



# ILO EVALUATION

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### SECO and NORAD

Country	USD
SCORE India	232,000
SCORE Bolivia	458,000
SCORE China	1,189,000
SCORE Indonesia	949,000
SCORE Colombia	1,058,000
SCORE Vietnam	1,994,000
SCORE Ghana	907,000
SCORE Peru	2,176,500
SIYB-SCORE Myanmar	5,017,500
SCORE Ethiopia	823,000
SCORE Tunisia	865,000
SCORE Geneva	3,731,000
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>19,400,000</b>

***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***

<sup>1</sup> SECO and Norad contribute to the budget with their own currencies. Therefore, the figure is can vary due to the exchange rate and distribution amongst country components can be adjusted based on the delivery rate.

## SCORE Phase III mid-term evaluation

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## List of Abbreviations

AA	Administrative assistant
ANDI	Asamblea Nacional de Empresarios de Colombia
BDS	Business development services
BEDO	Business & Export Development Organization
BSCI	Business Social Compliance Initiative
CEPB	Confederación de Empresarios Privados de Bolivia
CTA	Chief technical advisor
DANIDA	Danish Development Assistance to Ghana
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EM	Evaluation manager
ETI	Ethical Trading Initiative
EU	European Union
EVAL	Evaluation office
FPRW	Fundamental Principles of Rights at Work
GTAC	Global Tripartite Advisory Committee
GTUC	Ghana Trades Union Congress
HQ	Headquarters
ICS	Initiative for Compliance and Sustainability
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
IOE	International Organization of Employers
IP	Implementation Partners
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
KSBSI	Confederation of Indonesian Prosperity Trade Union
KSPI	Confederation of Indonesian Trade Unions
KSPSI-AITUC	All Indonesian Trade Union Confederation
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDPI	Management Development and Productivity Institute
MIG	Modelo de Igualdad de Género (Gender Quality Model)
MNE	Multi-National Enterprises

MTE	Mid-term evaluation
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPC	National project coordinator
NPO	National programme officer
NTAC	National Tripartite Advisory Committees
OSH	Occupational safety and health
P&B	Programme and budget
PPPs	Public private partnerships
PRODOC	Project Document
SAWS	China's State Administration of Work Safety
SCORE	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises
SCORE HoCo	SCORE Hospitality Coaching Programme
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SGS	Société Générale de Surveillance
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIPPO	Swiss Import Promotion Programme
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized enterprises
SMI	Semut Management Indonesia
TAC	Tripartite Advisory Committee
TBE	Theory-based evaluation
TC	Technical committee
TO	Technical officer
TOR	Terms of Reference
TÜV	Technischer Überwachungsverein
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
USD	United States dollar
VCCI	Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry

## List of Abbreviations in Appendices

APINDO	The Employers' Association of Indonesia
BDS	Business Development Services
BIFA	Binh Duong Furniture Association
BSO	Business Service Organisation
CAMIND	Cochabamba Departmental Chamber of Industry
CEC	China Enterprises Confederation
CGT	Confederación General del Trabajo (Colombia)
CICO	Zhejiang Communication Investment Co.
CMMA	Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs (Indonesia)
CNI	National Chamber of Industries
CSID	Centre for Supporting Industries
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTC	Confederación de Trabajadores de Colombia
CUT	Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (Colombia)
DNP	Departamento Nacional de Planeación (National Planning Department)
EQ	Equilatera
GEA	Ghana Employers' Association
GoG	Government of Ghana
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
HAWA	Handicraft and Wood Industry Association
MEM	Ministry of Emergence Management
MELR	Ghana Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Indonesia)
Mol	Ministry of Industry (Indonesia)
MoM	Ministry of Manpower (Indonesia)
MoT	Ministry of Trade (Indonesia)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
STCCI	Sekondi-Takoradi Chamber of Commerce and Industry
STSG	SCORE Training Solutions Ghana



ToC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
UTIPEC	Unión de Trabajadores de la Industria Petrolera y Energética de Colombia
VIA	Vietnam Industry Agency
VIA IDC	Vietnam Industry Agency, Industrial Development Centre

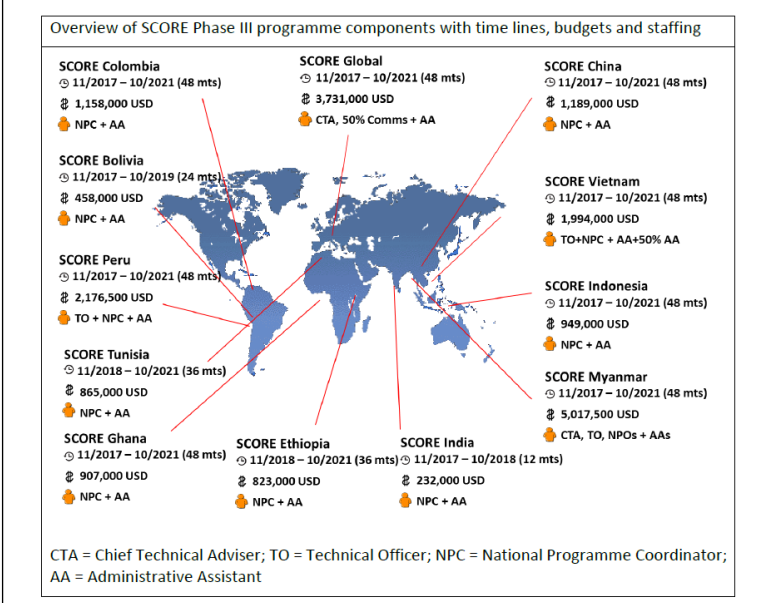
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### a. Summary of project purpose, theory of change and structure

Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme is an ILO development cooperation programme promoting productivity, competitiveness and decent work amongst Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in emerging economies. The targeted SMEs have approximately 50-250 employees, although this varies depending on country circumstances. Its underlying assumption is that productivity can be increased through better people management, better organisation of work processes and the application of workplace practices guided by the

Figure ES1: National programme budgets Phase III

NB: SCORE Global refers to SCORE HQ/Geneva. Total Budget \$19.4 million



principles of international labour standards.

The SCORE Programme comprises various components but its main instrument for affecting change is SCORE Training. The vision is that SCORE Training is “*the intervention of choice of national governments, social partners and lead buyers for promoting SME productivity and working conditions in selected industries and supply chains.*” The development objective is that “*SMEs in national and global supply chains have improved productivity and working conditions and provide decent*

*work.*” The programme has a theory of change that was finalised after the current phase began. It explains the three ‘waves’ of change that are expected to drive transformation when the programme is implemented in a specific country. Taken together, the waves articulate a vision for establishing a sustainable training programme through the following: 1) finding partner institutions and proving the concept underlying SCORE Training; 2) further adoption and adaptation of SCORE Training by other actors; and 3) government policy reforms relating to productivity. Phase III is primarily concerned with wave 2 (adoption and adaptation by other actors).

### b. Present situation of the project

The SCORE Programme is being implemented through 11 country offices in Africa, Asia and Latin America at the present time, and is coordinated by the global component in Geneva. Funding per country is set out in Figure ES1 above. The India country programme is now finished as planned, and the Bolivia programme has received additional SECO funding to allow it to continue until October 2021.

The programme is in its third phase and ILO funding will finish in October 2021. By the end of Phase III, SCORE hopes to deliver on the following Outcomes:

**Outcome 1:** Implementation partners have embedded SCORE Training in national programmes and budgets.

**Outcome 2:** Lead buyers support suppliers through SCORE Training.

SCORE is part of the ILO Enterprise Department, and contributes to the “promotion of sustainable enterprises for innovation, growth, more and better jobs.” It complements Decent Work Country Programmes in China and Viet Nam. After being criticised in Phase I for being overly oriented towards enterprise owners, it has shifted to become more of a tripartite programme, and this is recognised in the ILO Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2018-2019. The programme aligns with the UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) where relevant, and with Goals 5, 8, 9 and 12 of the Sustainable Development Goals through its contribution to mainstreaming gender, promoting decent work, achieving cleaner and more sustainable production patterns, and enabling SMEs to participate in global supply chains.

**c. Purpose, Scope and Clients of the Evaluation**

This mid-term evaluation (MTE) concerns the third phase of the SCORE Programme, covering the period from November 2017 to November 2019. The main clients are Norad and SECO as well as ILO EVAL and SCORE management.

The MTE team visited four countries chosen by ILO (Colombia, Ghana, Indonesia, Viet Nam) and visited SCORE Programme headquarters. Desk reviews were done of Bolivia and China. The MTE’s aim is to provide an accurate and comprehensive picture of the global programme’s context and development, answering evaluation questions for each country component and the global component, as well as generating lessons through comparative analysis of country experiences. The evaluation criteria are set out in Box ES1. The specific MTE objectives set by ILO were:

- Independently assess the progress of SCORE Phase III against the logframe;
- Inform the ILO on whether the current project strategy is working, and provide recommendations on what could be changed to increase the likelihood that the project reaches its objectives;
- Inform the ILO on feasible sustainability and exit strategies of SCORE Programme based on the assessment of each country’s approaches; and
- Identify good practices and lessons learned that would contribute to learning and knowledge development of the ILO and project stakeholders.

Box ES1: ILO Evaluation Criteria
1. Relevance and strategic fit of the intervention, including validity of intervention design 1a. Validity of intervention design (sub-question)
2. Intervention progress and effectiveness 2a. Effectiveness of management arrangements
3. Efficiency of resource usage
4. Impact orientation and sustainability of the intervention

**d. Evaluation Methodology**

Theory-based evaluation (TBE) has been used to underpin the study. TBE is well-suited to multi-faceted interventions implemented in contexts of complexity and enables an exploration of how interventions lead to outcomes and impacts.

The MTE was explicitly asked to consider the gender dimensions to SCORE as a cross-cutting issue. The programme has a gender equality strategy that was used as a reference point.

#### e. Main findings and conclusions

##### Sustainability

The sustainability of SCORE Training is one of the main ways SCORE programme will be judged, and comprises financial, technical and institutional factors. **The technical dimension to SCORE is strong** due to the high quality of the materials and training methods which distinguish it from other types of capacity building for SMEs. Furthermore, the content has been adapted and developed by several national programmes, resulting in training for new sectors (e.g. SCORE HoCo for the hospitality and tourism industry), on new issues (e.g. MIG SCORE on gender), and suited to new audiences (e.g. SCORE-inspired training for smaller and micro-enterprises, and for organisations in the social and solidarity economy). The unique features of SCORE (e.g. the social justice component, the inclusion of in-factory training and consultancy) are not always valued by enterprise owners or prospective funders, but this is not the fault of the materials and methods per se.

**The institutional dimension** is being addressed through the capacitation of local implementation partners, outreach to lead buyers, and training of trainers. Implementation partners are active in each country and are engaged in different facets necessary to sustain SCORE Training. The level of independence from the SCORE Programme (i.e. ILO human and financial resources) varies between countries, although it has increased in all mid-term evaluation countries over the course of Phase II. China and Indonesia provide strong examples of implementation partners able to increase their training of enterprises, develop training capacity, market training programmes, and attract non-ILO funding independent of the SCORE Programme. This can make it difficult for SCORE Programme management to keep track of impact, but overall that is a good problem to have. However, not all countries have implementation partners confident about carrying SCORE Training forwards beyond Phase III. This seems to be more a factor of opportunity rather than capability because the product is not always suited to local market conditions. In these cases, the influence of SCORE Training, outside a small number of SMEs, will only grow if implementation partners receive further donor funding to deliver training.

**The financial dimension** is being addressed by helping implementation partners develop alternative funding models (both revenue from enterprises, public funding and direct/indirect grants from other organisations), and by encouraging lead buyers to promote or sponsor SCORE Training in their supply chains. The latter has been a particular emphasis in Phase III but has not always brought the results hoped for. Assumptions about the presence of lead buyers and their willingness to provide funding were overly optimistic: international lead buyers in particular have been harder to engage with for a variety of reasons (e.g. decision-making processes, degrees of reputational risk or other incentives for action, alignment of SCORE Training with company's own programmes).

SCORE national programmes have often been innovative in identifying funding for training, and this is important because enterprises in many cases have been unwilling or unable to pay. There are various reasons for this (e.g. lack of capital, availability of free or cheaper alternatives, a culture of government subsidy, insufficient time or absorptive capacity, lack of recognition such as training certification). Some of the reasons were recognised and addressed in early phases (e.g. the need for a mixed funding model because of SMEs' traditional underinvestment in training), and some have been tackled as the programme has progressed (e.g. development of alternative SCORE-based training modules taking into account SME constraints). In some countries (e.g. Ghana and Colombia),

public and/or donor funding is being put into what are viewed locally as competing offerings, and implementation partners are unsure about SCORE Training’s long-term viability if there is no external funding. Every country programme is trying to address the long-term funding issue, and there are examples of undoubted success. However, moves to secure financial sustainability could be jeopardised if SCORE Programme staff leave before the end of Phase III.

## General Conclusions

The conclusions are based on the Evaluation Criteria which require the evaluation team to consider relevance and strategic fit, resource efficiency, progress and impact orientation.

1. In general, SCORE national programmes are aligned with ultimate beneficiary needs (SME workers and owners/managers). SCORE Training is of high quality, and its content is relevant to SCORE’s SME target group. Looking to the future, in countries such as Indonesia, China, Colombia and Viet Nam there is a large market of underserved SMEs. However, alignment with needs does not necessarily translate into demand. Investment in training is not always seen as a priority by owners, especially if the business benefits cannot be demonstrated clearly. The market for business development services in general is distorted in some countries by government subsidies that SCORE implementation partners do not have access to (e.g. Ghana, Colombia).
2. The programme has succeeded in engaging with a wide variety of intermediate beneficiaries (Table ES1). It has made significant progress in engaging with other development programmes, not least those of SECO and other ILO projects. It can also show progress in engaging ILO tripartite constituents including trade unions, although some SCORE countries are weak on freedom of association, and unions are not typically active amongst the SCORE Training target group.
3. National programme management have made significant efforts to adapt to local situations. Phase III represents a significant step forwards in terms of devolved management authority (e.g. implementation partners; national programme offices). Nonetheless, there are some areas where overall programme design is affecting impact. For instance, a false assumption about lead buyers means that all countries must commit resources to Outcome 2 (lead buyer engagement) even when this type of intermediate beneficiary is weak or absent.

Table ES1: Examples of intermediate beneficiaries

Employers and industry associations	e.g. VCCI in Viet Nam; ANDI in Colombia; CEPB in Bolivia
Training providers	e.g. Riwani Globe in Indonesia; SGS in China
Government departments and agencies	e.g. MDPI in Ghana; Ministry of Manpower in Indonesia
Lead buyers	e.g. ETI members in China; ICS in Viet Nam
National and sectoral trade unions	e.g. GTUC in Ghana; KSBSI, KSPSI-AITUC, KSPI in Indonesia
Labour inspectorates	e.g. SAWS in China

4. Difficulties in getting SME buy-in to a five-module training programme were identified in Phase II, and this led to revisions and new offerings such as SCORE Short Course. It is laudable that SCORE has modified its training in response to market demand, and expert trainers have been able to adapt materials to local SME needs. However, in hindsight SCORE’s impact might have been greater if factors such as the competitive landscape, SMEs’ absorptive capacity, and costs

and benefits of training had been properly factored into the choice of countries for implementation.

5. SCORE Programme has a gender equality strategy that tasks the programme to address areas such as gender-equal participation; mainstreaming of gender in programme data collection, monitoring and evaluation of impact; and awareness building about the problems of sexual violence and harassment in the workplace. Components of the strategy are evident in activities such as enterprise-level training, Training of Trainers and awareness-raising events (e.g. workshops and conferences). The programme has attempted to move away from just trying to increase the number of women participating towards a situation where benefits are designed around women's concerns. Although in hindsight the gender impact could have been greater if it had been approached differently in early programme design (e.g. gender criteria for selecting industries; gender budgets), the shifts since Phase II are positive. It is encouraging to see that in Latin America SCORE is paying particular attention to gender (e.g. the MIG SCORE training).
6. By many of its Output-level indicators, SCORE is achieving its targets, although there are inevitably differences between countries. There are, however, gaps between some Outputs and desired Outcomes. Worries within a country about sustainability are not necessarily captured in performance plans, and there is a possibility that national programmes are pursuing quantitative targets despite these having a weak relationship to Outcomes. Outcome 2 gives examples of this with countries investing in attempts to engage lead buyers, even when lead buyers are absent or uninterested.
7. The two most important indicators related to Outcome 2 are the number of lead buyers promoting SCORE Training, and the number of them sponsoring it in their supply chains. In both cases, performance is much lower than anticipated with only one country meeting targets for lead buyers promoting SCORE Training, and one meeting targets for lead buyer sponsorship of SCORE Training. This reflects an incorrect assumption that lead buyers in all countries would be an effective leveraging point. SCORE national programmes as well as SCORE Geneva have invested considerable effort in identifying and engaging with lead buyers, but relatively few buyers have been willing to go beyond workplace auditing to building supplier capacity.

**f. Recommendations, lessons identified and good practices**

**Lessons identified**

1. **Experiences in countries such as Indonesia and China show that it is ultimately possible to deliver SCORE Training without ILO financial support or expertise.** Importantly, those countries demonstrate that commercial training with a strong decent work component can be delivered in a sustainable fashion, provided that the quality of the productivity component is also high. However, this outcome is not consistent across all countries: it depends on a variety of local factors, such as the accessibility of non-ILO funding, and the pricing or presence of competing products and providers.
2. **Outputs must be strongly linked to Outcomes/Immediate Objectives in order that resources are allocated efficiently.** There are cases, such as with SCORE Colombia, where good progress is being made at the output-level (e.g. assisting implementation partners to engage with lead buyers; producing materials to familiarise lead buyers with SCORE Training), but this has not yet led to Outcome-level impact (e.g. lead buyers sponsoring SCORE Training). The SCORE experience shows the importance of gathering appropriate data and regularly reviewing and testing assumptions in the logframe and Theory of Change in order to assess if Output-level achievements are aligned with Outcomes. The lesson is that good progress may be made at Output level without making a meaningful contribution to achieving Outcomes. Conversely,

important Outputs and activities relating to Outcomes may not be captured in programme monitoring (e.g. the building of networks of SCORE-trained enterprises).

3. **The M&E system has been built up over the three phases of the programme, and its good for tracking outputs, but less effective for outcome and impact monitoring.** It has been adapted to meet changing demands, and now contains multiple components (e.g. M&E database, impact studies in selected countries, tracking against performance plans, quarterly review reports). Most SCORE managers feel the system delivers what it is intended to even if it can take a lot of effort. However, there are three key lessons for the future:
  - a. There is little incentive for trainers/enterprises to contribute data once their activities are being delivered without ILO support. Consequently, countries SCORE Training without ILO involvement is high may be under-reporting the amount of training taking place, skewing SCORE's overall achievements for Phase III.
  - b. As implementation partners take greater ownership of SCORE Training, they have their own M&E needs. In countries such as Viet Nam, the SCORE M&E database is being maintained by implementation partners, but local partners have different needs to the SCORE programme (e.g. tracking training activities, but also demonstrating training impact to prospective clients). These needs should be addressed as part of the capacitation process.
  - c. Approaches to M&E in international development consistently evolve, and it is now recognized that 'impact-oriented' M&E systems are important components in supporting learning and adaptive management. The SCORE M&E system does not reflect best practice in terms of the monitoring and evaluating of outcomes and impacts that is vital to adaptive management and learning. The types of indicators and quantification employed have limits - as the programme recognises. Decisions about how much to invest in modifying the system to meet changing expectations were hard to justify when the programme's total lifetime was uncertain.
4. **There has been a concerted effort to mainstream gender into SCORE Training and other programme activities.** There is still an imbalance between male and female beneficiaries at enterprise level is to a significant degree a consequence of male-dominance in some sectors where SCORE Training is taking place. If future national programmes want to increase female participation, gender criteria need to more heavily weighted in sector selection, perhaps at the risk that overall impact on productivity, working conditions and decent work will be less. SCORE seems to have done this in newer country programmes such as Bolivia.
5. **The SME target group is often unable to afford or do not see the benefit of SCORE Training unless there is financial support and, in some cases, even with financial support.** Some SCORE national programmes and their implementation partners have been able to leverage such support (e.g. Ghana), and there can be funding or other resources available because of the importance attached to SMEs by government. The lesson here is that market conditions that affect SCORE's sustainability need to be (and can be) understood early on and taken into account in programme and product design.
6. **The cost of SCORE Training and SME unwillingness to pay is only one of the barriers to uptake.** An emerging factor that may have an impact in the future relates to the expectation amongst some SMEs that they will be certified or accredited as SCORE-compliant, reflecting the certification available on other courses. There are good reasons why ILO does not want to be involved in accreditation (e.g. the cost of maintaining a robust system; the risk to ILO reputation); however, in Indonesia, standardisation and accreditation of training is being advocated by government, and this will eventually have an impact on SCORE Training providers. If this marks a trend, then it has implications for any ILO enterprise-level training, and it would

be timely for SCORE Global to engage with relevant parties to prevent a situation where ILO-initiated training becomes redundant because of policy changes (e.g. collaboration with ISO or national accreditation bodies).

### Examples of emerging good practice

- 1. Networks and communities of practitioners:** SCORE's sustainability is strengthened when there are communities of enterprises and trainers that enable their members to continue to develop beyond any single training activity. The networks/communities take different forms in different countries, but they have played a crucial role in building communities of practice in Indonesia and Viet Nam and have begun to create basic awareness in Colombia of the linkages between productivity and decent work. This helps to build market demand and find joint solutions to related challenges.
- 2. Capacity strengthening of implementation partners to be owners of SCORE:** There are Implementation partners in each country included in this evaluation with the capacity and commitment to deliver SCORE Training (or SCORE-inspired training) beyond Phase III. This is central to Outcome 1 and the Development Objective. Given the right market conditions, they can carry out essential activities required for sustainability (e.g. attract funding, promotion, training delivery, training of trainers, market growth). This is only possible where market conditions are suitable (e.g. the SME market is underserved; funding is available). SCORE's goals for long-term impact are unrealistic if market conditions are not conducive in this manner.
- 3. Integrating SCORE into existing training agencies' programmes:** Funding SCORE Training outside of ILO has been problematic in some countries, and assumptions about lead buyers have been overly optimistic. Integrating SCORE Training into other organisations' programmes is one way of increasing SCORE's impact once Phase III ends. It contributes to sustainability in cases where other financial models are not feasible, or implementation partners are constrained. This approach also allows enterprises to be accredited in line with the agencies' policies. This helps overcome the market resistance in some countries to training that does not lead to certification or other kinds of recognition. It is also appropriate given the increasing pressure from governments for training standardisation and accreditation in some countries.<sup>2</sup>
- 4. Mixed funding models of training:** SCORE Training is being delivered at greatest scale where mixed funding models are in place, managed by implementation partners. Although SMEs are reported to contribute 30-40% of costs on some courses, and there are mechanisms for matched funding in some countries (e.g. China, Colombia), it is unlikely that SCORE Training will be fully SME-funded in the short to medium term. However, SCORE offers a number of examples of good practice in creating mixed funding models, and these are the basis for SCORE Training's future sustainability. The most developed examples are in China, Indonesia and Viet Nam) where implementation partners are accessing multiple sources of funding to deliver training.

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<sup>2</sup> See the Indonesia country report for an example.



5. **Adaptive management:** Different funding models and an increasing array of training offerings indicate that local ownership of SCORE Training and local stakeholder input has increased since the last mid-term evaluation. Lessons about understanding and adapting to national conditions are aspects of good practice that can be taken forward in new country programmes and similar projects. Using this experience, there is no reason why adaptive design and management systems cannot be used in new country programmes and in projects that evolve out of SCORE.

## Recommendations

- 1) **Extend contracts for national programme personnel until the end of Phase III.** Progress is being made with capacity strengthening of implementation partners, but it would be a false economy to stop this too early if it had a negative impact on SCORE Training sustainability. While accepting that Phase III has been designed so that implementation partners have a year to 'go it alone', the situation with Output-level progress means that there will often be gains if programme staff can continue in post. *PRIORITY: High. ACTION BY: CTA and Regional Coordinators. WHEN: Short-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION: Medium.*
- 2) **Review Outputs and Outcome Relationships so that activities the programme is investing in are ones that are most likely to be impactful at the Outcome level.** This should take place as soon as possible and include a reassessment of the assumptions in the logframe and the Theory of Change. Particular attention should be paid to Immediate Objective / Outcome 2 where assumptions about lead buyers are proving problematic. *PRIORITY: High. ACTION BY: SCORE national and global managers. WHEN: Short-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION: Low.*
- 3) **Promote MIG SCORE in all national programmes because of its potential benefit for women workers.** For the remainder of Phase III, the training should be shared with as many countries as possible to promote its adoption and to encourage a debate about gender mainstreaming in SMEs. *PRIORITY: Medium-High. ACTION BY: SCORE national and global managers, MIG SCORE trainers. WHEN: Medium-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION: Medium.*
- 4) **Take steps to develop a more 'impact-oriented' M&E system.** Support IPs to assist their efforts to promote and maintain the quality of SCORE Training if/when ILO support ends. Undertake pilots in selected countries to identify and demonstrate the kind of outcome and impact-data that it is feasible to collect. Data should be collected on fewer indicators and a sub-set of countries, enterprises and impact pathways, to concentrate resources into generating more robust evidence on priority causal steps and assumptions. Beneficiary and intermediary beneficiary feedback should be included. Regular reflection and learning loops should be established. Final evaluation to be theory based, involve surveys of intermediate and ultimate beneficiaries and comparative case studies to test key causal steps and assumptions, use of 'Most Significant Change' and Contribution Analysis to assess the relative contribution of the programme. *PRIORITY: Medium-High. ACTION BY: ILO EVAL. WHEN: Short-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION: Medium.*
- 5) **Consider employing social learning processes in any future programme recognizing the importance of local ownerships and sustainable delivery.** Properly facilitated SL processes are strongly supportive of the adaptive, bottom-up approaches that have become more prominent in Phase III. SCORE managers and other relevant ILO personnel should be capacitated to include social learning in programme design and management. National and sub-regional learning alliances could be piloted in one or two countries in the remainder of Phase III to jointly identify problems and solutions, building momentum for action. Support peer learning at worker and at SME owners and manager levels in *all* SCORE countries, creating communities of practice which could continue beyond 2021. Documented successful examples. *PRIORITY: Medium-High. ACTION*

*BY: SCORE regional coordinators and national managers. WHEN: Medium term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION: High.*

- 6) **As part of engaging with lead buyers, continue to add to its ILO SCORE and ILO's wider learning through two specific activities.** First, in addition to engaging with US-headquartered global brands (e.g. Apple, Amazon), SCORE Global could engage with global brands headquartered in India, Korea or China which in many countries are at least as important. Second, in addition to looking to lead buyers as a financial sponsor, they could be looked at as a source of expertise (e.g. making expertise in quality control or product engineering in their companies and supply chains available to SMEs). *PRIORITY: Medium-Low. ACTION BY: CTA. WHEN: Medium-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION: Medium.*

## 1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme is an ILO development cooperation programme that promotes productivity, competitiveness and decent work in emerging economies. It is assisting governments, industry associations and trade unions in Africa, Asia and Latin America to develop export and domestic industrial sectors, with a particular focus on small and medium enterprises (SMEs). SCORE's underlying assumption is that productivity can be upgraded through better people management, better organization of work processes and the application of workplace practices guided by the principles of international labour standards.

SCORE's **ultimate beneficiaries** are workers and managers in SMEs including small exporters and subcontractors in industries with high job creation potential and significant decent work deficits such as gender discrimination. The targeted SMEs have approximately 50-250 employees, a size where most SMEs start creating a middle management layer and hence have the necessary capacity to absorb new approaches and methodologies in their operations.

The **intermediate beneficiaries**, who serve the needs of the ultimate beneficiaries, are listed in Table 1.

*Table 1: SCORE Intermediate beneficiaries*

Employers and industry associations	Lead buyers (domestic and international)
Training providers	National and sectoral trade unions
Government departments and agencies involved in the development and implementation of SME policies and programmes	Labour inspectorates

SCORE is intended to contribute to the promotion of international labour standards, social dialogue, tripartism and gender equality. It achieves this through the following:

- At enterprise level, SCORE Training intends to communicate a strong legal, moral and business case for investment in responsible workplace practices and respecting Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW). It helps enterprises build systems to increase enterprise productivity while improving the quality of jobs through better dialogue and working conditions.
- At policy-level, the programme promotes international labour standards, social dialogue and tripartism through its training of policymakers and social partners.
- All project activities are advised by national or global tripartite advisory committees.

The rationale behind SCORE has been explained in several previous documents (e.g. Phase II MTE; Phase III PRODOC; publicity materials). In summary, SME productivity is lower than it could be if modern management practices were introduced, and one result of this is that working conditions are poor. SMEs that adopt such practices are claimed to be more productive and competitive, and as well as offering decent work, they can be more attractive to consumers and buyers in supply chains. However, the enabling environment for such change is often lacking (e.g. limited SME resources, government policy, access to finance, lack of business development services). Although SCORE has not addressed all the barriers facing SMEs, it has tried to develop interventions that are suitable for and accessible to SMEs, particularly those with less than 250 workers.

A comprehensive gender equality strategy was developed in Phase II, including measures relating to sector selection, reviewing the gender sensitivity of training materials, gender guidance for trainers,

and integration of gender into the M&E system. In Phase III, specific gender indicators have been included in the logframe and capacity building efforts. These are intended to increase the understanding and commitment of partners to gender equality in relation to their work on SMEs.

SCORE's main intervention is SCORE Training, a practical training and in-factory consulting programme targeted at SMEs. The training demonstrates best international practice in the manufacturing and service sectors (e.g. Kaizen, Lean Six Sigma), and amongst other things could help SMEs participate in global supply chains. The programme is also designed to work with governments, and employers' and workers' organizations to address key constraints that hamper growth in specific industries, and to advise partners on best practices in the development of SME policies. The SCORE project has been funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) since 2009. During Phase I (2009-2014), the donors contributed USD 9.7 Million to the ILO; Phase II of the SCORE project (2014-2017) was funded with USD 19.4 Million; and, during the Phase III, both donors funded USD 19.4.

SCORE is now in its third phase. During Phase I from 2009 until 2013, the SCORE Programme developed a training package, training of trainers and a capacity building programme for institutions who wanted to deliver the training package. During Phase II (2013-2017), the overall objective was to establish institutions in each SCORE country that were able to provide SCORE Training independently from ILO and donor funding.

In Phase III (2017-2021), SCORE has sought to build on its earlier achievements, emphasising its contribution to development. The vision is that SCORE Training is *"the intervention of choice of national governments, social partners and lead buyers for promoting SME productivity and working conditions in selected industries and supply chains."* The development objective is that *"SMEs in national and global supply chains have improved productivity and working conditions and provide decent work."* Realising the vision involves increasing the number of countries where SCORE Training is available (Bolivia and Peru have been added in Phase III), but the main emphasis is on embedding SCORE Training into the programmes and budgets of implementation partners and participating lead buyers so that SCORE-inspired training will continue after 2021.

There is a global strategy contained in the Phase III project document, and country level strategies are derived from this. Target sectors vary by country, including both export and domestic-oriented businesses. Stages of implementation also vary between countries. The programme has a Theory of Change that explains the three 'waves' that are expected to drive transformation when the programme is implemented in a country. Taken together, the waves articulate a long-term sustainability vision (Figure 1). The waves and some of their key assumptions are described below (The flow of actions is what would occur in an ideal scenario, and do not necessarily represent the reality of implementation. Current implementation is described in Section 5.2.):

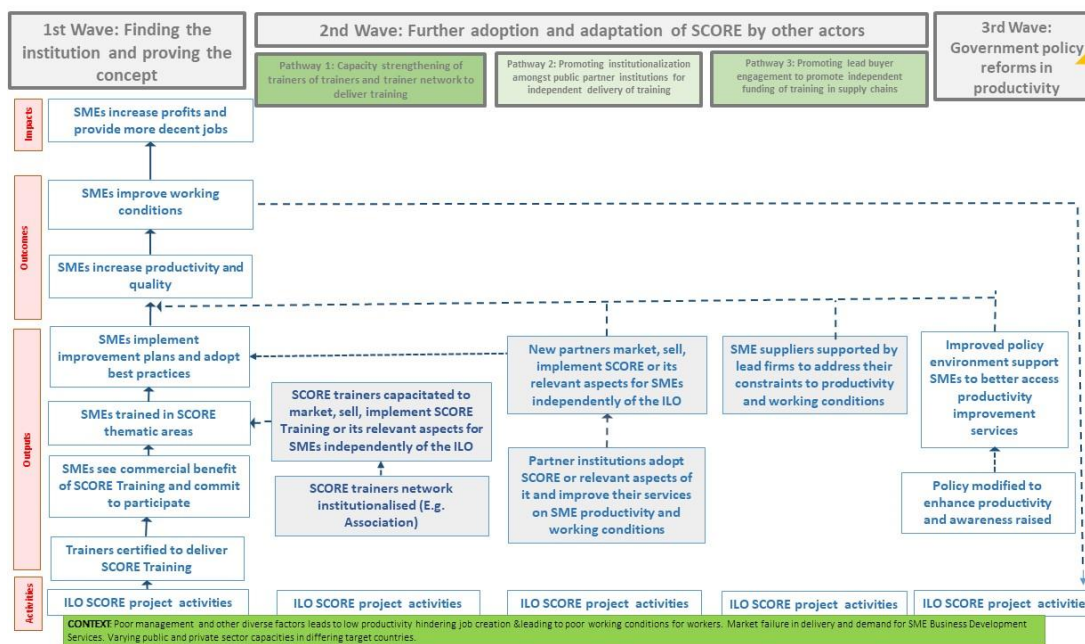
- **1<sup>st</sup> Wave - 'finding the institution and proving the concept'**: outlines the approach followed when SCORE is launched in a country or when the programme ventures into a new sector. Sectors should be based on their potential to grow, importance to female workers, working conditions and participation in domestic and international supply chains. Key to sector/cluster selection is the presence of institutions and service providers with potential to provide SCORE Training and in-factory counselling to enterprises in the sector/cluster. The programme partners with these institutions and service providers and builds their capacity to deliver SCORE Training (or relevant aspects of it) so that they can offer it commercially to enterprises. The enterprises then implement improvements taught through the training and

increase productivity, quality and working conditions leading to greater profits and more jobs.

- **2<sup>nd</sup> wave – ‘further adoption and adaptation of SCORE by other actors’:** seeks to build on the 1<sup>st</sup> wave results. The programme consolidates the network of SCORE trainers from institutions as well as private service providers. It strengthens their capacity to market the programme and to mobilise non-ILO funds to implement SCORE Training. Additionally, the SCORE Programme seeks to demonstrate that the training model is replicable on a larger scale with other institutions and lead firms. It therefore extends partnerships to other large national institutions which have the capacity, financial means and outreach to offer SCORE Training across the country, and ultimately embed it in their portfolio of products/activities. At the same time, the SCORE Programme expands collaboration with multinational enterprises/lead firms that want to improve social compliance and performance of SMEs in their supply chains by providing them SCORE Training or relevant aspects of it.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Wave – ‘government policy reforms relating to productivity’:** policy work to mobilise national governments to support interventions that promote SME productivity and working conditions. More stable and substantial government support will only materialise if SME productivity, working conditions and the importance of SMEs as job creators and drivers of a productive transformation of economies can be made a focus of attention for policy makers. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave, the SCORE Programme uses evidence generated from SCORE interventions in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> waves as well as research on policy environment to inform government agencies on better policies to support the development objective of the SCORE Programme.

It should be noted that there are three separate impact pathways nested within the second wave (a) strengthening the capacity of trainers and trainer networks to deliver training; b) capacitating public and private partner organisations to deliver training independently; c) engaging lead buyers to promote independent funding of training in their supply base). Different countries are at different stages depending on when they began, but broadly speaking the emphases of SCORE’s different phases have been as follows:

Figure 1: SCORE current theory of change



- Phase 1 of SCORE focused mostly Wave 1.

- Phase 2 focused on Wave 2, mainly impact pathways a) and b).
- Phase III focused on Wave 2 (mainly impact pathways b) and c)) and Wave 3

## 2. EVALUATION BACKGROUND

This mid-term evaluation (MTE) concerns the third phase of the SCORE Programme. It builds on previous evaluations and impact studies that have looked at SCORE methods, the effectiveness of SCORE Training, enterprise-level impact, and the development of implementation partnerships. The MTE covers the period from November 2017 to November 2019 and aims to provide an *‘accurate and comprehensive picture of the global project’s context and development’*, answering evaluation questions for each country component and the global component, as well as generating lessons through comparative analysis of country experiences.

The specific MTE objectives set by ILO were:

- Independently assess the progress of SCORE Phase III against the logframe;
- Inform the ILO on whether the current project strategy is working, and provide recommendations on what could be changed to increase the likelihood that the project reaches its objectives;
- Inform the ILO on feasible sustainability and exit strategies of SCORE Programme based on the assessment of each country’s approaches; and
- Identify good practices and lessons learned that would contribute to learning and knowledge development of the ILO and project stakeholders.

During Phase III, the programme has been active in 11 countries (Bolivia, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Peru, Tunisia, Viet Nam). The MTE team visited four countries chosen by ILO (Colombia, Ghana, Indonesia, Viet Nam) and visited SCORE headquarters. Desk reviews were done of Bolivia and China.

The programme has commissioned impact studies, but the evaluation team were asked to assess the ‘impact orientation’ of the programme, in the light of the planned final evaluation, rather than assessing SCORE’s impact on ultimate beneficiaries at this stage and with limited resources.<sup>3</sup> As this is a mid-term evaluation, and impact assessment was not planned from the design of the programme, this study can only consider the readiness of the programme for final evaluation and make recommendations accordingly. For the final evaluation and in the event of a follow-on programme, it will be important to generate more evidence on the causal relationships set out in the Theory of Change. Generating evidence on the causal connections between improvements and practice changes by enterprises, and the resulting productivity and working conditions benefits, leading, ultimately to increased profits and new decent jobs, is not necessarily straightforward, but it is important from a learning perspective for the programme

The main clients of the evaluation are SECO and NORAD, the ILO constituents as well as the ILO.

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<sup>3</sup> The impact studies in India, Viet Nam, Ghana and Peru present a nuanced view of SCORE Programme but have largely been positive. They provide evidence that SCORE Training leads to detectable changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of managers and workers of firms that participate in the activities. The SCORE India impact study, for example, found that SCORE Training led to real changes in attitudes and motivation among managers and workers in 9 out of 10 factories and significantly increased manager awareness. However, the more recent Peru assessment has concluded that managers are more likely to recognise the benefits than workers.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Overall Approach

Theory-based evaluation (TBE) has been used to underpin the study. TBE enables evaluation and learning in multi-faceted interventions implemented in contexts of complexity. Key features of TBE were described in the MTE Inception Report. Amongst its strengths are that it enables an exploration of how interventions lead to outcomes and impacts by identifying the mechanisms involved and addressing the influence of the intervention vis-à-vis other contextual factors. It is an approach and not a specific method or technique: a way of structuring and undertaking analysis using a range of different evaluation, data collection and learning activities.

**Gender sensitivity:** The MTE was explicitly asked to consider the gender dimensions to SCORE as a cross-cutting issue. The programme has a gender equality strategy that was used as a reference point. Gender indicators form part of the programme’s M&E database, and progress on these is reported in smartsheets/performance plans and the exit/sustainability strategy. These sources of secondary information were used in the evaluation. In addition, gender was integrated into the structure of interviews and focus group discussions.

#### 3.2 Key Steps in the Methodology

The key steps in the TBE are i) Clarifying the purpose of the evaluation, ii) Developing the Theory of Change, iii) Data collection and analysis, iv) Contribution Analysis, v) Communicating findings. See Figure 2.

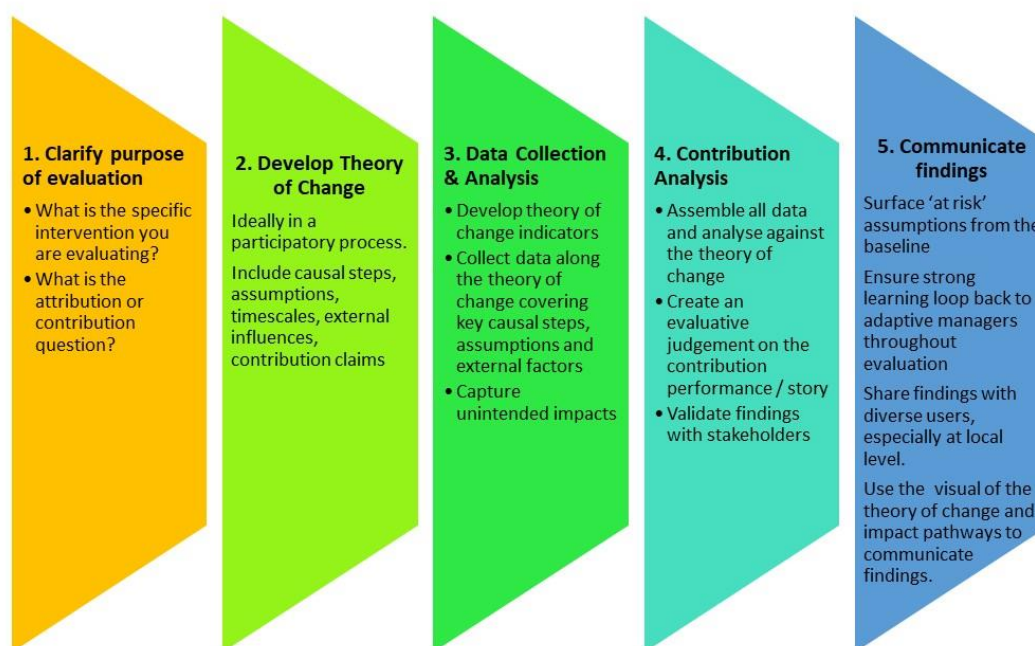


Figure 2: Key Steps in Theory-Based Evaluation

##### 3.2.1 Clarifying the Purpose

In addition to the specific objectives of the evaluation (Section 4 above), four evaluation criteria were set by ILO (including two sub-questions) (Table 2). Enterprise-level impact was not part of the MTE because this was addressed in previous evaluations and impact studies, and because at programme level, experimental designs are not currently in place and the impact studies have not

been followed up and are focused on specific cases, rather than presenting a programme-level assessment. However, the team has assessed the extent to which the programme is impact-oriented, and how far it will be feasible for an independent evaluation to assess the impact of the programme.

More detailed evaluation questions were given in the study TOR, and the overall set of questions can be found in Appendix 1. These questions were combined with the Theory of Change for the programme to form the conceptual and analytical framework.

Table 2: Evaluation criteria

ILO Evaluation Criteria
1. Relevance and strategic fit of the intervention, including validity of intervention design 1a. Validity of intervention design (sub-question)
2. Intervention progress and effectiveness 2a. Effectiveness of management arrangements
3. Efficiency of resource usage
4. Impact orientation and sustainability of the intervention

### 3.2.2 Developing the Theory of Change

The Theory of Change developed by SCORE (see Figure 1) has been used as the conceptual framework for the mid-term evaluation. This was developed after Phase III began and is different to earlier ones (e.g. that used in MTE Phase II). It describes ‘waves’ of change that are anticipated in a specific country. However, the Theory of Change can also be used to unpack the causal steps in a more detailed manner and provide an analysis of the assumptions associated with each step, which can then be tested and evidenced. The evaluation team has identified and focused primarily on the Theory of Change elements which are most relevant for Phase III. The team assessed progress on the Outputs and Immediate Objectives (Outcomes) for Phase III, and to understand how and why these are being achieved or not, we developed assumptions for different stages of the causal pathway. Studies of selected country programmes and the global component generated evidence to test these assumptions. This in turn enabled the team to identify which assumptions hold true and which are ‘at risk’, and to generate lessons on what could be done differently for the rest of the programme and to inform future strategy beyond the SCORE Programme.

### 3.2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The MTE collected data relevant to the indicators in the Phase III logframe, and additional indicators developed by the ILO SCORE team in its Theory of Change. Data on logframe indicators are available in the M&E database, but SCORE does not collect data on the Theory of Change indicators. In order to overcome this, the evaluation team made qualitative assessments based on the data collected during interviews (see below).

The evaluation team was able to draw on the following as **secondary information** sources for analysis of country programmes and the global component:

- Previous final and mid-term evaluations



- Impact studies (Ghana, Viet Nam, India). NB The impact study for Peru was not completed in time for the MTE.
- Training materials
- Exit and sustainability strategies (including updates on progress against Outputs)
- SCORE strategy documents (e.g. gender, communications, knowledge management)
- Performance plans (Smartsheets)
- Quarterly progress reports
- Additional materials accessible through SCORE Platform including enterprise case studies
- SCORE M&E database
- SCORE global and national websites, plus social media where accessible

The team conducted four **country programme visits** where it was able to access additional country-specific secondary information sources, and to conduct interviews with a purposively selected sample of SCORE stakeholders. The latter included:

- Implementation partners
- SMEs receiving SCORE Training
- SCORE national project staff
- National tripartite advisory committee members
- SCORE funders
- ILO country and regional officers
- Other organisations connected to SCORE (e.g. international labour and trade initiatives)

Each country study was conducted by a member of the core evaluation team together with a national evaluator familiar with SMEs, the working environment, the political economy, and other relevant aspects of the country.

The team also visited **SCORE headquarters** in Geneva and **SCORE donors**. A full list of interviews is attached at Appendix 2, but sources of primary information included:

- SECO personnel responsible for SCORE
- SCORE Chief Technical Advisor
- SCORE staff (technical officer, communications, knowledge management)
- Global Tripartite Advisory Committee members
- Better Work

In addition to the country programmes visited, **desk reviews** were conducted of two countries (China, Bolivia). These drew on the following:

- Exit and sustainability strategies (including updates on progress against Outputs)
- Performance plans (Smartsheets)
- Quarterly progress reports
- Previous final and mid-term evaluations
- Relevant case studies
- SCORE M&E database
- SCORE global and national websites, plus social media where accessible

#### 3.2.4 Contribution Analysis

The Theory of Change and its assumptions were analysed using Contribution Analysis to identify and weigh important lessons about how and why the programme has brought about change. The MTE

did not assess the impact of the programme at enterprise-level (as stipulated by the ILO TOR and as set out in the evaluation team Inception Report); rather, it focuses more on progress with respect to Outcomes and considers the ‘impact orientation’ of the programme, in view of the upcoming final evaluation. Insights from Contribution Analysis are most apparent in the Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practice (Section 7; Appendices 4-5).

#### 3.2.5 Reporting and Communication of Findings

The evaluation team has followed “Evaluation Unit Checklist 5: Preparing the evaluation report”, and Evaluation Unit Guidance Note 3, 2014 (Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practice) as the basis for the MTE report.

During the four country visits, initial findings were fed back to national programme staff. A draft main report was submitted to ILO EVAL in December 2019 and based on the Evaluation Unit’s feedback a final report was produced followed by an Evaluation Summary report. The team will present its key findings to SCORE (ILO and donors) in February and March 2020. (The timeframe for the MTE can be found in Appendix 3.)

#### 3.2.6 Limitations and Potential Bias

To avoid confirmation bias (i.e. the tendency to readily accept conclusions that agree with one’s beliefs and discard conclusions that disagree with them) and to avoid funding bias (i.e. the inflation of success narratives, favouring the financial supporters of a study), the team took the following approach: Careful triangulation of information provided by a diversity of stakeholders and sources of information. Care was taken to avoid the inflation of success narratives by ensuring that stakeholders from different organisations and levels were interviewed and ample scope was given for interviewees to give overall comments on the programme and context. The team also sought to understand the positional interests of different stakeholders to take this into account in the analysis of their perspectives. A limitation of the study is the limited time that the evaluation team had in the field, which necessarily reduces the depth of analysis possible; however, in each of the country cases a large number of stakeholders were reached providing a strong overview of programme performance. The team did not have resources to conduct representative surveys; the team indicated the types of interviewees sought, and the itinerary was developed in collaboration with the ILO country teams.

#### 3.2.7 Norms, standards and ethical safeguards

The team members have long-term experience in working with developing country organisations, policy makers, civil society and service providers, and with complex programme evaluations and impact evaluation. NRI is committed to operating all aspects of their work in an ethical manner, including respecting the rights of employees, promoting non-discriminatory practices and acting in accordance with the laws of the countries we work in. The evaluation team adhered to the OECD DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation and the Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance. Further, NRI and the University of Greenwich have policies on ethics in research. NRI has a ‘Code of Practice on Research with People’. These include: identifying the need for and securing necessary ethics approval; ensuring relevance and high quality and development value; avoiding harm to participants in studies; ensuring participation is voluntary and free from external pressure; ensuring confidentiality of information, privacy and anonymity of participants; operating in accordance with international human rights conventions and covenants; respecting cultural sensitivities; committing to publication and communication of all evaluations and research studies; independent of those implementing; ensuring particular emphasis on ensuring participation from women and socially excluded groups. All of these were followed in conducting this study.

Internal quality assurance: To ensure that all the findings are quality assured, the evaluation team drew upon the internal quality assurance processes within the NRI. In accordance with the NRI research ethics policies, all information related to beneficiaries has been kept confidential, in line with good data management practices.

## 4. EVALUATION FINDINGS

### 4.1 Relevance and Strategic Fit of the Intervention, Including Validity of Intervention Design

#### 4.1.1 Global Programme

SME workers make up a large proportion of the global workforce, and they stand to benefit from improved working conditions and decent work.<sup>4</sup> SME owners need to enhance productivity and improve management practices if they are to stay competitive and grow. These two groups are the ultimate beneficiaries of SCORE, and the programme continues to be broadly aligned with their needs. They do not typically have access to business development services (BDS), either because the market is underserved, or they are unable or unwilling to pay. SCORE Global stresses the importance attached to SMEs in international supply chains, but SMEs serving domestic markets are also recognised as having leverage over their suppliers. The programme is broadly aligned with the needs of its SME target group, in particular, decent work and productivity challenges in each country.

The programme has a broad array of intermediate beneficiaries (page 29). Alignment differs significantly between countries. For instance, lead buyers have supported SCORE in China but for reasons explained in the country reports, they have not been as active in Ghana. In Colombia the challenge has been to find companies that are willing to finance the SCORE Programme. Trade union involvement similarly varies by country. For instance, all the trade union confederations are involved in Indonesia, but in Colombia unions have until recently been hesitant about getting involved in the programme.

SCORE is part of the ILO Enterprise Department, and contributes to the “promotion of sustainable enterprises for innovation, growth, more and better jobs.” It complements Decent Work Country Programmes in China and Viet Nam. After being criticised in Phase I for being overly oriented towards enterprise owners, it has shifted to become more of a tripartite programme, and this is recognised in the ILO Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2018-2019. The programme aligns with the UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) where relevant, and with Goals 5, 8, 9 and 12 of the Sustainable Development Goals through its contribution to mainstreaming gender, promoting decent work, achieving cleaner and more sustainable production patterns, and enabling SMEs to participate in global supply chains.

SCORE is funded as a global programme by SECO and Norad. An evaluation of SECO in 2018 said SCORE was one of the programmes considered “aligned to government policies, national development strategies and sector priorities.”<sup>5</sup> Its status as a global programme means that it does not necessarily reflect the country programme priorities of its donors (e.g. Norad), but this is understandable.

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<sup>4</sup> ILO’s definition of Decent Work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

<sup>5</sup> WEHU SME International Competitiveness and Market Access evaluation

SECO is keen that synergies between SCORE and other programmes it helps fund (e.g. Better Work, the Swiss Import Promotion Programme [SIPPO]) are optimised. Phase III has seen cooperation in countries where Better Work is active (e.g. Indonesia). The general intention has been to find ways that SCORE can be integrated into Better Work training for suppliers in global supply chains. Although there is theoretical alignment between the interests of the two programmes, it has proved difficult to achieve because Better Work and SCORE do not work with similar enterprises. For example, the Tier 1 companies that Better Work concentrates in the apparel industry are typically very large, employing thousands of workers in many cases. Although the situation can vary between industries, SMEs that are the focus for SCORE are less likely to be classified as Tier 1 suppliers. Furthermore, the MTE team heard from different sources that SMEs operating at Tier 1 were already familiar with more sophisticated management methods than the level of training offered by SCORE.<sup>6</sup> The cost of SCORE was also mentioned as a barrier; however, the 'One ILO' approach adopted in Ethiopia, which enables more integrated programme delivery, appears to be creating more synergistic ways of working.

As well as Better Work, SCORE has worked with the Ethical Trading Initiative (China) and Initiatives for Compliance and Sustainability (Viet Nam). The ETI partnership has shown that SCORE complements the interests of lead buyers in certain contexts such as where they are subject to scrutiny and pressure so that they insist on social/ethical compliance in their supply chains. In the Phase II MTE, it was recommended that the growth of compliance/certification relating to areas such as international labour standards and quality assurance should be used as an argument in promoting SCORE Training to SMEs. However, the lack of interest in funding or promoting SCORE amongst buyers in countries such as Ghana and Colombia, means that this assumption is not always valid, and does not guarantee SCORE's strategic fit.

#### 4.1.2 Country Programmes<sup>7</sup>

In general, SCORE national programmes are aligned with ultimate beneficiary needs, although there is some evidence that workers feel less benefit than managers/owners.<sup>8</sup> The content and methods of SCORE Training are suited to the needs of the SMEs in SCORE's target group and are a useful starting point for enterprises that are new to business development services. The content and its delivery are generally recognised as being of high quality. Furthermore, looking to the future, in countries such as Indonesia, China and Viet Nam there is still a large market of underserved SMEs. The market is larger still if SMEs with less than 50 workers (including micro enterprises) are included, and some implementation partners have taken the initiative to adapt SCORE Training for such firms (e.g. BEDO in Indonesia).

However, alignment with needs does not necessarily translate into demand. Workers only benefit from SCORE if employers are willing to adopt the training. In Colombia and Ghana, for instance, many SMEs do not see investment in productivity as a priority, especially when – as they see it – they are struggling for survival. As well as survival as a company, poor infrastructure, government regulations and staff turnover are viewed as more important, and the link between such issues and the concerns of SCORE Training are not always recognised. On further examination, the barrier to SCORE uptake seems to be unwillingness to pay for business development services, especially when

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<sup>6</sup> Supply chains are often divided into tiers: Tier 1 suppliers are those providing product directly to lead buyers. Tier 2 suppliers are those supplying Tier 1 firms. Tier 3 suppliers supply Tier 2 firms.

<sup>7</sup> More complete information on individual countries is contained in the Country Reports (Appendices 8-13).

<sup>8</sup> This was a finding of the Peru Impact Evaluation which noted an increase in workers' satisfaction with working conditions after SCORE Training, but to a lesser degree than amongst managers.

the SMEs are used to receiving government-subsidised training. In these cases, the problem is less one of strategic fit than one of programme design, and this is discussed further below.

There are examples of each kind of intermediate beneficiary mentioned in the Phase III Project Document engaging in SCORE (Table 3), even though their roles vary significantly between countries. There are examples of business associations (e.g. VCCI in Viet Nam), government departments (e.g. the State Agency for Worker Safety [now part of the Ministry of Emergence Management] in China and the Management Development and Productivity Institute [MDPI] in Ghana), and private providers (e.g. SMI in Indonesia) becoming key implementation partners. The fit with trade unions also varies. For instance, in Indonesia national unions are amongst the training providers, but in Colombia and Ghana unions have taken longer to accept SCORE Training, and feel they were not properly consulted in earlier phases (e.g. GTUC in Ghana).

*Table 3: Examples of different types of intermediate beneficiaries involved in country programmes*

Employers and industry associations	e.g. VCCI in Viet Nam; ANDI in Colombia; CEPB in Bolivia
Training providers	e.g. Riwani Globe in Indonesia; SGS in China
Government departments and agencies	e.g. MDPI in Ghana; Ministry of Manpower in Indonesia
Lead buyers	e.g. ETI members in China; ICS in Viet Nam
National and sectoral trade unions	e.g. GTUC in Ghana; KSBSI, KSPSI-AITUC, KSPI in Indonesia
Labour inspectorates	e.g. SAWS in China

A good indicator that SCORE is aligned with bilateral development agencies' priorities at country level is their willingness to fund SCORE Training or include SCORE in programme design. In Ghana, for example, DANIDA and the Government of Ghana have made it a requirement that all grantees of their Skills Development Fund include SCORE Training in funding proposals. In China, 20 suppliers to Matrix were trained with matched German government funding as part of the SCORE-ETI initiative. Although outside the scope of this MTE, additional funding from SIDA and the EU for country-level activities shows that SCORE is aligned with other donors' priorities for SMEs.

#### 4.1.3 Programme Design

It was anticipated that the influence of SCORE country staff and IPs would increase during Phase III. As part of handing over training to implementation partners, SCORE staff and IPs in the target countries have had more say in what needs to be achieved to ensure SCORE achieves a lasting legacy beyond Phase III. This increased local ownership (recommended by the Phase II MTE) is very welcome. For the benefit of future programmes, it would be interesting to know if and under what conditions this could have happened sooner. For example, at what stage did 'on-the-ground capacity' in individual countries reach a level where it was possible to move away from a standardised process? What are the merits or otherwise of a more adaptive approach to programme design at country level? What facets of adaptive programme design are possible when building a global programme (e.g. local stakeholder engagement, real-time learning, adaptive learning)?

Some of the difficulties arising in Phase III – particularly at country level – are a result of earlier design decisions. These are detailed in the country reports (see Appendices), but we highlight the most important ones here. SCORE is a global programme underpinned by a specific theory of enterprise development and intended to replicate an approach which integrates productivity, working conditions and decent work in multiple countries. It makes certain universal assumptions about the situation with SMEs, some of which have proved true in some contexts, but false in others. For example, international lead buyers do not exist in many countries while domestic ones are – with exceptions such as Colombia – not prepared to fund supplier training. As a result, it is not

universally true that lead buyers can be promoters and sponsors of SCORE, but nonetheless country programmes have been required to act as if it is<sup>9</sup>.

The programme explicitly aims to benefit managers/owners and workers, although it is worth noting that worker feedback is only gathered systematically in impact studies, rather than in the monitoring system. Certain factors affecting demand seem not to have influenced design until later. This is most apparent in the development of the five module training programme where an emphasis on training content and method resulted in a suite of modules that, while recognised as being of high quality, were considered by many as expensive and too time-consuming for some SMEs. The programme responded by introducing the SCORE Short Course during Phase II (Module 1 plus an introduction to the elements of the other four modules), and this now accounts for nearly half of the training in the countries included in this MTE (excluding China).<sup>10</sup>

It is laudable that SCORE has modified its training in response to market demand, and expert trainers have been able to adapt materials to local SME needs. However, in hindsight SCORE's impact might have been greater if factors such as the competitive landscape, SMEs' absorptive capacity, and costs and benefits of training had been properly factored into choice of countries for implementation, process of identifying solutions to productivity-working conditions challenges and/or 'product' design. Because this was not the case, national programmes in Phase III can face a situation where they are trying to embed a product that is uncompetitive (e.g. in Colombia, SCORE is considered too costly or SMEs expect subsidised, government-sponsored training); affected by market distortions (e.g. in Ghana, the Ministry of Trade and Industry uses JICA funding to provide free Kaizen training); or not in line with government or other potential funder priorities (e.g. in Indonesia, government is prioritising small and micro-enterprises which can be smaller than SCORE's target group).

As the Indonesia example shows, country programmes can adapt to these situations. In Indonesia, implementation partners have developed a SCORE-influenced programme for small and micro enterprises. However, in terms of design, there can be a tension between the expectations of global programme management and the ideas and priorities in implementing countries. In many cases practical solutions have been found (e.g. the delegation of trainer quality assurance to country programmes where practicable without jeopardising SCORE or ILO's reputation; promotion of 'SCORE-inspired' training), and there is recognition amongst SCORE management and stakeholders that Phase III represents a significant step forwards in terms of devolved management authority. Nonetheless, there are some areas where programme design is stifling impact. For example, in some countries it is normal for enterprises on training programmes to be certified/accredited. This is not something that SCORE or ILO in general supports or provides because of the complexities of running a credible system. This can be a disincentive for some managers and owners. However, it is also worth noting that for other managers and owners, the costs associated with certification would be off-putting and it is the very flexible, non-compliance-oriented approach which is attractive to them.

Assessing impact itself is problematic (see Section 5.2.4.b on monitoring and evaluation), and this is an aspect of design. The false assumption about lead buyers in some contexts (see above) means that all countries must commit resources to Intermediate Objective 2 (lead buyer engagement) even when this type of intermediate beneficiary is weak or absent, although the programme has had an

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<sup>9</sup> Recognizing this, ILO SCORE team proposed in May 2019 to the donors a revision to this outcome statement, changing it to 'Lead buyers support suppliers through SCORE Training or the promotion of its concepts', with changes in associated indicators.

<sup>10</sup> 114 enterprises undertook Short Course; 125 enterprises undertook Module 1, 25 of which took Module 2. 24 enterprises undertook one of Modules 3-5.

adaptive approach. This led to programme management recently requesting a change in the Outcome 2 statement and some of the associated indicators.

SCORE has been criticised in the past for benefiting employers more than workers. Since Phase II, the programme design has been modified to emphasise greater worker benefit, particularly amongst women (e.g. the development of training materials suited to women workers and workers in specific sectors; additional monitoring of gender through the M&E system). This is still the case in Phase III, and the programme design is informed by a gender strategy (see below). However, if SCORE was starting today, it could take steps to increase worker benefit from the outset. For instance, sectors and enterprises could be chosen based on working conditions, prospects for advancing the decent work agenda, and the proportion of women employed. Equally, avenues for supporting the training of workers in labour law and occupational safety and health (OSH) issues that did not rely on enterprise funding, could also be explored (e.g. worker training at government vocational college courses).

#### 4.1.4 Gender Equality and Non-discrimination in Programme Design

SCORE has developed a gender equality strategy that is being implemented in Phase III, building on the gender elements of earlier phases. National workplans contain budget lines for specific gender activities, and gender has been included in activities such as Training of Trainers (including online training for existing trainers) and awareness-raising events (e.g. workshops and conferences). There are gender targets in performance plans (e.g. number of gender-sensitive activities in training modules), and the number of women participating in all activities is recorded routinely in performance plans and on the M&E database.

SCORE has attempted to move away from just trying to increase the number of women participating towards a situation where benefits are designed around women's concerns (page 19). Thus, for example, women are not only members of Enterprise Improvement Teams, their priorities (e.g. separate changing areas) are included in workplace improvements. This shift is appropriate, but one of the lessons from SCORE is the importance of mainstreaming gender as soon as possible in order to have greater impact. This is not always straightforward as the example of the furniture sector in Viet Nam shows. In that case, a high proportion of women in the workforce did not immediately translate into a proportionate number of women trainees, because of factors such as gender bias amongst managers and preferencing male dominated parts of production. By commissioning a study of labour practices in the furniture sector, SCORE Viet Nam has gained valuable insights into the composition of the workforce but also the changes that are taking place. Where SCORE Training is focused on specific sectors, this would help adaptive programme design to help prevent discrimination, not only regarding gender but other areas such as disability.

The gender equality strategy emphasises the importance of choosing sectors using gender criteria, but in Phase III it is effectively up to implementation partners to decide what factors to focus on and SCORE management has little leverage to affect their actions. It is therefore important that gender and other aspects of discrimination are a focus of capacitation work with implementation partners for the rest of this Phase. SCORE Indonesia offers examples of workshops and other activities where this is happening. The MIG SCORE training module is an important development, providing SCORE trained with an advanced gender lens. Designed by the ILO Colombia team with a gender specialist, there are challenges in its uptake in Colombia, but it is being rolled out elsewhere and may be attractive in other countries where the market conditions are more conducive for business development services for SMEs. If there were to be an extension of SCORE beyond Phase III, MIG

SCORE would be a strong entry point for effective enterprise-level training with a strong gender - orientation.

Discrimination based on disability is strictly prohibited by law in SCORE countries such as Viet Nam, however SCORE could be more explicit about its efforts to benefit people living with disabilities. The programme's impact on such people is not mentioned in the four impact studies that have been conducted. The Phase II MTE recommended that SCORE market itself to people living with a disability, and the issue seems to have been included in some Phase III awareness-raising and capacity building activities. However, the M&E system does not track performance in the area of disability or other non-gender areas of discrimination such as disability, sexuality and ethnicity. A legitimate question for any future evaluation and the design of future projects is whether emphasis on gender distracts from/prevents investment in other aspects of discrimination, and more broadly how can enterprise-level interventions be designed to optimise their discrimination impacts.

#### 4.1.5 Exit and Sustainability Strategies

The evaluation team was asked to advise on feasible sustainability and exit strategies. Each country programme has developed an exit and sustainability strategy, and given that these are already being implemented, the team limits its comments to them. (They are in more detail in the country reports [see Appendices 8-13]). Each strategy contains actions relating to the seven Outputs in the Phase III logframe. It is assumed that if these outputs are delivered, programme sustainability will be achieved.

There are reasons to question this assumption, the main ones being as follows:

- A basic assumption is that SMEs demand business development services, there are non-ILO mechanisms to pay for them, and there is a clear gap in the market that is not affected by market distortions. This only holds true in some countries but exit strategies do not take this into account.
- The number of certified and expert trainers seems to be based on what is achievable rather than what is necessary. There is no obvious information about how targets have been set, and the strategies do not set out alternative scenarios for where there is a shortfall or oversupply of trainers.
- The number of implementation partners is not obviously linked to what is necessary to sustain the programme. In Indonesia, for example, there are ten partners, while in China there are seven, yet the former has trained 495 enterprises since Phase I while the latter has trained 668. The optimum number will vary from country to country, and will be influenced by local context, and partner characteristics and capability (e.g. what sectors does the partner work with; what types of SME does it target). This kind of contextualisation (even if it were quite rough) would help assess if the appropriate amount of effort is being invested in partners over the remainder of Phase III.
- Lead buyers have been identified as one potentially important way to sustainability. Many of the national level Outputs are likely to be achieved. However, in several cases these 'outputs' would be better considered 'inputs', i.e. a necessary contribution to a larger goal. For example, requests from lead buyers, the amount of promotional material, and the number of case studies may be important to influence lead buyer behaviour, but achieving them is a relatively small factor in having lead buyers support their suppliers to take SCORE Training (Immediate Objective 2).
- SCORE assumes, but does not systematically monitor, the results chain implied in Immediate Objective 2. For instance, it assumes that a lead buyer agrees to promote SCORE, sponsors



its suppliers, and training happens; this in turn leads to productivity and decent work gains that then bring benefit to the company and its workforce. An impact-oriented monitoring system is needed to provide evidence and test the assumptions involved.

The short-term risk in focusing on deliverables that may not relate to Phase 3 Outcomes/Immediate Objectives is that effort will be spent on unnecessary activities while more significant ones are under-resourced or ignored. There are also longer-term, sustainability risks such as the programme not being able to make a compelling case about to what degree and in what circumstances it delivers benefits to workers and employers.

#### 4.2 Intervention Progress and Effectiveness, Including Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

SCORE Phase 3 has two Outcomes/Immediate Objectives each of which has specific Outputs. (See Table 4.) Indicators are attached to each Output. (The full list of Outcomes, Outputs and Indicators can be found in Appendix 6.)

Table 4: Outcomes and Outputs, SCORE Phase III

<b>Outcome 1: Implementation partners have embedded SCORE Training in national programmes and budgets</b>	<b>Outcome 2: Lead buyers support suppliers through SCORE Training.</b>
<i>Output 1:</i> Implementation partners (IPs) and service providers have developed business plans to market, sell and organize SCORE Training and to apply subsidies	<i>Output 5:</i> Comprehensive promotional materials and guidance notes (including on how to deal with due diligence concerns) when targeting lead buyers have been made available.
<i>Output 2:</i> Aspects of SCORE Training have been embedded in training programmes	<i>Output 6:</i> Implementation partners have been capacitated to market SCORE Training to lead buyers and MNE sponsors using different engagement models.
<i>Output 3:</i> National training of trainers and quality assurance systems are in place.	<i>Output 7:</i> Awareness of lead buyers has been raised on advanced supplier development practices that go beyond social compliance audits.
<i>Output 4:</i> Policymakers and social partners have increased knowledge on productivity, working conditions and SME policies.	

Progress under each Output can be tracked in the Quarterly Progress Reports, and the Performance Plan submitted bi-annually. Some of this information can also be found on the M&E database which can be updated by national programme staff, Implementation Partners or trainers directly. More qualitative assessments of progress, including some quantitative outcome data, are given in the quarterly progress reports and the Exit and Sustainability Strategies documents. The Geneva office and country offices are therefore able to track progress on outputs regularly, but cannot fully track progress on outcomes and impacts. Moreover, the type of indicators employed means that there are limits to the evidence being generated that could support outcome and impact evaluation.

##### 4.2.1 Progress Against Immediate Objective 1

It is very important if the programme is to achieve its main objective for Phase III that it programme has an accurate picture of progress and knows where extra effort is required in order to become sustainable. Performance is detailed on a country by country basis in the country reports (see

Appendices). Aggregate performance against delivery targets as of end June 2019 is presented in Appendix 7.<sup>11</sup> This analysis is summarised in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of aggregate performance against delivery targets as of June 2019

Output 1: Implementation partners and service providers have developed business plans to market, sell and organize SCORE Training and to apply for funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good progress is being made with half of activities. Five countries (83%) are on track</li> <li>• Four countries have met at least 5 of their 7 targets, including cost-recovery and training by implementation partners</li> <li>• Implementation partners in some countries are unable to operate with high independence from ILO (33% [2 countries])</li> <li>• Targets to train unionised enterprises are only being met in 50% of cases</li> </ul>
Output 2: Aspects of SCORE Training have been embedded in training programmes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good progress is being made with two-thirds of activities (83% [5] countries are on track)</li> <li>• Four countries have met their targets for all activities</li> <li>• In two countries the amount of SCORE-influenced training is less than expected, but in at least two countries it is higher</li> <li>• One country (Ghana) has not met its targets</li> </ul>
Output 3: National training of trainers and quality assurance systems are in place.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality assurance systems are reported in all countries</li> <li>• Five countries have met their targets for 75% of activities</li> <li>• Targets for certified trainers have not been met in half of countries</li> <li>• The number of expert trainers is less than planned in two countries</li> </ul>
Output 4: Policymakers and social partners have increased knowledge on productivity, working conditions and SME policies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Tripartite Advisory Committees are meeting as scheduled in five countries</li> <li>• Policy-makers and social partners are being trained in line with targets in all countries</li> </ul>

#### 4.2.1.a Country progress

Progress inevitably varies significantly between countries and the main findings are summarised here.

#### Colombia

Looking at the goals set for Phase III of SCORE, and comparing them to delivery figures, the evaluation finds that SCORE Colombia has achieved, and in some cases greatly surpassed, the targets for implementation partners, expert trainers, national training schemes, promotional material, and meetings with interested parties. However, another indicator closely related to SCORE's sustainability has not been met and according to the national team may not be achieved in the remaining time for Phase III (i.e. a target of '217 enterprises trained'; current achievement -192).

Although there are six implementation partners with the capacity to design proposals and deliver training independent of ILO support, they are constrained by insufficient demand for training and the related issue of competing products. Implementation partners find it difficult to sign up SMEs for training which has a knock-on effect for trainers. The programme is therefore in a situation where it may achieve most of its outputs, but it may fall short of the Outcome 1 goal of embedding SCORE in national programmes. However, the programme has been successful in embedding the programme

<sup>11</sup> This was the latest period for which complete performance plan and exit strategy data before the deadline for submitting the draft evaluation report.

to a varying extent in five implementing partners<sup>12</sup>. All these organizations have the capacity to deliver SCORE Training and design proposals with a 100% independence from ILO. However, the main constraint is demand and competition for SCORE Training services.

The reasons for positive achievements in terms of outputs with a lack of progress at outcome level are because certain assumptions in the Theory of Change do not hold true in the Colombian business development services context (e.g. SME demand; interest in productivity; underserved market; ability to pay for training). This misfit between the assumptions and the conditions of Colombia's business ecosystem have meant that although a lot of effort and resources have been put into the marketing, training and rolling out of the programme, it has not been able to gain as much traction as expected.

In order to make SCORE Training more competitive, the Colombia programme has explored alternative means for SCORE's adoption and sustainability. These include encouraging SCORE-inspired training by other training or business service schemes (e.g. commercial service providers, universities, existing government programmes); including SCORE in existing subsidised training (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, Factories of Productivity programme); and developing targeted versions of the SCORE methodology (e.g. MIG SCORE). A matched-funding scheme accessible to enterprises for training has also been established. These initiatives show how SCORE Colombia has been highly adaptable and sought to build on key opportunities as they arise in Phase III. However, the impact will be limited because the programme ends in 2021, and SCORE has still to be mainstreamed in these organisations' strategies, agendas and budgets.

### **Viet Nam**

SCORE Viet Nam is considered the best donor-funded collaboration by one of its implementation partners, the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). It is making good progress with most of its outputs as per the performance plan. Notable are the number of gender sensitive practices incorporated into modules, the satisfaction rates for training, and the higher than expected cost-recovery. Programme management is confident that it will meet most targets not yet on track. Its sustainability strategy is focused on increasing training in the furniture sector where it is well-established (e.g. expanding into the northern provinces) and extending into new sectors. This in turn involves working with new implementation partners (e.g. government SME development agencies). These new partners have access to government training funds and are starting to include SCORE-influenced training in their budgets and plans.

Assumptions about the demand for SCORE Training amongst the SME target group, and the willingness of those SMEs to pay for productivity improvements, have largely proved true. The cost-recovery rate for SCORE Training is 75%. In the southern provinces where SCORE is well-established, implementation partners have the capability to market and conduct training independent of SCORE management. There is also an established cadre of certified trainers and expert trainers. Capacitating new partners, however, will require significant effort, especially as one agency is new and inexperienced in working with SMEs.

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<sup>12</sup> The program has been successfully embedded in 5 implementing partners: Alianzas por el Desarrollo; EQUILATERA (EQ); CEG SAS; Chamber of Commerce of Bucaramanga; CTA; Camacoos. In addition, SCORE Training materials were used for the development of the Program *Factories of Productivity*.

The number of active certified trainers is low compared to other countries (four people) and falls short of the target of 12 trainers. This reflects enterprises' strong preference for experienced trainers which denies opportunities to newer people. Future trainers such as those on government facilitated SCORE-influenced training will not require certification. The experienced trainers are supporting SCORE-trained enterprises with new initiatives that further build their competencies. These are self-funding. ILO is still contributing 25% of the costs of training, arguing that this is necessary to ensure ILO's core values continue to be taught. The intention is that this will be phased out in the remainder of Phase III, although it should be noted that national programme staff will not be available to oversee this beyond October 2020.

### **Bolivia (Desk Study)**

SCORE Bolivia is a newer programme than the other countries in the MTE, beginning as a pilot project funded supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs starting in 2013, and becoming part of the SCORE global programme in 2017. It has recently been extended to October 2021 to increase the time for delivering on outputs and increase the intervention's scope (e.g. a component to increase internationalisation and steps to formalisation). It is on track with regards to most of its targets: trainers and local institutions are being capacitated as intended, and the number of enterprises trained is higher than planned (164). The employers' federation, Confederación de Empresarios Privados de Bolivia (CEPB), is involved in programme delivery, the development of new training and marketing materials, and working towards solutions on matters such as cost-recovery and gender-oriented training. A new partner, the Ministry of Productive Development, is adopting SCORE Short Course. Despite the country's hostile labour environment, SCORE has had a degree of success in reaching union representatives and unionised enterprises.

The number of implementation partners delivering training and including SCORE in their business plans is higher than targeted (eight organisations) and assisting these to achieve sustainability is a major focus of Phase III. The number of certified trainers is higher than anticipated (36 people) with a greater percentage of women than in SCORE overall (42%:37%). The degree to which training is still funded by ILO varies but is lower than targeted. (42% of training costs were met by non-ILO sources in July 2018-December 2018, but 0% were met during January – June 2019). The level of independent delivery (i.e. training delivered by implementation partners without non-financial ILO assistance) also varies, although in July 2018-December 2018 it was 24% ahead of target. (During January – June 2019 independent delivery was 0%.) These differences seem to be related to which implementation partner is involved, with CEPB having run training fully independent of SCORE Bolivia.,

In addition to SCORE-trained enterprises, 61 firms have received training influenced by SCORE but without ILO support. This suggests that, despite the high reliance on SCORE Bolivia for formal SCORE Training, some companies and organisations are actively accessing alternative funding to receive or deliver elements of SCORE. This implies that SCORE will be sustainable in some form, and it is evident that some of the requirements for long-term programme delivery are in place (e.g. implementation partners; number of certified trainers). There are three areas that need attention: a) the number of expert trainers (only one at present); b) the abovementioned cost recovery rates; and c) the ability of implementation partners to manage SCORE Training without ILO technical and financial support.

## **Ghana**

The programme demonstrates strong progress relating to certain indicators in the performance plan. There are three implementation partners from the government, NGO and business sectors. They have a pool of 26 certified trainers including six expert trainers. The partners have independently delivered SCORE modules to enterprises, and, in collaboration with ILO, have developed the SCORE 'short course' as a way of reducing costs and thus ensuring sustainability. One of the partners (a government agency) has been designated to coordinate SCORE after Phase III and is working with SCORE Ghana to achieve a smooth handover of responsibilities. It has submitted a budget to the relevant ministry to fund SCORE Training during the next financial year.

Key assumptions in the Theory of Change were inaccurate, notably that SMEs would pay for training, and that SCORE would be affordable. SCORE Ghana has tried to adapt to this situation by marketing specific modules to enterprises based on their need and offering the SCORE Short Course. The value added of SCORE Training has not been readily recognised in either the public or private sectors. Case studies of SCORE successes, media publicity, and organising national SCORE events have attempted to overcome this barrier. Nonetheless, the above obstacles will affect sustainability after Phase III.

Unlike some countries, SCORE in Ghana has not influenced other training, and in general the programme has not delivered training to the number of enterprises envisaged (194 enterprises trained: 230 target). This is essentially a reflection of market distortions and demand rather than implementation partner constraints. Government subsidies that SCORE Ghana has been unsuccessful in obtaining, mean that SMEs are unused to paying for training, Kaizen training is available free of charge, and a significant segment of the SME market is made up of SMEs that SCORE has tended not to target (20 employees or less) because they do not have the absorptive capacity. These conditions were recognised in the logframe's assumptions, but the risks they present have been difficult to mitigate. Attempts have been made to obtain government funding, but for the most part either SCORE Training has not been accepted in budget lines, or funding has not been released (e.g. for SCORE HoCo). However, SCORE Ghana successfully obtained \$40,000 of funding from DANIDA and the government plus additional funding from Solidaridad West Africa which together allowed 16 SMEs to take all five SCORE Training modules.

## **China (Desk Study)**

In Phase III, SCORE China has emphasised the expansion of geographical coverage through physical and virtual training (e.g. expansion from Huzhou City to Zhejiang Province), establishment of a SCORE Academy by implementation partners, renewed emphasis on SCORE modules in addition to M1 and M5, and increased funding to public sector implementation partners. The SCORE Academy was established in July 2019. This was later than planned as a result of the restructuring of the programme's main government implementation partner, SAWS, which is now part of the Ministry of Emergence Management. The Academy is a unique model of how SCORE can be sustained. It is a collaboration between SAWS and the Confederation of Chinese Enterprises. It will play a key role in maintaining the quality and quantity of SCORE Training as well as coordination and marketing.

The SAWS restructuring had a knock-on effect for programme activities because of the high independence of partners with limited interference from SCORE China. However, progress against the performance plan has been consistently good: the only shortfall is the number of active certified trainers (54 against a target of 80). This is attributable to SAWS' uncertain situation in 2018, and,

specifically, the probably temporary inability to meet the demand for training of trainers from private-sector consultancy firms.

Despite the above uncertainties, all activities at the provincial level (in Zhejiang and Beijing) were implemented as planned. Training is no longer funded by ILO, but the amount of training has increased rapidly (442 enterprises compared to 207 at the end of Phase II), and this has been achieved without undermining the satisfaction rate which is 96%. In contrast with some countries that have struggled to sell modules other than M1, 89% of companies take more than one module. The introduction of a shortened version of SCORE does not seem to have undermined demand for longer modules.

SCORE's success in China demonstrates that in this country context, assumptions behind the Theory of Change were correct. There is a market for SCORE-type training, and both public sector trainers (notably labour inspectors) and private sector consultants (including international firms) are willing to deliver the training. This seems to have happened despite competition from other providers/BDS. The reasons for the success in China are important to understand given the situation in countries such as Ghana and Colombia where local competition and issues with non-ILO funding are acting as a constraint on SCORE Training uptake. The reasons might include SCORE's early success in gaining government and business confederation support, a SME market large enough to support multiple training providers and methods, and recognition amongst SME owners of the benefits of better management practices. A desk review can only speculate on possible reasons, and it would be useful for future programmes or any extension to SCORE to understand more about what it is that make SCORE Training in China competitive so that lessons can be applied in other SCORE countries where appropriate.

Two additional areas that merit attention are: a) increasing the number of trainers in line with targets if this was appropriate as this would also provide an opportunity to increase the number of female trainers which is currently low compared to the SCORE average<sup>13</sup>; and b) providing a breakdown of data on sources of non-ILO funding of training (e.g. SME contribution; government contribution) as a way of demonstrating what can be achieved (marketing purpose) and incorporating evidence-based funding targets in future programmes (design purpose)

## **Indonesia**

SCORE Indonesia is achieving impressive results in terms of performance indicators. Of special note are: a) the large number of implementation partners delivering SCORE independent of ILO (12 organisations), and the high level of cost recovery (89%); b) the inclusion of SCORE in business plans, and the high number of enterprises indirectly benefiting from SCORE Training (1,700); c) the efforts to develop gender-responsive programming (e.g. female entrepreneur training; gender awareness activities); and d) the number of ILO tripartite representatives trained – notably trade unions – which already exceeds Phase III's target.

Assumptions that there was not only a market for SCORE but also financial resources available to support SCORE uptake by SMEs have proved true in this country context. SMEs in the SCORE target group are a priority for various government departments as well as other funders such as universities and domestic foundations. Moreover, the implementation partners can access these funds. Therefore, training is carried out without ILO support except where the programme is being promoted to new sectors and regions. Looking ahead, an assumption important for sustainability is

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<sup>13</sup> 9% of trainers trained in China are women, and the proportion of certified trainers is 28% compared to a SCORE average of 37%.

that the community of SCORE practitioners will continue to develop, and it is important that continuity and development of the communication groups already established remains high on the capacitation agenda for the rest of Phase III. Specific actions and indicators of progress could usefully be included in Quarterly Progress Reports.

SCORE Indonesia is an example of what can happen when implementation partners feel a strong sense of ownership. As well as delivering training, they are able to find funding, market products, build networks so that enterprises can learn from each other, carry out training of trainers, and help expand the programme into new sectors and regions if necessary. Not all these important activities are captured by ILO. For instance, the number of certified trainers is less than planned at present, but this is partly because trainers recruited through implementation partners and delivering 'SCORE-influenced' training, especially for small and micro enterprises, do not need ILO certification. Indeed, it is highly likely that much more SCORE-influenced training is being delivered than is being reported: this speaks well for sustainability, but it means there are gaps in the current monitoring system. However, SCORE Indonesia is exceeding its targets. Most important in terms of learning for future programmes and any extension of SCORE is to understand in more detail how the Indonesia programme has evolved to achieve the level of local ownership, the variety of funding, and the number of enterprise staff trained (over 5,000 directly and indirectly<sup>14</sup>) that it has.

#### *4.2.1.b Implementation Priorities for Phase III*

The most recent assessment of progress by SCORE headquarters (July 2019)<sup>15</sup> highlighted two areas of concern relating to Immediate Objective/Outcome 1: a) cost recovery because training is still often subsidised by the ILO; and b) quality assurance systems to manage SCORE Training activities post the programme. The country studies confirm this to an extent, but we would also point out that only one country in the MTE is not on track to achieve 100% cost recovery by the end of Phase III, and quality assurance systems are reported to be present in all six countries. It is unclear why there are discrepancies between SCORE headquarters' assessment and data in performance plans. It could be that quarterly targets are too low, masking the possibility that there will be delivery deficits that cannot be met by 2021. It could also be that the MTE countries are not representative of SCORE as a whole: implementation partners in China, Viet Nam and Indonesia (half of the MTE countries), for example, no longer need SCORE staff to help deliver training.

It is important at this stage in the programme that what is prioritised is what is most important for sustainability. In several countries there is reason to conclude that meeting Output level targets will not ensure sustainability. These gaps could likely have been identified earlier if the Theory of Change had been integrated into programme design, monitoring and evaluation, and learning. In the remainder of Phase III, the Theory of Change could be used to help identify where to invest resources (i.e. because the results are critical for sustainability), and what to deprioritise (i.e. because the activities or Outputs are not essential). This should lead to a reworking of exit strategies and performance plans.

N.B. Country-specific priorities are discussed in country reports.

#### 4.2.2 Progress against Immediate Objective 2

The most recent assessment of progress by SCORE headquarters (see above) stated that lead buyer engagement has not yielded adequate results in terms of lead buyers promoting or sponsoring

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<sup>14</sup> Performance plan figures as of June 2019.

<sup>15</sup> SCORE Global Strategy for Exit.docx, July 2019 version.

SCORE Training to their SME suppliers. We have explained some of the reasons for this in our discussion of programme design (page 29).

The two most important indicators that Immediate Objective 2 is being realised are:

- The number of lead buyers *promoting* SCORE Training in their supply chains.
- The number of lead buyers *sponsoring* SCORE Training in their supply chains.

In both cases, performance is much lower than anticipated with only one country meeting targets for lead buyers promoting SCORE, and one meeting targets for lead buyer sponsorship of SCORE. Performance is detailed on a country by country basis in the country reports (see Appendices). Aggregate performance against delivery targets as of July 2019 is presented in Appendix 7. It is summarised in Table 6.

Table 6: Aggregate performance against delivery targets Outcome 2

Immediate Objective/Outcome 2: Lead buyers support suppliers through SCORE Training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead buyers are promoting SCORE more than in earlier phases, but targets are only being met in one country (Viet Nam)</li> <li>• Lead buyers (international and national) are reluctant to sponsor supplier training</li> <li>• The programme’s emphasis is on buyers in international supply chains, but domestic lead buyers can be more responsive (Colombia, Indonesia)</li> <li>• Not every national programme has access to lead buyers for international value chains, and therefore rely on SCORE headquarters or employers’ associations or national corporate social responsibility sustainability initiatives to broker relations</li> </ul>
Output 5: Comprehensive promotional materials and guidance notes (including on how to deal with due diligence concerns) when targeting lead buyers have been made available
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good progress is being made with promotional materials, and case studies are also being developed including a very large repository of cases and reports<sup>16</sup></li> <li>• Workshops for lead buyers have been held (e.g. China, Colombia Indonesia)</li> </ul>
Output 6: Implementation partners have been capacitated to market SCORE Training to lead buyers and MNE sponsors using different engagement model
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation partners in half of the countries have been reluctant to invest resources in marketing to lead buyers</li> <li>• Proposals have been submitted to lead buyers in four countries (67%)</li> </ul>
Output 7: Awareness of lead buyers has been raised on advanced supplier development practices that go beyond social compliance audits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead buyers are asking for meetings etc with SCORE to a higher degree than targeted in 83%/5 countries</li> <li>• Countries where there are few large domestic or international lead buyers are meeting Output targets but will not necessarily achieve the Outcome (e.g. Bolivia, Colombia, Ghana)</li> </ul>

The picture regarding lead buyers appears healthier than it is if one only looks at the performance plan data. This is another example where there is a gap between Outputs and Outcomes (see also page 39), and the Outcome will not necessarily be achieved even if all of the Outputs are realised. In this case, assumptions about the existence and interests of lead buyers were overly optimistic.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> SCORE Case Study and Video Inventory.xls

<sup>17</sup> The key assumption was that there are sufficient lead buyers with CSR programmes in the country (Phase III PRODOC), and the likelihood of this not being the case was rated low-medium. In hindsight, it should have been rated medium-high.



There are various examples of how this error plays out in SCORE countries. For instance, in Ghana it was hoped that one of the lead buyers would be from the oil and gas industry, but the industry has its own internal (and often international) processes to ensure improved productivity.

This is a design flaw rather than an implementation one, resulting from an assumption that lead buyers in all countries were an effective leveraging point. In countries struggling to engage lead buyers, a decision needs to be made about how much effort to expend in the time remaining. This is especially true if such effort takes away from activities such as partner capacitation. As with Outcome 1, this kind of analysis would benefit from working through the Theory of Change to see if certain assumptions are false and present barriers that cannot be overcome in the time available.

#### *4.2.2.a Partnering with other initiatives*

In some countries, engaging lead buyers – particularly international supply chains – has been made easier because of SCORE’s relationship to existing initiatives. The joint programme with ETI and the relationship with BSCI auditing (both in China) are examples of this. In Viet Nam, the intention is that members of the Compliance and Sustainability Initiative will ask their suppliers to receive SCORE-influenced training. In Ghana, SDF (part funded by DANIDA) has become a Lead Buyer and one of its funding mechanisms require prospective grantees to incorporate SCORE training. In Colombia, the domestic lead buyer Efigas has supported supply chain development (12 SMEs), implemented SCORE training within Efigas the company, and they have also supported SCORE training awareness and public relations. The programme has partnered with other ILO programmes on youth and rural development.

Better Work has been highlighted as a particularly important partnership because of the strong involvement of ILO and SECO. It is only active in two of the countries in the MTE, Indonesia and Viet Nam. It is a high-profile programme and there has been country-level engagement with SCORE; but in the countries visited it is not oriented towards SMEs. This situation may change, and in Indonesia two pilot trainings have been conducted using materials from SCORE and Better Work. Anecdotally, the MTE team learned that the partnership with Better Work has been especially effective in Ethiopia.

#### 4.2.3 Management Effectiveness

SCORE has a small management component at national and global levels. In Geneva, there is a full-time CTA, technical officer and junior technical officer whose duties include knowledge management. There is also a part-time communications officer. There are regional coordinators for Latin America and Asia, and national programmes are staffed by a national programme coordinator (or equivalent) and an administrator. Funding for national programme staff in the MTE countries will end in 2020 except for Bolivia. Non-MTE countries Myanmar, Ethiopia and Tunisia will have national programme staff until October 2021.

In the four countries we visited, the SCORE teams were highly active and committed. There have been implementation challenges as highlighted earlier, but the teams have worked hard and flexibly to find solutions such as helping to develop SCORE-inspired training suited to the local market. They have also worked energetically to build relationships with implementation partners and capacitate them for the future. Although accomplishments differ between countries, we feel this is typically due to the relationship between local conditions and programme design rather than a reflection on management.

The programme respects the timeframes and workplans in the Phase III Project Document. Where there has been slippage, this seems to have been the result of external factors (e.g. the delay in setting up the SCORE Academy in China because of government restructuring), and not only do the country studies show the strong progress being made in identifying and capacitating implementation partners, there are also examples of the programme successfully addressing difficulties with partners (e.g. the slow progress by the Ministry of Manpower in Indonesia after a senior management change).

As noted, contracts for national programme staff in some countries end towards the end of 2020. If this happens it could affect sustainability given the stage of development with implementation partners. It also causes anxiety amongst staff, and some staff have already left.

The role of national programme management is clear from the country progress described in Section 5.2.1. The functioning of Global and National Tripartite Advisory Committees is discussed in Section 5.2.6. The global component (headquarters) has two main roles in Phase III: a) maintaining quality, and b) brokering alliances to fund SCORE activities. Regarding the former, SCORE has adopted a lighter touch approach to training of trainers and certification than in earlier phases. Implementation partners are now more in the driving seat, not only running training for enterprises but also training of trainers. This seems to have been done without negatively affecting the number of trainers or their quality (as measured by enterprise satisfaction rates). It is intended that ILO will maintain control over trainer certification and re-certification unless a national partner with related capacity and a solid business model has ownership of the process.

SCORE Global would like to have more funders to enable it to expand into new countries. Its achievements in this regard are largely outside the scope of this MTE (e.g. individual donor funding for training in specific countries). The partnership with ETI in China which resulted in several European companies using SCORE in their supply chains is an example of what can be achieved through brokering, although this began before Phase III. Despite continuing efforts to attract a new global-level donor, it seems unlikely this will happen in Phase III.

#### *4.2.3.a Communications strategy*

There is a SCORE communications strategy which is the responsibility of the communications officer. Communication is an important element of Phase III which, in addition to training materials, requires that SCORE is promoted and explained to new enterprises, donors, lead buyers and implementation partners as well as to stakeholders in SECO, Norad and ILO. The strategy has the following aims<sup>18</sup>:

- To position SCORE as a global training package
- To increase awareness of, and dialogue on, decent work for productivity at the local, national and global level
- To inform and maintain engagement in the SCORE Project of donors, ILO constituents, sector partners and ILO departments

Most of the activities in the strategy relate to the global component. There are many inputs that are typical of a conventional communications strategy such as brochures, case studies, press packs and videos. These are delivered on a regular basis set out in the strategy, although in some cases the quality is not visually of a standard that intermediate beneficiaries such as larger companies are accustomed to. The communications officer is aware that such inputs might be less effective than in the past because of the ways in which audiences connect with media. No single siloed channel can

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<sup>18</sup> There are also specific activities relating to SCORE Ethiopia, but the Ethiopia programme is beyond the scope of the MTE.

hold a consumer's attention for long enough to successfully communicate a marketing message. Furthermore, it is increasingly difficult to measure and track impact because of the multiple interconnected information channels available, although there are plans to address this using an external agency in 2020. The communications officer is also aware that the global strategy does not yet have an equivalent at national level in all countries.

In the time available for this MTE, we cannot assess the effectiveness of the strategy given the complexity of the media landscape. The programme was highlighted during the ILO Centenary celebrations and received good press and online coverage as a result. There was also a SCORE testimonial video. Successes in country programmes have been highlighted on the ILO website (e.g. trade union participation in Indonesia), and SCORE is supporting the development of INFOStory (an interactive magazine) which D-COMM (the ILO central communications team) is using to communicate lessons about working with SMEs and through which SCORE is achieving greater visibility.

In terms of programme sustainability, some of the most significant activity is taking place at country level. Trainers and enterprises, for instance, are using social media to exchange information and maintain contact, and factory exchange visits are taking place. National and sub-national promotional activities are organised by national programmes and implementation partners without necessarily input from Geneva. For instance, the SCORE academy event in Baranquilla (Colombia) was a major success at which stakeholders learned from the experiences of others, and groups such as trade unions began to see the programme's value.

Building implementation partners to promote SCORE is important for sustainability. It is anticipated that ILO's server will host the SCORE training and marketing materials developed so far, however new materials are being developed at national level and as programmes become more independent, SCORE headquarters will have less input into and control over communications materials or strategies. This evolution highlights the importance for the future of having a stronger, interactive and iterative communications strategy than in the past.

#### *4.2.3.b M&E system*

A M&E system should enable progress to be measured against a set of SMART indicators (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based goals). The SCORE Programme M&E system consists of the following components:

- M&E database to collect real-time enterprise training and activity level project information.
- Quarterly review report to track activities delivered by each SCORE country team.
- Bi-annual performance plan to track Project outputs and outcomes.
- Exit strategy – including recommendations on actions for sustainability at Project end.
- Bi-annual reports reporting on six-month periods.
- Annual report to showcase outcome level achievements from all SCORE countries and global components.
- Impact assessment to understand impact of project implementation in selected countries (only for Peru for Phase III, and previous impact studies in earlier phases).
- Mid-term and final evaluations.

Following on from the Phase II Mid-term Review of February 2016 and Ghana Impact Assessment Report of July 2016, evaluation recommendations were made to strengthen the M&E system overall to allow for improved impact assessment. This included documenting changes that companies made in their operations with the assistance of SCORE and estimating cost savings resulting from these changes.<sup>19</sup>

Additional indicators were added to the database in 2018 to track progress at the Output level (e.g. 'Upgrade of worker facilities', 'Use of SOPs' and 'Process to reduce materials usage') and at intermediate outcome level (e.g. % staff members unionised, % with collective bargaining agreement, % using digital wage payments).

In Phase III, output and outcome (direct effects) and intermediate impact level data are collected at enterprise level as part of the M&E database (part of the M&E system), and individual enterprise case studies have also been produced. The impact-related data which are collected at enterprise level are a mix of binomial indicators that monitor the existence of good practices in enterprises (i.e. changes in practice that can be plausibly attributed to the intervention) and quantitative and qualitative data on the most significant improvement projects made in the enterprise as a result of SCORE Training.

The SCORE M&E Guide (2019) explains the M&E system, emphasizing the practical nature of its design, recognizing that there is a need to avoid over-burdening SME managers. The Guide recognises the system's limitations (e.g. the quality of data collected by SMEs, under-reporting of positive change, baseline data can be collected during an unrepresentative period, lack of post-training data). However, the system fulfils the functions *it was designed for*, i.e. providing good and up-to-date information on activities and outputs in line with the programme logframe and performance plans. As the programme has evolved, there has been a growing demand (e.g. from implementation partners, companies and potential sponsors) for more data on impact, and some stakeholders have an expectation that the system can provide this. The MTE team discusses this later in the report (Section 5.4.2).

There are, however, weaknesses in the current system that need noting because they can cause confusion and may even affect perceptions about performance. For example, the M&E database, performance plans, the Quarterly Progress Reports and the annotated Exit Strategies do not seem to be integrally linked so that data entered in one are not automatically verified against or cascaded to the other components. If data are entered manually in each document, then this opens the possibility for error, but even without this, there can be confusion about what is being referred to. For example, the Bolivia Exit Strategy (June 2019) records that cost recovery on training is 23% while the performance plan records a figure of 0%. For anyone outside of the programme, it can be time-consuming to understand why these apparent discrepancies occur, and it is something future evaluators should be aware of. The use of different terms to refer to what seem to be similar things can also be confusing (e.g. 'number of enterprise staff trained in workshops' is used in the M&E database while 'number of enterprise staff trained by IPs' is used in the performance plan), and some indicators are tracked in the performance plans that are not on the M&E database (e.g. the estimated number of enterprises trained by programmes influenced by SCORE Training).

The complex nature of impact and attribution that is a feature of programmes such as SCORE has led to investment in country and company impact assessments. These together with case studies are meaningful as stand-alone reports (although some case studies appear to have a marketing rather

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<sup>19</sup> SCORE Ghana Impact assessment report, July 2016

than analytical purpose)<sup>20</sup>, but they cannot be used to draw overall conclusions or lessons about impact because of difficulties with comparability. This is understandable, and the country impact studies serve a useful purpose in terms of understanding in detail how SCORE Training affects enterprises and workers. However, it has been impractical and too expensive to conduct these longitudinal studies in all the countries. Such rigorous impact assessments are most useful when linked to a programme-wide outcome and impact monitoring system. A lot of data are currently collected to the point where trainers and country programme managers may feel there is too much. In future programmes or phases, it may be possible to collect data on fewer indicators, but more effectively. This should include regular beneficiary feedback which is currently not evident in the M&E system except for country impact studies.

#### 4.2.4 Gender Issues Assessment

The SCORE Phase III gender equality strategy builds on and is an important step forward from earlier phases, particularly the gender mainstreaming orientation of Phase II. Mainstreaming in Phase III can be assessed using the strategy's five objectives:

1. Working towards gender-equal participation at all levels with increased inclusion of women in programme activities and trainings delivered by partners and service providers.
2. Moving beyond non-discrimination to transformation, to achieve more equitable outcomes for women in SCORE enterprises.
3. More gender-responsive programming through better mainstreaming of gender in programme data collection, monitoring and evaluation of impact.
4. Creating awareness about the problems of sexual violence and harassment in the workplace and how this affects not only women but the enterprise as such.
5. Greater awareness of the reasons why gender equality and non-discrimination need to be addressed among partners, service providers, MNE sponsors, workers and managers.

Gender-responsive programming is assisted by inclusion of gender-related data in the M&E system. The gender strategy cuts across the programme outputs and objectives, but gender-related data can be aggregated using the M&E database, and can be interrogated using the performance plans, country Exit Strategies and Quarterly Progress Reports. Data on training participants, enterprise-ownership, the total number of staff in participating enterprises, expert and certified trainers, and ILO constituents and social partners exposed to SCORE-related themes can all be disaggregated by gender. The number of gender sensitive practices in each training module is also tracked and reported. SCORE is piloting gender-budgeting in Indonesia and Bolivia with the intention that this will be rolled out in other countries during Phase III.

Gender-equal participation is still emphasised in enterprise selection, training and implementation partner capacitation. The Gender Global Progress Report section of the M&E database shows that the percentage of women being trained as trainers or selected for training by enterprises is roughly

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<sup>20</sup> Case studies can legitimately be used to report results and positive success stories by projects and programmes. However, this should not be conflated with a more detailed evaluative case study, which would more likely have a purposive selection strategy, a clear conceptual framework (ideally a theory of change), standardized questions and indicators to guide the analysis, and a thorough analysis of the contextual factors and other contributing causes of change. Multiple such case studies can then be comparative analysed to identify 'necessary and sufficient' factors for success.

the same as in Phase II (35-40%). It is possible this figure will increase as a result of SCORE India – which had low female participation rates – closing.

More equitable outcomes are promoted through the inclusion of gender in SCORE Training. The number of gender sensitive practices included in each module has risen in Phase III to an average 4.35 compared to 1.53 in Phase II. Another important element in the shift from non-discrimination to transformation, and creating gender awareness, is the participation of women in the Enterprise Improvement Teams. It is noteworthy that even though women make up no more than 35% of the workforce in enterprises trained using SCORE materials, the percentage of EITs with women members is over 60% and in 2019 was 74% suggesting that gender balanced EITs can still be created as the total number of enterprises trained grows.

An important step in creating awareness about sexual violence and harassment in the workplace and its impact on women and the enterprise has been the introduction of MIG SCORE in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia (and potentially Indonesia) which has a more explicit focus on gender. There have also been workshops, conferences and other activities run by national programmes to increase awareness amongst SCORE stakeholders such as implementation partners, service providers, ILO constituencies and social partners. Countries are not expected to meet central targets for this type of activity, and therefore what is delivered varies between national programmes. This is sensible given the different situation in individual countries, and the progress by national programmes is included as part of the Quarterly Progress Reports.

Country initiatives provide insights on gender that are not necessarily captured in M&E reporting. For instance, the 2019 study of labour practices in Viet Nam found that Enterprise Improvement Teams are noticeably more effective when they have female members. In some respects, the M&E system – and, in particular, the M&E database - does not always allow easy gender-based analysis of outcomes and benefits. For instance, there are two performance indicators in the Enterprise Reports on the database that explicitly refer to gender (Presence of men and women on the Enterprise Improvement Team; Number of gender sensitive practices per training module). There are most probably other indicators that, if positive, indicate benefits to women (e.g. ‘Upgrade of worker facilities’, could include improvements such as separate lavatories and changing facilities). This kind of granular detail about enterprise-level changes would be helpful to show gender transformation. Analysis of this kind of impact would be something to include in any future impact assessments.

The sustainability of components linked to positive gender outcomes once the SCORE programme ends is discussed in Section 5.4. The programme has accumulated a lot of knowledge about how to incorporate gender into enterprise-level activities, and this could usefully be captured (e.g. in a guidance document for programme planning) for the benefit of future programmes. As noted previously (page 31), the sooner gender dimensions are understood and integrated into programme design, the greater the gender impact is likely to be. As seen in the case of the Viet Nam furniture sector, this includes not only considering the proportion of women employed in a sector, but the understanding of the barriers to their participation in training.

#### 4.2.5 Tripartite Advisory Committees

There are functioning Tripartite Advisory Committees at global and national levels (GTAC and NTAC). Greater ownership by national implementation partners means it can be difficult for GTAC to have the understanding it needs to provide advice; with this in mind, a GTAC visit to Latin America is scheduled for 2019. Impact reports such as the one being finished for Peru are an important way for GTAC to check if what is being achieved is in line with ILO priorities. This is especially important

because the world of SMEs might not be familiar to the industry associations and trade unions that are represented on the TACs.

NTACs meet once or twice a year and are discussed in more depth in the country reports (Appendices 8-13). NTAC meetings are useful opportunities for programmes to brief stakeholders on progress, not only ILO constituents but also SCORE donors and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. implementation partners). The Phase II MTE mentioned that trade unions were not very active in NTACs, and this can be explained in part by the low levels of worker organisation in the SME target group and the perception that SCORE is about productivity rather than workers' rights. A more participatory approach to programme design might have helped determine if there were sectors or regions where unionisation in SMEs was higher (and therefore enable these to be targeted), but SCORE managers feel that in general there are few sectors where trade unions are organising in SMEs to a high degree. However, in countries such as Indonesia, SCORE has succeeded in involving trade unions in NTAC and training, and union representatives interviewed pointed out that SCORE had given organisers access to factories they would not otherwise have had contact with.

#### 4.3 Efficiency of Resource Usage

As with the previous MTE, the evaluation team has not analysed financial reporting documents and therefore have not made a detailed analysis of efficiency. We offer the following observations based on the information we had access to, including the country visits. The programme's ambitions and its resources seem well balanced. Bearing in mind its international reach, it has a small number of staff and this number has decreased since Phase II. Furthermore, most country programme offices (including five of the six in this MTE) are due to close by the end of 2020, leaving a period when the CTA, technical officer, and two regional coordinators will need to work with implementation partners and lead buyers directly on what should be the final steps to secure sustainability.

The Phase II MTE said that SCORE Training can be considered quite expensive when looking only at the number of enterprises reached. The situation has changed significantly since then, and the number of enterprises trained has gone from 765 at the end of Phase II to 2,599 as of November 2019. In the process, 484,770 managers and workers have undergone SCORE Training. This change/acceleration is not consistent across all countries. In countries where it is most apparent (e.g. China and Indonesia) it can be attributed to a combination of new, less time-heavy training offerings, increased implementation partner capacity in delivery and marketing, increased non-ILO funding, and a growth in the number of trainers.

Any thorough analysis of resource efficiency would need to take into consideration the enterprises receiving SCORE-influenced training. Country programmes report individually on this in their performance plans. In countries such as Indonesia and China, the amount of what is termed 'indirectly received training' is high (1,700 and 1,200 enterprises respectively). Moreover, the figures may be higher than this because implementation partners may not feel they have to provide information about training which the ILO has not helped fund. Indeed, as the degree of local ownership and autonomy increases, it will be difficult to accurately assess programme efficiency.

In addition to enterprise training, SCORE has built a cadre of trainers, including expert trainers who can run training of trainers and develop/modify materials. 1,157 trainers have been trained to date (145 in Phase III), and there are currently 258 certified trainers worldwide. 145 trainers have lost their certification. Although the situation varies between countries, many of the people trained never intended to be certified. For instance, they undertook training to gain awareness of the SCORE method, and then became champions promoting SCORE in their organisations. It is also possible that some trainers are still active even though their certification has expired. The trained trainers as a

whole form a cadre that will continue to train enterprises and other trainers. This should increase the programme's reach and make costs competitive. The money spent on training this cadre so far should be considered an investment cost and should not be included in any calculation of cost at enterprise level. However, any further training of trainers after Phase III will depend on implementation partner resources, and this should not be overlooked in their business models.

The project budget also includes activities for other target groups and stakeholders, including awareness raising amongst social partners and ILO constituents. The impact of such investments can only be assessed in the longer term (e.g. changes in SME policy; influence of SCORE methods). Furthermore, it is reasonable to assume that a significant proportion of the budget is being spent on developing and introducing innovative approaches to SME training delivery; this includes piloting those approaches prior to further replication and rolling out. As the Phase II MTE concluded, the cost of SCORE per company can be defended given its innovative nature and the pilot-characteristics. This defence is strongest in countries where SCORE is taking off under local ownership: it is weakest where for country-specific reasons the innovations and investment have yet to result in a sustainable offering.

It can be argued that low cost-recovery is a compelling indicator of resource inefficiency (i.e. subsidies are required to make SCORE competitive). The country studies in this MTE show the situation is more complicated than this. In some cases, markets have been distorted (e.g. by government policy and subsidy) and it has taken longer than expected to establish business models suited to the local environment. SCORE country programmes have been entrepreneurial in trying to make SCORE viable, and this has been encouraged by SCORE headquarters. What emerges is a set of interesting questions about the efficiency of a global as compared to a national programme. For instance, would approaches to training have been different and more impactful if they had been developed around local circumstances? What added value did adopting a global approach bring? What other types of interventions, beyond training products/coaching are needed to address the root causes of poor productivity and working conditions in a specific country context? Who should frame the problems and potential solutions? These are questions that have arisen out of the Phase III MTE and are ones that could be explored in future evaluations.

SCORE Training has been criticised for being too expensive at the point of delivery. The Phase II MTE recommended a stratified approach towards financial and institutional sustainability of SCORE Training provision with specific cost-recovery and payment mechanisms for specific categories of SMEs (e.g. large SMEs would not be eligible for subsidies). Paying after the training or paying in instalments was also deemed possible, although the idea that banks might provide credit to fund training participation was deemed impractical given that SMEs often struggle to get finance for capital investments. None of these approaches seems to have been adopted systematically in the countries visited by the MTE team.

One aspect of SCORE Training that, according to some SCORE managers, makes it more expensive than other training, is the decent work component. The MTE team heard on several occasions that SMEs were reluctant to pay for what could be considered a public rather than a private good. A purely financial assessment of efficiency would need to disaggregate the investment in and cost of the public good elements. Knowing this would help implementation partners who are 'selling' SCORE Training to enterprises, lead buyers and other funders.

However, the view that SCORE Training is overly expensive does not seem to be universally valid. In the case of Indonesia, for instance, SCORE Training seems to be competitive (approximately \$1200/enterprise per module, compared to consultancy fees in excess of \$1000/day), but this does



not necessarily make it affordable, especially for smaller SMEs. Demand elasticity could have been factored into the design of SCORE methods in earlier phases. The emergence of SCORE Short Course and various SCORE-inspired offerings seem to be a response to this, although the data do not allow analysis of whether cost-recovery is higher for these more recent training products.

Even if SCORE Training is unaffordable to some enterprises, there is ample evidence in some countries that it is deemed good value by government departments, private foundations and others with funds to support SME development. Some of the anticipated funding channels such as lead buyers and enterprises have not sponsored SCORE Training to the degree expected, but where SMEs are a developmental priority, SCORE methods have proved competitive.

Any full analysis of resource efficiency would need to take into consideration the extent to which SCORE's presence and activities have leveraged other financial and human resources. There is no easy way to measure this, but making non-ILO managed funds available, influencing non-SCORE training, and inspiring post-SCORE training initiatives are all indicators of how SCORE can leverage resources that would not otherwise be available to the SME target group.

#### 4.3.1 Resource efficiency in relation to gender

Gender dimensions to SCORE Training can be considered part of its public good element (see previous section). The gender-budgeting pilots currently underway in Bolivia and Indonesia should provide information on how to assess what is being invested in gender-related activities and the benefits for women. If this is rolled out to other SCORE countries, it should allow for a more detailed understanding of efficiency that has been the case in the past.

Gender issues are integrated into the different forms of SCORE Training and national programmes have successfully embedded gender awareness into the ways that implementation partners promote, implement and revise training. As noted in the assessment of gender issues, there is no sign that attention to gender is decreasing despite the increased amount of training delivered and the increased handing over of responsibility to implementation partners. This suggests that the approach to integrating gender has been efficient enough to be continued. (See Section 5.4 for a fuller discussion of sustainability.)

#### 4.4 Impact Orientation and Sustainability of the Intervention

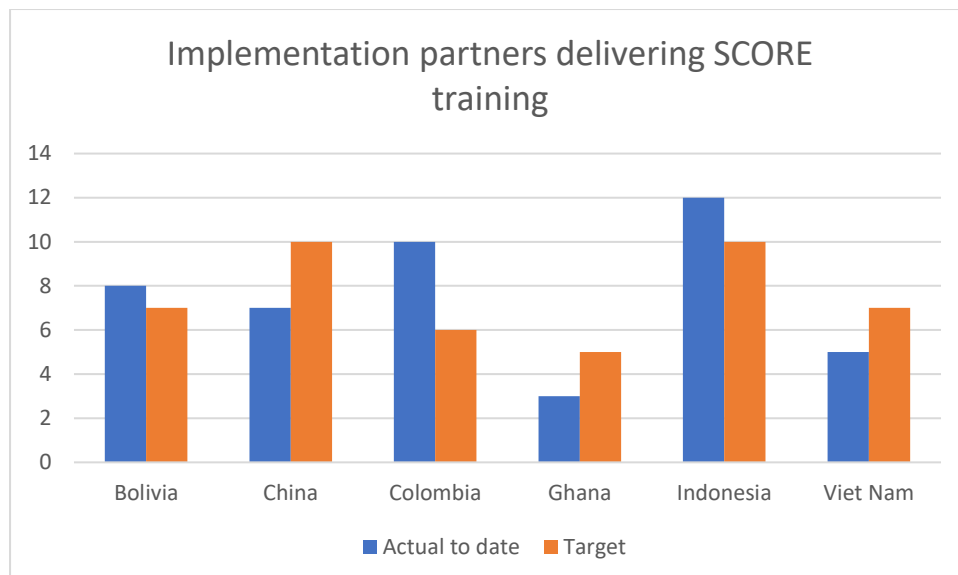
Each country plus the global component has its exit and sustainability strategy. These seem sensible given the varying local contexts, and are being implemented in a thoughtful, effective manner. In some cases, this requires flexibility and adaptation because of specific developments (e.g. the restructuring of SAWS in China), but country programme management is committed and responsive.

Implementation partners are crucial to SCORE's sustainability beyond Phase III. It is difficult to summarise everything that is being done to ensure SCORE has a long-term impact because country programmes and implementation partners have their own strategies and areas of emphasis. However, at the risk of over-generalisation, the legacy of SCORE in each country will be:

- A cadre of certified trainers able to deliver a flexible, SME-oriented approach suited to multiple sectors.
- Multiple implementation partners able to deliver training of trainers and training of enterprises in SCORE or SCORE-inspired training, and to develop non-ILO revenue streams.
- New or adapted training products developed with implementation partners and suited to SME needs.
- Case studies and other materials to capture learning for SCORE and ILO.

At this stage, this legacy depends specifically upon implementation partners which have a crucial role to play in terms of building and maintaining the cadre of trainers and accessing non-ILO funding. The current distribution of implementation partners delivering training in MTE countries is set out in Figure 3.<sup>21</sup>

Figure 3: Implementation partners delivering SCORE Training



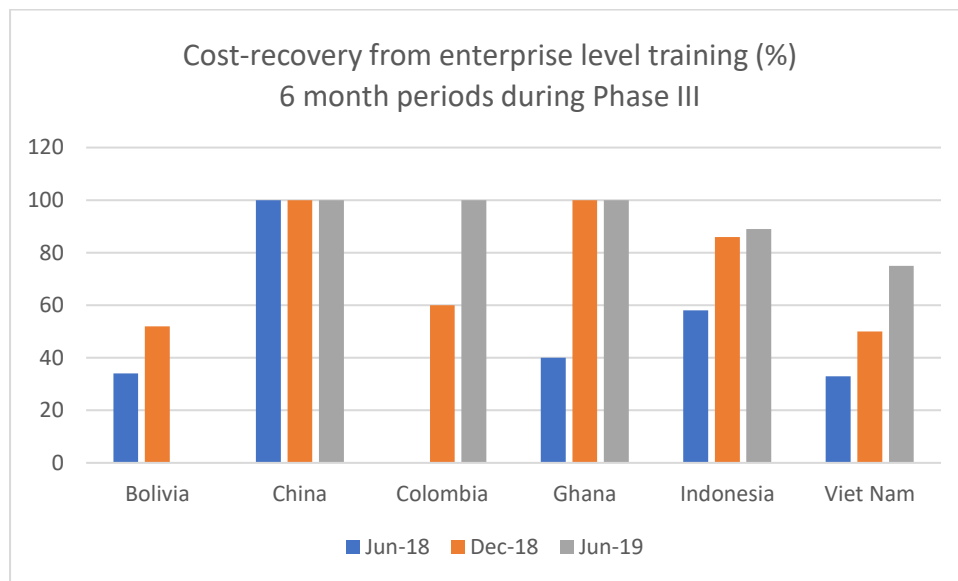
The partnerships are at different stages of development, and new partners specifically will require SCORE management input to fully capacitate them. For instance, VCCI (Viet Nam) and BEDO (Indonesia) have been SCORE partners for more than five years and are able to run and market training with a high degree of independence. By contrast, such as the Chambers of Commerce in Colombia and SME TAC (Viet Nam) will require more assistance before they can sustain the programme in the long-term. Likewise, MDPI in Ghana is taking on a new role as the SCORE coordinating institute, and this will also require SCORE input to ensure this function is properly developed.

Cost-recovery from training is another indicator of how sustainable training might be in the future. (Figure 4). These figures need to be interpreted carefully, however. In some instances, the figure is deceptively low because training pilots are still being carried out, fully funded by ILO (e.g. Indonesia). This is a legitimate use of ILO funds that will add to the SCORE value proposition in the long-term. In some instances, a high cost recovery figure may hide uncertainties which exist about long-term sustainability. For instance, in Ghana, the SCORE SME target group can access JICA funding for Kaizen training, and the Ghana government is not yet funding SCORE Training. Likewise, in Colombia national programme staff were unconvinced that enterprises would fund training beyond Phase III because of their own resource limitations and the availability of cheaper training elsewhere.

<sup>21</sup> Performance plan figures, as of June 2019.

Figure 4: Cost-recovery from enterprise-level training

NB 0% shows as an empty column.



In general, for the foreseeable future SCORE’s impact is more likely to depend on other organisations’ willingness to sponsor enterprise-level training than on revenue from enterprises themselves. Governments in China, Indonesia, Colombia and more recently Viet Nam have been willing to allocate funds for SCORE Training. Private foundations, donor agencies, universities and private firms have also helped fund training for enterprises.

The anticipated funding from lead buyers has not materialised to the extent envisaged, particularly international buyers. SCORE is still encouraging attempts to approach lead buyers, and as well as promotional activities and piloting, there are examples of buyers sponsoring enterprises (e.g. Efigas and E.S.P. in Colombia). Efforts to engage international lead buyers at national programme level have not met with the kind of success anticipated and may not justify the investment. There are ongoing pilot activities that might change this situation (e.g. nascent collaboration with Compliance and Sustainability [Viet Nam]; SCORE-Better Work pilot with home décor companies [Indonesia]), but based on progress so far, implementation partners may not see it as in their interests to continue the lead buyer strategy. The capacity they have acquired to date may eventually help them engage with domestic lead buyers, but to be fully effective, the nature of the supply chain would need to be fully factored into the choice of sectors and this has not happened to date.

SCORE Global has made concerted efforts to engage with lead buyers and feels this has yielded good results. Not only has it led to engagement with global companies such as Amazon and Apple, it has helped bring consortia of companies to support/promote SCORE (e.g. the collaboration with ETI in China). However, SCORE Global feels its capacity to sell SCORE to lead buyers, and to reach decision-makers within those companies, is still not as strong as it needs to be.

For the remainder of Phase III, the potential benefits of getting lead buyer support need to be balanced against the probability of success and the amount of effort involved. In a worst-case scenario, time spent on lead buyers would mean implementation partners were not prepared to implement SCORE independently. Insistence on engaging with international lead buyers in cases where there are limited returns also risks sending the message that SCORE priorities are more important than national ones. Workers deserve good working conditions regardless of what type of supply chain they are part of (and regardless of any buyers’ interest): therefore, looking to the

future, the focus of training should be where there is the greatest opportunity to improve working conditions and productivity and achieved decent work.

Another way for SCORE to have a lasting influence is to have its methods and principles embedded into other organisations' programmes (e.g. Matrix is piloting this in its supplier training in China). Government agencies and private training providers are in the process of doing, or have already done, this (e.g. China, Viet Nam, Ghana). International inspection/certification firms are also offering SCORE as part of their audit process training (e.g. SGS, TÜV). SCORE-influenced training has the potential advantage in some countries of allowing enterprises to be certified. ILO does not certify enterprises, because of the prohibitive costs to SMEs of implementing a compliance system. This can be a barrier in countries where people expect some type of formal recognition if they undertake training (e.g. Colombia, Bolivia, Indonesia), although a certificate of participation is provided. Looking ahead, training standardisation and certification is a trend in more and more countries, and although there are good reasons why ILO does not want to be a certification body in the accepted sense, it might harm SCORE's legacy if this issue is not addressed. The MTE team is not suggesting that ILO change its policy, but there might be opportunities to explore SCORE Training accreditation with international organisations such as ISO or national bodies to that training credibility is assured, and developments that could undermine that credibility (e.g. trainers or implementation partners offering certification) are discouraged.

#### 4.4.1 Sustainability of Social Justice Components

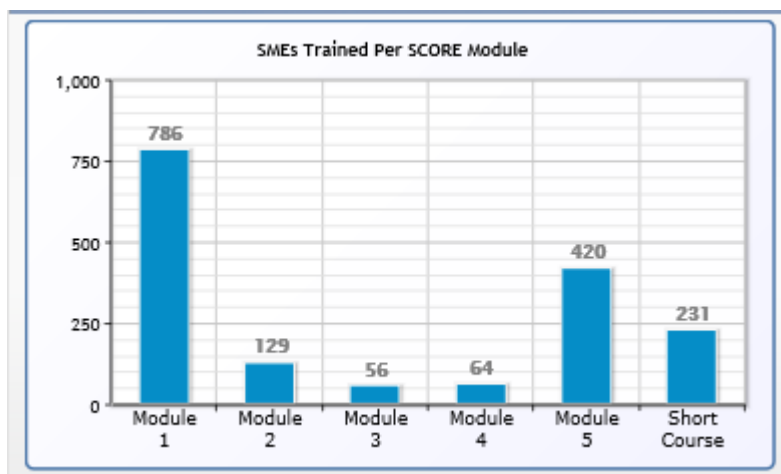
SCORE is not solely focused on enterprise productivity: it is also about decent work and upholding international labour standards. Working conditions, collective bargaining, remuneration and other aspects related to decent work are all included in the training modules and are followed up on during the enterprise-level consultancy visits that are an integral part of the SCORE Training method. The MTE team limited its number of enterprise visits in line with the TOR and, also, recognising that assessing enterprise-level outcomes requires dedicated country impact studies/assessments of the kind SCORE has commissioned in India, Ghana, Viet Nam and Peru. However, our factory visits and some of our conversations with worker representatives suggest that workplace dialogue, management-worker cooperation, safer practices and improved working conditions are amongst the clear benefits of the training. These are less tangible, earlier stage steps to achieving more transformative changes such as living wages, but they are nonetheless important achievements given the challenges under which SMEs are operating in the target countries.

As noted earlier, the causal links implied in the Theory of Change have proved difficult to assess (e.g. SMEs that implement improvement plans increase their productivity and this then leads to *significant* improved working conditions and more decent work) (Figure 2). Although the programme has documented examples of generative causality (e.g. in some enterprises increased productivity has led to workers making more money where they are paid piece-rate), the M&E system was not designed to capture such higher level outcomes and impacts across the programme, and there is limited attention to the other factors (e.g. other development programmes, legislative changes) which could also be influencing enterprises and institutionalization processes. Instead, the programme uses country impact assessments as part of the M&E system. There are good reasons for this choice (e.g. the complex causal relations between any group of inputs and high-level changes, and the influence of other factors on outcome indicators). (For instance, are higher wages a form of gain-sharing coming from higher productivity or do they reflect labour shortages?). An impact-oriented M&E system of the kind found in increasing numbers of development projects would allow the programme to assess how far productivity and working conditions changes lead to higher profits and decent work as set out in the Theory of Change (enterprise pathway), but as noted earlier the

SCORE M&E system was not set up with this in mind. It is by no means certain that if the system had been set up with more of an impact orientation it would have been able to *prove* causality: as the country impact assessments show, SCORE Training by itself is insufficient to bring systemic change in working conditions. (For instance, the recent Peru assessment found that employees felt working conditions improved only slightly after SCORE Training.) However, it would have had stronger Contribution Claims, especially with more data collection from intended beneficiaries, and also a clearer learning loop to help *improve* impact. A consequence of this information gap in terms of sustainability is that it will be difficult for implementation partners to make a ‘business case’ for SMEs to invest in better working conditions, and arguably the programme should have invested more at an earlier stage to achieve this (e.g. producing case studies on improved working conditions similar to those published about productivity).

Some people interviewed argued that ILO funding was justified in order to fund SCORE’s ‘social premium’, i.e. the social justice components missing from other training such as Kaizen. However, this might imply that those components will fade away after Phase III, especially if they are reliant on SMEs to pay for them. The evidence for this is inconclusive. Modules 3 and 4, related to working conditions and labour standards, have had a relatively small uptake. It is also possible that SCORE trainers, who are well-versed in including social justice in their practice, see no reason to remove that component. There is not a strong market for Modules 3 and 4, but social justice is a key element of the compulsory Module 1 and the SCORE Short Course, and working conditions are central to Module 5 (OSH). Working conditions and decent work are also integral to newer training offerings such as SCORE HoCo, MIG SCORE and SCORE Compliance.

Figure 5: SMEs trained per SCORE module (as of October 2019)



It therefore seems unlikely that the inclusion of decent work is a barrier to SCORE’s sustainability. Moreover, there is some indication that it will make SCORE appealing in some markets. For example, new international trade agreements in Viet Nam will increase the pressure on SMEs to comply with international labour standards: SCORE offers enterprises a practical way of being more competitive in this changing environment. The caveat to this is where SMEs are expected to pay a substantial proportion of the training costs themselves, and hence they may question why they are paying for what could be viewed as a public good. As noted previously (page 48), clear information on the cost and efficiency of the social justice components to training might help implementation partners sell SCORE to funders.

#### 4.4.1.a Sustainability of Gender Components

SCORE has consistently tried to increase the opportunities for women in Phase III. Figure 6 shows that the proportion of women has increased or remained the same compared to Phase II, the only decrease being in the proportion of women expert trainers. The latter is explained by the rapid increase in expert trainers in Phase III (from 4 to 26 as of December 2019), and the lower number of women in this cohort. However, in terms of the number of trainers, the figure for women has gone from two to eight. There has also been a rise in women from ILO constituents and social partners participating in other events.

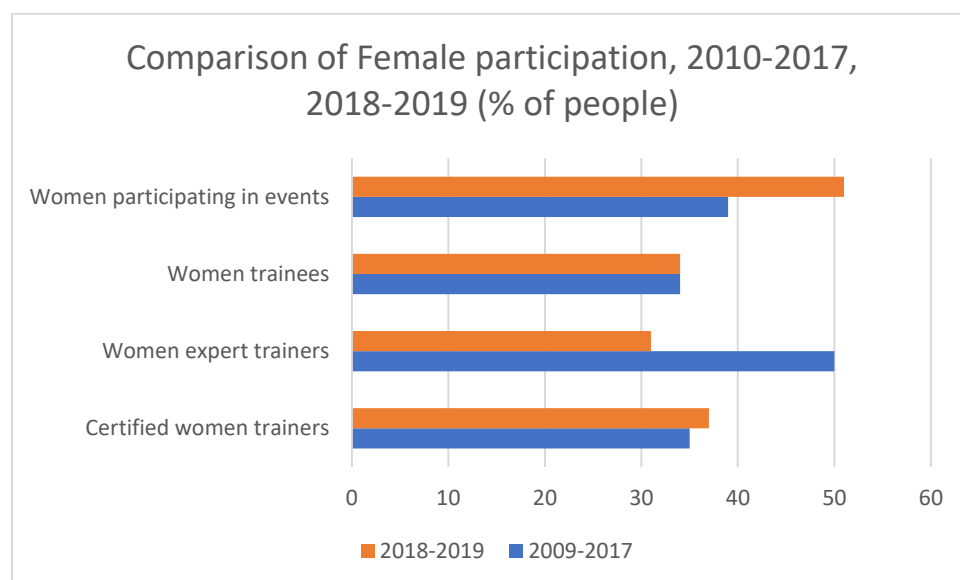


Figure 6: Female participation (M&E database)

SCORE headquarters emphasises gender outcomes and dimensions across all its communications efforts, and as noted earlier country programmes are seeking to mainstream gender through awareness-building activities and new training. The MIG training programme, which is being promoted in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, (and potentially in Indonesia soon as well) provides a gender-oriented perspective on productivity and decent work (training of trainers has been carried out, and one enterprise has been trained), and in Bolivia 9 enterprises have taken an expanded module combining Modules 1 and 4, and giving them a stronger gender focus.<sup>22</sup>

The extent to which the gender impacts of SCORE will continue after Phase III will depend largely on the local context. As already noted, gender is only one consideration when deciding what sectors to work with, and with Phase III's emphasis on consolidation, any expansion at present is focused on new sectors' viability as a market rather than social considerations. Women's participation as entrepreneurs is also monitored, and in Indonesia women owners account for 41% of enterprises trained. (The average for other MTE countries is 14%.<sup>23</sup>)

#### 4.4.2 Sustainability of Management Systems

The MTE team was asked to consider the sustainability of the M&E system after 2021 as one of the Evaluation Questions (Appendix 1). The present system was built around ILO's needs, and for various reasons may not be suited to implementation partners, although in Ghana and Viet Nam local organisations are proposing to continue with the M&E database. (See country reports.) What would

<sup>22</sup> The module is called 'Managing productivity and human talent with gender equality.'

<sup>23</sup> M&E database figures, November 2019.

be of most benefit to implementation partners once ILO support ends is a relatively light touch system that generates information about the enterprise-level impact of SCORE Training and the delivery of activities so that it could be used to promote SCORE Training to SMEs and other users/funders, monitor training quality, and help understand progress in the main impact areas (productivity, working conditions, decent work).

Such a system would have a stronger outcome-orientation than the present one, because it does not have the same purpose. SCORE national programmes have a useful role to play in testing implementation partners' appetite for and views on such a system. Implementation partners have specific ideas about what information they need to carry the programme forwards. An example of this is in the Indonesia country report and demonstrates the kind of information that a future M&E system might produce.<sup>24</sup>

#### 4.5 Summary Assessment of Gender, ILS and Tripartite Issues

The SCORE Programme has taken steps to mainstream gender in line with its Gender Equality Strategy. It has deliberately targeted women as participants in all its activities and spread awareness about what gender mainstreaming means in a SME context. Nonetheless, men are more likely to benefit than women at the enterprise and trainer levels. The cause of this lies with the programme's design. Choice of sectors in earlier phases was based on different factors in addition to gender, and as the programme nears completion, implementation partners are too focused on sustainability issues to make significant changes at the present time.

SCORE is supportive of International Labour Standards (ILS). In many cases, SCORE Training will be the first-time working conditions and decent work have been part of SME capacity building. ILS are an integral part of Module 1 and the more recent SCORE Short Course has allowed additional attention to be paid to the workforce. The criticism that SCORE is too oriented towards the needs of entrepreneurs needs to be weighed against the fact that unions are not typically organising amongst the SCORE SME target group, and that labour inspectorates may not be prioritising these enterprises. It is also a fact that SCORE Training cannot happen without the interest of SME owners/managers.

It is worth noting that international free trade agreements that include ILS are being introduced into some SCORE countries, and for export-oriented enterprises SCORE Training is a means of adapting to importer requirements.

SCORE has not factored tripartite issues into the choice of countries. Thus, for example, SCORE is active in Viet Nam and China where freedom of association is restricted. Tripartite Advisory Committees are active, although the MTE team did not attend any meeting or obtain anything other than anecdotal evidence about their effectiveness. The NTACs in the countries we visited had full tripartite representation, but one comment we heard in more than one country was that the committees seem mostly to observe progress rather than perform an advisory role

## 5. Conclusions

SCORE's vision is that it is *"the intervention of choice of national governments, social partners and lead buyers for promoting SME productivity and working conditions in selected industries and supply chains."* The development objective is that *"SMEs in national and global supply chains have improved productivity and working conditions and provide decent work."* In Phase III, the emphasis

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<sup>24</sup> In Indonesia, BEDO gathers information in three areas which it uses to promote benefits to enterprise owners: increased sales; reduced costs; workforce.

has been on embedding SCORE Training into the programmes and budgets of implementation partners plus participating lead buyers so that SCORE-inspired training will continue after 2021.

By its own indicators of success, SCORE has made significant progress in many respects during Phase III. It has listened to the comments of previous evaluations and taken on board their recommendations where they are practicable.<sup>25</sup> In some countries, there has been significant growth in training, not least SCORE-inspired training without ILO support. In China, Viet Nam and Indonesia there seems little doubt that SCORE will have a lasting legacy through the routine activities of implementation partners.

## 5.1 General Conclusions

In general, SCORE national programmes are aligned with ultimate beneficiary needs (SME workers and owners/managers). SCORE Training is of high quality, and its content is relevant to SCORE's target group. Looking to the future, in countries such as Indonesia, China, Colombia and Viet Nam there is a large market of underserved SMEs. However, alignment with needs does not necessarily translate into demand. Investment in training is not always seen as a priority by owners, especially if the business benefits cannot be demonstrated clearly. The market for business development services in general is distorted in some countries by government subsidies that SCORE implementation partners do not have access to.

The programme has succeeded in engaging with a wide variety of intermediate beneficiaries. It has made significant progress in engaging with other development programmes, not least those of SECO and other ILO projects. It can also show progress in engaging ILO tripartite constituents including trade unions, although some SCORE countries are weak on freedom of association, and unions are not typically active amongst the SMEs targeted for SCORE Training.

National programme management have made significant efforts to adapt to local situations. Phase III represents a significant step forwards in terms of devolved management authority (e.g. implementation partners; national programme offices). Nonetheless, there are some areas where overall programme design is affecting impact. For instance, a false assumption about lead buyers means that all countries must commit resources to Outcome 2 (lead buyer engagement) even when this type of intermediate beneficiary is weak or absent.

Difficulties in getting SME buy-in to a five-module training programme were identified in Phase II, and this led to revisions and new offerings such as SCORE Short Course. It is laudable that SCORE has modified its training in response to market demand, and expert trainers have been able to adapt materials to local SME needs. Adaptation to local conditions has not always been possible, however. Strong implementation partners are not sufficient to surmount difficulties such as an unfavourable competitive landscape (e.g. the availability of cheaper, more attractive options), the absorptive capacity of SMEs (e.g. the amount of time and human resource available for capacity building), and insufficient evidence for potential users of SCORE Training to assess the costs and benefits. Although these conditionalities are found to some degree in all countries, they have been a particular barrier in Ghana.

SCORE Programme has a gender equality strategy that tasks the programme to address areas such as gender-equal participation; mainstreaming of gender in programme data collection, monitoring and evaluation of impact; and awareness building about the problems of sexual violence and harassment in the workplace. Components of the strategy are evident in activities such as enterprise-level

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<sup>25</sup> Not all recommendations have been accepted (e.g. the suggestion that SMEs might get loans from banks to fund training did not recognise the difficulties SMEs face in acquiring formal financial services).



training, Training of Trainers and awareness-raising events (e.g. workshops and conferences). The programme has attempted to move away from a primary emphasis on increasing women's participation towards a situation where benefits are designed around women's concerns. Although in hindsight the gender impact could have been greater if it had been approached differently in early programme design (e.g. gender criteria for selecting industries; gender budgets), the shifts since Phase II are positive. It is encouraging to see that in Latin America SCORE is paying particular attention to gender (e.g. the MIG SCORE training).

By many of its Output-level indicators, SCORE is achieving its targets, although there are inevitably differences between countries. In some countries, it is possible indicators allow a more positive picture to be painted about sustainability than seems justified on the ground (e.g. percentage of cost-recovery), but the MTE team could not interrogate this in depth. However, what is apparent is that there are areas where gaps exist between Outputs and Outcomes. Worries within a country about sustainability are not necessarily captured in performance plans, and there is a possibility that national programmes are pursuing quantitative targets despite these having a weak relationship to Outcomes. Outcome 2 gives examples of this with countries investing in attempts to engage lead buyers, even when lead buyers are absent or uninterested.

The two most important indicators related to Outcome 2 are the number of lead buyers promoting SCORE Training, and the number of them sponsoring it in their supply chains. In both cases, performance is much lower than anticipated with only one country meeting targets for lead buyers promoting SCORE Training, and one meeting targets for lead buyer sponsorship of SCORE Training. This reflects an incorrect assumption that lead buyers in all countries would be an effective leveraging point. SCORE national programmes as well as SCORE Geneva have invested considerable effort in identifying and engaging with lead buyers, but relatively few buyers have been willing to go beyond workplace auditing to building supplier capacity.

## 5.2 Sustainability of SCORE Training

ILO evaluates sustainability using financial, technical and institutional factors. **The technical dimension to SCORE is strong** due to the high quality of the materials and training methods which distinguish it from other types of capacity building for SMEs. Furthermore, the content has been adapted and developed by several national programmes, resulting in training for new sectors (e.g. SCORE HoCo for the hospitality industry), on new issues (e.g. MIG SCORE on gender), and suited to new audiences (e.g. SCORE-inspired training for smaller and micro-enterprises). The unique features of SCORE (e.g. the social justice component, the inclusion of in-factory training and consultancy) are not always considered a priority by enterprise owners or external funders, and this can lead directly and indirectly to enterprises not taking the training (e.g. because they are unwilling to pay, or there is other seemingly similar training available). However, this is not true in all locations, and even if it occurs in some places it is not the fault of the materials and methods *per se*.

**The institutional dimension** is being addressed through the capacitation of local implementation partners, outreach to lead buyers, and training of trainers. Implementation partners are active in each country and are engaged in training and organisation to varying degrees. In some countries they are now largely independent of SCORE programme, and able to increase their training of enterprises, develop training capacity, market training programmes, and attract non-ILO funding. This can make it difficult for SCORE management to keep track of impact, but overall that is a good problem to have. However, independent implementation partners already exhibiting the capacity to carry SCORE forwards beyond Phase III, are not present in all countries. This seems to be more a factor of opportunity rather than capability and relates to how well the product is suited to local

market conditions. In these cases, the influence of SCORE, outside a small number of SMEs, will only grow if implementation partners receive further donor funding.

**The financial dimension** is being addressed by helping implementation partners develop alternative funding models (both revenue from enterprises and direct/indirect grants from other organisations), and by encouraging lead buyers to promote or sponsor SCORE Training in their supply chains. The latter has been a specific emphasis in Phase III but has not brought the results hoped for. Assumptions about the presence of lead buyers and their willingness to provide funding were overly optimistic: international lead buyers especially have been difficult to access and mobilise.

Enterprises in many instances have proved unwilling to contribute to training costs, although this is not always the case and there are examples of matched funding that can be built on (e.g. China, Colombia). There are various reasons for enterprise reluctance (e.g. lack of capital, availability of free or cheaper alternatives, a culture of government subsidy, insufficient time or absorptive capacity to undertake training, lack of recognition such as training certification). The Phase III design has recognised the need to find a mixture of public and private funding to support future SCORE uptake, but the prospects for success vary with contextual conditions. In some cases, implementation partners face the prospect of 'owning' a product that will not land in the marketplace without external funding. Every country programme is trying to address this, and there are examples of undoubted success. Training in China and Indonesia seems to be financially viable, and Viet Nam is moving in this direction. However, moves to secure financial sustainability could be jeopardised if SCORE Programme staff leave before the end of Phase III.

## 6. Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Recommendations

### 6.1 Lessons Learned<sup>26</sup>

There are lessons to be learned from each country, but not all of them have programme-wide relevance. Country-specific lessons are set out in the country reports (Appendices 8-13). The main cross-cutting lessons apparent from Phase III are set out below.

1. **The conditions for success in terms of building a locally managed programme are increasingly evident.** The quality of SCORE Training is well-respected, and it provides workers and managers practical knowledge and experience to improve productivity and working conditions and increase decent work. The extent to which there is demand for the training, however, varies considerably according to local market conditions. Experiences in countries such as Indonesia and China show that it is now possible to deliver SCORE Training without ILO financial support or expertise, but this depends on a variety of local factors such as the accessibility and availability of non-ILO funding, and the pricing or presence of competing products and competing providers.

In general, enterprises in many countries are unable to afford or do not see the benefit of SCORE Training unless there is financial support. There is limited evidence that SMEs of the kind that would benefit from SCORE (i.e. smaller SMEs with only basic management practices) are willing or able to pay the full cost of training (although a significant number pay a proportion of the cost<sup>27</sup> and some markets have been distorted by the availability of free training. However, some SCORE national programmes and their implementation partners have been able to leverage such non-ILO support, and there is often funding or other resources available because of the importance attached to SMEs by government. The lesson here is that market conditions that

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<sup>26</sup> Lessons learned are also explained in Appendix 4.

<sup>27</sup> According to the Phase III Project Document, SME contributions are 30-40% in most countries.

affect SCORE's sustainability need to be (and can be) understood early on and taken into account in the design of training products as well as in marketing and capacitating local partners. Indicators to allow sustainability in the market to be tracked should be incorporated into M&E and other management systems.

2. **SCORE highlights the importance of having a strong link between Outputs and Outcomes/Immediate Objectives.** If this is not the case, then progress against Outputs can appear positive even though there are doubts as to whether the Outcome will be realised. For instance, capacitating implementation partners to engage with lead buyers (IO 2, Output 6) will not help achieve Immediate Objective 2 if the assumption that lead buyers are present in a sector or country is false. Therefore, investment in achieving this Output without considering other factors would starve other potential more impact-achieving activities of resources. Conversely, important Outputs and activities relating to Outcomes may not be captured in programme monitoring (e.g. the building of networks of SCORE-trained enterprises).

A lesson here is that the programme's assumptions need to be reviewed and tested in order to assess if Output-level achievements are aligned with Outcomes. For example, SCORE Colombia has achieved most of its Output-level targets relating to Immediate Objective 2, but it is still falling short on Outcome-level indicators. Tracking the validity of assumptions, enables the programme to take more timely action to evaluate and mitigate risks (e.g. the willingness of SMEs to pay for training was an important assumption, but the resultant risk has proved hard to mitigate in Ghana and Colombia). Other assumptions that could have been given more weight include the availability of alternative funding in a country and the national presence of lead buyers.

A review of current Outputs in the context of Outcomes could be carried out by programme management in order to identify if there are any revised Outputs and activities that are feasible in the time remaining in Phase III and which could better ensure Outcomes/Immediate Objectives were met (see Recommendations). This could be particularly effective given the knowledge the programme now has about the conditions for success at different levels. For example, important conditions for effective enterprise-level change include: a) having the right people attend the training (e.g. the cohort must include company decision-makers; Enterprise Innovation Teams with women can be more effective); b) understanding the company's absorptive capacity for new ideas (e.g. Is the factory big enough to accommodate changes? Is the owner supportive?); and c) understanding the times of year or the investment cycle when companies are most responsive.

3. **Changing requirements of M&E.** The M&E system has been refined over the course of the programme and comprises multiple components. It serves its purpose for programme management's tracking of immediate results, providing good and up-to-date information on activities and outputs. However, there has been significant progress in the field of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning since SCORE started. If the system was to be designed today based on good practice it would be designed to collect more data at outcome and impact levels and on key assumptions, plus the indicators selected might be fewer in number, but would be linked to critical causal steps in the Theory of Change. As outlined in the SCORE M&E Guide, the current indicators do not capture the magnitude or significance of change, and there is no beneficiary feedback, so it is hard to know how meaningful the changes achieved are. For example, it would be useful to have at least a simple scale to measure the magnitude or significance of change

(e.g. a simple rubric or evaluative scale) from manager/owner perspectives and from intended beneficiaries – i.e. (different groups of) workers.

The M&E system has been built up over the three phases of the programme. It has been adapted to meet changing demands, and now contains multiple components (e.g. M&E database, impact assessments in selected countries, tracking against performance plans, quarterly review reports). Most SCORE managers feel the system delivers what it is intended to even if it can take a lot of effort. However, there are three lessons for the future:

- a. There is little incentive for trainers/enterprises to contribute data once their activities are being delivered without ILO support. Consequently, countries SCORE Training without ILO involvement is high may be under-reporting the amount of training taking place, skewing SCORE's overall achievements for Phase III.
- b. As implementation partners take greater ownership of SCORE Training, they have their own M&E needs. In countries such as Viet Nam, the SCORE M&E database is being maintained by implementation partners, but local partners have different needs to the SCORE programme (e.g. tracking training activities, but also demonstrating training impact to prospective clients), and a lesson is developing systems tailored to those needs as part of capacity strengthening.
- c. While the M&E system has been fit for purpose in terms of tracking output, and some data are collected at higher outcome and impact levels, there are limitations of the approach for monitoring and evaluating outcome and impact as a means to inform adaptive management and learning.

Although at least one implementation partner is taking on management of the system (VCCI), it does not meet the needs of key stakeholders who will drive SCORE forwards beyond Phase III (i.e. implementation partners, trainers). It is already apparent that where ILO is not helping to fund training, they are reluctant to input data. This will worsen after Phase III, and ILO will find it increasingly challenging to track progress and impact. A major overhaul of the system is not feasible at this stage – unless the programme is continuing to a fourth phase. Programme managers could consult with implementation partners about what kind of system they need and consider supporting the development of this as part of capacitation. If a future programme is commissioned, it will be important to design an impact-oriented M&E system (see Recommendations).

4. **There has been a concerted effort to mainstream gender into SCORE Training and other programme activities.** Sectors where SCORE is active are often male-dominated. Women are more likely to be entrepreneurs in some regions rather than others for cultural and historical reasons. Therefore, despite continual efforts to involve women in SCORE activities, women workers are less likely to benefit from SCORE than men because they form a smaller part of the workforce in some of the sectors receiving SCORE Training.

SCORE has tried to ensure women's participation to the extent the underlying programme design allows. Although women are less likely to have been trained than men, they are present in Enterprise Improvement Teams, and performance against gender-specific indicators is largely positive where they exist.

In order to mainstream gender, however, any gender strategy needs to be integrated into the programme design from the outset. In SCORE's case, this would have meant ensuring that not only were training methods (including materials) robust from a gender perspective, but as importantly that sectors and regions were chosen based on gender criteria as is said to have

happened in later-starting countries such as Bolivia. Mainstreaming gender as part of capacitating implementation partners is also important, and SCORE provides examples of how to do this as well as the significance of social and cultural conditions in helping or hindering such efforts. Again, this should happen as soon as possible not least so that mainstreaming of gender and social justice more generally is carried out while the programme has significant influence over implementation partners' decisions.

5. **The SME target group is often unable to afford or do not see the benefit of SCORE Training** unless there is financial support and, in some cases, even with financial support. Some SCORE national programmes and their implementation partners have been able to leverage such support, and there can be funding or other resources available because of the importance attached to SMEs by government. The lesson here is that market conditions that affect SCORE's sustainability need to be (and can be) understood early on and taken into account in programme and product design.
6. **In some countries, there is an expectation that SME training will lead to certification or accreditation of some kind for the enterprise.** There are various factors that prevent SCORE from providing this service (e.g. ILO policy; the cost of maintaining a robust accreditation system). However, there is a growing trend for emerging economies to pay attention to standardisation and accreditation of training (e.g. Indonesia), and the potential impact of this on SCORE Training's sustainability needs to be considered. The MTE team agrees with SCORE management that it would be too costly and a risk to ILO's reputation if the programme was to consider carrying out enterprise-level certification itself. However, a lesson is that not addressing certification affects SME interest in SCORE Training, especially where this is an expectation amongst SMEs of some kind of recognition, or where countries are moving towards standardisation and accreditation of training. Recognising this issue as an opportunity and a barrier is something that should be included in any future programme design, and where it is already an issue there is an opportunity for country and SCORE Global management to propose options to address it during the remainder of Phase III (e.g. collaboration with ISO or national accreditation bodies). This would contribute to SCORE Training's sustainability, and equally address an issue that is likely to reoccur in other enterprise training initiatives.

## 6.2 Emerging Good Practice

### **Networks and communities of practitioners**

At the implementation level, there has been strong support for creative methods of networking and learning amongst stakeholders such as implementation partners, trainers and SMEs. This is linked to the overall goal of building the sustainability of SCORE. The networks are largely self-supporting and enable SCORE to have a deeper and more lasting impact than what could be achieved by training alone. They take different forms in different countries, but they have played a crucial role in building communities of practice in Indonesia and Viet Nam and have begun to create basic awareness in Colombia of the linkages between productivity and decent work. This is a necessary precursor to creating market demand and/or identifying joint solutions to related challenges.

Such approaches need to be context-appropriate and should maximize participation, multi-way communication and creative learning approaches to build up ownership and action. ILO should not seek to 'control them' or 'own them.' Their presence and organic growth support to the idea that future programme development should consider a social learning approach (see Recommendations).

Such networks can add considerable value to intervention design. For instance, they can reveal non-financial factors that explain SME difficulties in taking training (e.g. companies may be unable to send workers for fear of missing delivery deadlines; they may not have the absorptive capacity to take further modules after Module 1 or the Short Course). We have shown that enterprises are highly selective about which modules to take (page 53): networks of enterprises and trainers would provide more insight into why this is the case, helping with the design, promotion and implementation of future training.

### **Capacitating implementation partners to be owners of SCORE**

Implementation partners have the capacity and commitment to deliver SCORE Training (or -influenced training) beyond Phase III. This is central to Outcome 1 and the Development Objective. Given the right market conditions, they can carry out essential activities required for sustainability (e.g. attract funding, promotion, training delivery, training of trainers, market growth). This is only possible where market conditions are suitable (e.g. the SME market is underserved; funding is available). SCORE's goals for long-term impact are unrealistic if market conditions are un conducive.

SCORE provides implementation partners with the knowledge and resources to build their own programmes. They can deliver those programmes with a high degree of independence provided the market conditions are favourable and appropriate funding models are put in place. There is a wealth of experience in SCORE about how to capacitate effective partners, although this is not necessarily communicated through performance indicators, impact assessments and short case studies. It would be a missed opportunity for future ILO programmes if this experience were not analysed and documented.

### **Integrating SCORE into existing training agencies' programmes**

Funding SCORE Training outside of ILO has been problematic in some countries, and assumptions about lead buyers have been overly optimistic. Integrating SCORE Training into other organisations' programmes is one way of increasing SCORE's impact once Phase III ends. It contributes to sustainability in cases where other financial models are not feasible, or implementation partners are constrained. SCORE in China, Colombia and Viet Nam are amongst the countries that have explored this option. Embedding SCORE methods in this way requires national programmes to build relationships with potential government partners, introducing them to SCORE through promotional activities and training. SCORE then works with these partners at the appropriate level to help them design training curriculums, build training capacity and develop business plans. After this, SCORE can help mentor trainers and supervise training where appropriate.

This approach also allows enterprises to be accredited in line with the agencies' policies. This helps overcome the market resistance in some countries to training that does not lead to certification or other kinds of recognition. It is also appropriate given the increasing pressure from governments for training standardisation and accreditation in some countries.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> See the Indonesia country report for an example.

## Mixed funding models of training

The previous mid-term evaluation put considerable emphasis on SMEs making a significant contribution to training costs. Although SMEs are reported to contribute 30-40% of costs on some courses, and there are mechanisms for matched funding in some countries, it is unlikely that SCORE Training will be fully SME-funded in the short to medium term because of the barriers identified elsewhere in this report. However, SCORE offers a number of examples of good practice in creating mixed funding models, and these are the basis for SCORE Training's future sustainability. It is important to note that where these models are most developed (e.g. China, Indonesia, Viet Nam), ILO funding is not simply being replaced by another donor or funder. Implementation partners are accessing multiple sources of funding to deliver training and requiring SMEs to contribute as well.

These mixed funding models are sustainable for as long as private and public sector agencies prioritise SME development (something that is unlikely to change for the foreseeable future). In China and Indonesia, they already allow a large amount of training to be delivered with little or no ILO funding. The models themselves are devised by the implementation partners and reflect local opportunities and conditions.

## Adaptive management

Since Phase II there has been an increase in local ownership of SCORE Training and local stakeholder input has played a greater role in shaping national programme activities. The benefits of this can be seen in the growing array of training offerings available and the different funding models both of which are made possible because of adaptive management. Lessons about understanding and adapting to national conditions and the importance of building local ownership are part of good practice that can be taken forward in new country programmes and similar projects. They show the advantages of developing and testing key assumptions in the Theory of Change with implementation partners and ultimate beneficiaries so that they are as accurate and meaningful as possible. Colombia and Indonesia provide positive examples of local capacity. This kind of bottom-up approach would ensure that the eventual product satisfy a need before engineering a tool and institutional architecture for delivery which may not be sustainable. Enabling strong local ownership also highlights the roles SCORE Global can play in building a supportive infrastructure (e.g. accessing technical expertise, fundraising, fostering international networks, winning support of ILO constituents, brokering relevant partnerships, ensuring ILO principles are adopted in national programmes). The most significant difference between such a bottom-up programme and SCORE as it was originally designed is that any tools/methods do not have to be engineered centrally in the first instance, and then rolled out to national programmes; rather, they are an input designed around local needs and conditions, and only used where there is a demonstrable likelihood of worthwhile impact.

## 6.3 Recommendations

1. Extend the contracts for national programme staff in China, Colombia, Ghana, Indonesia and Viet Nam will end in the fourth quarter of 2021. Ending ILO staff inputs before the end of Phase III would be a false economy if it negatively affected sustainability. While accepting that Phase III has been designed so that implementation partners have a year to 'go it alone', the situation with Output-level progress means that there will often be gains if programme staff can continue in post. **The evaluation therefore recommends that the potential added value of extending contracts to the end of Phase III be evaluated quickly,** and additional funding be sought (e.g. through cost-savings) to enable extensions where appropriate. This is a high priority that needs addressing as soon as possible. **PRIORITY: High.**

**ACTION BY:** CTA and Regional Coordinators. **WHEN:** Short-term. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:** Medium.

2. Reassess the value of Outputs under Immediate Objectives 1 and 2. **The evaluation recommends that there be a review of Outputs and Indicators, with respect to the achievement of Outcomes, using a theory of change approach**, so that activities the programme is investing in are ones that are most likely to be impactful at the Outcome level. This should take place, as soon as possible, and include a reassessment of the assumptions in the logframe and the Theory of Change. The review is appropriate for both Immediate Objectives, but particularly Immediate Objective 2 where assumptions about lead buyers are proving problematic. In some instances, this will lead to less emphasis on quantified targets (e.g. number of enterprises trained), and more on components of lasting change (e.g. institutionalisation of SCORE). The review should be conducted by SCORE Global and national managers with input from implementation partners and interested members of the tripartite advisory committees. **PRIORITY: High. ACTION BY: SCORE national and global managers. WHEN: Short-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: Low.**
3. **Promote MIG SCORE in all national programmes because of its potential benefit for women workers.** The evaluation recommends that in the remainder of Phase III the training be shared with other countries, not only to encourage its adoption by implementation partners, but perhaps more importantly at this stage to encourage a debate about gender mainstreaming in SMEs. This could be achieved by a video documenting the context, content and use, and making this available online as part of a guided discussion with SCORE teams and implementation partners worldwide. More ambitiously, managers and trainers involved in MIG SCORE in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia could lead promotional events in other SCORE countries and at ILO headquarters. The potential impact of this makes it a high priority, although it is something that can be done gradually over the next 18 months subject to staff being in post. **PRIORITY: Medium-High. ACTION BY: SCORE national and global managers, MIG SCORE trainers. WHEN: Medium-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION: Medium.**
4. **Take steps to develop a more 'impact-oriented' M&E system.** Support IPs to assist their efforts to promote and maintain the quality of SCORE Training if/when ILO support ends. Undertake pilots in selected countries to identify and demonstrate the kind of outcome and impact-data that it is feasible to collect. Data should be collected on fewer indicators and a sub-set of countries, enterprises and impact pathways, to concentrate resources into generating more robust evidence on priority causal steps and assumptions. Beneficiary and intermediary beneficiary feedback should be included. Regular reflection and learning loops should be established. Final evaluation to be theory based, involve surveys of intermediate and ultimate beneficiaries and comparative case studies to test key causal steps and assumptions, use of 'Most Significant Change' and Contribution Analysis to assess the relative contribution of the programme.  
In order to help the final evaluation team assess impact (something particularly important if Phase III is the final phase), the MTE team recommends that the following be considered in **the final evaluation methodology:**
  - a. Surveys of intermediate beneficiaries for a random sample of enterprises that entered the training at the same time, and to use recall techniques,
  - b. Sets of comparative case studies can be conducted: Purposively selected cases should use the theory of change as a standardized conceptual and analytical framework.
  - c. A Most Significant Change approach could be considered to capture, in the absence of more robust baselines, what the major changes achieved are according to



intermediary beneficiaries (e.g. SME managers and owners) and intended beneficiaries and their representative organisations.

- d. Contribution Analysis, i.e. this is the method-neutral, meta-approach to testing contribution claims, through assembling different types of evidence. It may be more feasible to test certain causal relationships, e.g. one OSH-related impact pathway and one 'workplace relations' impact pathway, rather than the whole enterprise theory of change, i.e. collect less data, but more effectively. A similar case can be made for the institutional pathways. Comparative case study analysis, survey data and key informant data, should be assembled to construct a robust Contribution Claim Story, backed by evidence, and based upon a clear interrogation of underlying assumptions.

**PRIORITY:** *Medium-High. ACTION BY:* ILO EVAL. **WHEN:** *Short-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION:* *Medium.*

5. **Consider employing social learning processes in future programmes, recognizing the importance of local ownerships and sustainable delivery.** Properly facilitated SL processes are strongly supportive of the adaptive, bottom-up approaches that have become more prominent in Phase III. SCORE managers and other relevant ILO personnel should be capacitated to include social learning in programme design and management. National and sub-regional learning alliances could be piloted in one or two countries in the remainder of Phase III to jointly identify problems and solutions, building momentum for action. Support peer learning at worker and at SME owners and manager levels in *all* SCORE countries, creating communities of practice which could continue beyond 2021. Colombia, Viet Nam, China and Indonesia all have examples of these, and the evaluation has highlighted them as examples of emerging good practice. Document successful examples. **PRIORITY:** *Medium-High. ACTION BY:* *SCORE regional coordinators and national managers. WHEN:* *Medium term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION:* *High.*
6. **Building on the experience of engaging lead buyers to date continue to add to ILO SCORE and ILO's wider learning through specific activities.** First, in addition to engaging with US-headquartered global brands (e.g. Apple, Amazon), SCORE Global could engage with global brands headquartered in India, Korea or China which in many countries are at least as important. (For instance, Alibaba [China] is a competitor to eBay and Amazon that has a high profile across Asia; Gojek [Indonesia] is a platform for a vast array of SMEs that successfully competes with Uber across SE Asia.) Second, in addition to looking to lead buyers as a financial sponsor, they could be looked at as a source of expertise. Tier 1 companies have product engineers, quality control specialists and CSR experts whose experience might be relevant to SMEs. SCORE in collaboration with organisations active in such supply chains could explore ways of linking this expertise to implementation partners where there was interest. This is a low priority, but one that could be addressed during Phase III as part of SCORE Global's investment in building relationships with lead buyers. **PRIORITY:** *Medium-Low. ACTION BY:* *CTA. WHEN:* *Medium-term. RESOURCE IMPLICATION.* *Medium.*

## Appendices

## Appendix 1: Evaluation questions

Evaluation Questions	Indicator
<b>1. Relevance and strategic fit of the intervention, including validity of intervention design</b>	Degree of relevance and strategic fit, including design validity using an evaluative scale
1.1 Are the objectives of SCORE phase III intervention consistent with beneficiaries' requirements and country needs?	Extent to which SCORE objectives align with beneficiary requirements and country needs.
1.2 Are the objectives of SCORE phase III intervention in line with Norad's and SECO's priorities?	Extent to which SCORE objectives and Norad and SECO priorities are aligned as assessed by donors
1.3 Is SCORE phase III intervention linked to national and ILO's development frameworks (Country's national development plan, UNDAF, DWCPs, P&B, SDGs)?	Extent to which SCORE intervention linked to national and ILO development frameworks
1.a. Are the project strategy, objectives and assumptions appropriate for achieving planned results?	Assessment of appropriateness of strategy, objectives and assumptions for achieving results using an evaluative scale
1.a.1 Are the project strategy, objectives and assumptions appropriate for achieving planned results?	Assessment of the appropriateness of the design with respect to achieving results.
1.a.2 Does the project's Theory of Change allow for impact assessment, including assumptions/hypotheses that are underpinned by evidence and lessons learned from previous project phases?	Assessment of the quality of the Theory of Change and evidence generation in terms of impact assessment evaluability.
1.a.3 Does the project contribute to core ILO issues such as labour standards, and social dialogue?	Extent to which the project design enables a contribution to core ILO issues.
1.a.4 How well has the project drafted the exit and sustainability strategy?	Viability of the project exit and sustainability strategy (technical, institutional, financial)
1.a.5 What lessons can be learned for the design of future projects in the similar field of expertise, improving productivity and working conditions in SMEs	Design lessons generated on most effective approaches for improving productivity and working conditions in SMEs
1.a.6 Within the context of ILO goal of gender equality, disability inclusion and other non-discrimination issues as well as national level policies in this regard, to what extent did the project design take into account specific gender equality and non-discrimination concerns relevant to the project context?	Extent of gender mainstreaming in project design
<b>2. Intervention progress and effectiveness</b>	Assessment of intervention progress and effectiveness [High; Medium; Low]
2.1.1 Is the project on track in delivering its outputs in all countries (mapped out in the performance plans)	Number and proportion of outputs achieved in all study countries according to performance plans
2.1.2 To what extent has the project so far achieved its objectives (incl. the cost recovery plan) and reached its target groups?	Number of objectives including cost recovery plan achieved  No and type of target groups effectively reached
2.1.3 Concerning the institutional-level, how far has the capacity of partner organizations been built in relation to delivery of the outputs/objectives?	Extent to which partner organizational capacity to deliver outputs/objectives strengthened assessed (e.g. market, sale and fund raising for SCORE Training, certification and quality assurance)

Evaluation Questions	Indicator
2.1.4 Concerning the institutional-level, how far has the capacity of partner organizations been built in relation to SCORE exit and sustainability strategy?	Extent to which partner organisational capacity has been strengthened with respect to SCORE exit and sustainability strategy
2.1.5 What obstacles did the project encounter in project implementation? What corrective action does the project need to take to achieve its objectives?	Types of obstacles encountered according to programme partners and intended beneficiaries.  Extent to which corrective actions implemented by project
2.1.6 Within its overall objectives and strategies, what specific measures were taken by the project to address issues relating to Gender equality and non-discrimination?	Extent to which gender equality and non-discrimination adequately addressed through implementation of specific measures
2.1.7 How well has the project complemented other ILO, SECO and Norad projects (including Better Work) in the country?	Extent of complementarity between project and other ILO, SECO and Norad projects
2.2 Effectiveness of management arrangements	Assessment of effectiveness of management arrangements using an evaluative scale
2.2.1 Are time frames and work plans respected? How are contingencies dealt with? To what extent corrective action is taken when required?	Assessment of timeliness of delivery and extent of adaptive management
2.2.2 Are the Global and National Tripartite Advisory Committees functioning and what value do they add?	Assessment of the functionality and value addition of global/national TACs
2.2.3 Is the project systematically and appropriately monitoring and documenting information to allow for impact assessment at a later stage? Does the monitoring framework provide data to measure end-line results? What could be improved?	Evaluability of monitoring framework with respect to impact assessment
2.2.4 Is the project systematically and appropriately monitoring, documenting and communicating results, including on gender, at the country and global level?	Level of integration of gender monitoring, documentation and communication at country and global level  Extent and frequency of communication with policy makers and buyers
2.2.5 Is the monitoring and evaluation system practical, useful and cost effective for project management?	Extent to which M&E system supports project adaptive management
2.2.6 How effective is the project in sharing good practices between country components and communicating success stories and disseminating knowledge internally and externally (including gender-related results and knowledge)?	Project effectiveness in sharing good practices across programme  Project effectiveness in external and internal communication of success stories and knowledge generated  Number of promotional materials and guidance notes produced and disseminated to different audiences
3. Efficiency of resource usage	Assessment of efficiency of resource usage using an evaluative scale [High, Medium, Low]
3.1.1 Does the project make efficient use of its financial and human resources?	Resource allocation for financial and human resources  Budget spend

Evaluation Questions	Indicator
3.1.2 Is the implementation strategy cost-effective?	Alignment of implementation strategy and budget  Reasons for over or under-spend or divergence in strategy
3.1.3 Is the distribution of resources between staff and activities optimal?	Optimization of resource allocation between staff and activities  Budget spend
3.1.4 Were the intervention resources used in an efficient way to address gender equality in the implementation?	Proportion of budget allocated to gender equality  Budget spend
4. Impact orientation and sustainability of the intervention	Assessment of a) impact orientation and b) sustainability
4.1.1 How effectively has the project built national ownership and capacity of people and institutions?	Extent of national ownership and capacity building of relevant people and institutions by the project
4.1.2 Would SCORE Programme's sustainability model of monitoring and evaluation system work after 2021?	Sustainability of SCORE Programme M&E model post-2021
4.1.3 Are there business models applied in the different countries that seem more promising to reaching financial sustainability?	Potential of business models tested and identification of most effective approaches in terms of financial sustainability
4.1.4 Are the gender-related outcomes likely to be sustainable?	Extent to which gender-related outcomes, as identified by SCORE Team, are likely to be sustainable
4.1.5 Is the lead buyer engagement strategy sustainable?	Assessment of the sustainability of the lead buyer engagement strategy
4.1.6 Has the project reached sufficient scale and depth to justify the investment? Has the project found the right balance between scale and depth and the trade-off between them? Is the approach and its results likely to be up-scaled or replicated? Is the project a cost-effective way to improve productivity and working conditions in SMEs?	Overall assessment of project in terms of balancing scale and depth.  Assessment of the potential for scaling of the approach and its results
4.1.6 To what extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDG and relevant targets? (explicitly or implicitly)	Overall assessment of the likely long-term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDGs and relevant targets.

## Appendix 2: People interviewed

### Geneva and Bern, 12-13 September 2019

Date	Organisation/Individual
<b>12 Sept</b>	
Bern	Valerie Bersetbircher, SECO Natalie Rast, SECO
ILO HQ, Geneva	Michael Elkin, CTA SCORE
<b>13 Sept</b>	
ILO HQ, Geneva	SCORE team on ToC
	GTAC members (representatives of IOE, ITUC, ACT/EMP, ACTRAV)
	Na Eun Mun, SCORE M&E
	Norma Potter, SCORE global communications officer
	Roopa Nair, Better Work
	SCORE team

### Colombia September 23-27, 2019

Institution	Type of institution	Interviewees
SCORE team: Overview/ context	ILO	- Carolina Trevisi - Dayana Quintero
ANDI	Employer Association - ILO Constituent	- Maria Camila Agudelo
PAR Servicios	Lead Buyer	- Luis Miguel Zubieta
National Planning Department	Policy think tank - Government	- Juan Pablo Garcia - María Camila Patiño
SECO Colombia	Donor	- Christian Brändli - Catalina Pulido
Alianzas por el Desarrollo	Implementation Partner	- Oscar Cardona
UTIPEC	Sector Trade Union	- Alejandro Ospina - Nancy Amado
Constructora Colpatria	First MIG Score Implementer	- Diana Soto
ILO staff collaboration	ILO	- María Cristina Ramirez - Diana Salcedo - Paola Campuzano
3 trade unions (CGT, CTC, CUT)	Trade Unions - ILO Constituents	- CGT: Julio Roberto Gómez - CTC: Rosa Elena Flerez, Luz Mary Gonzalez

Ministry of Labor	- Government - ILO Constituent	- Martha Cecilia Bustamante
EQUILATERA (EQ)	Implementation Partner	- Mónica Cortes
Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá	Implementation Partner (Prospective)	- Martha Gómez, Frederick Arcila
Regional Competitiveness Council Atlántico	Local Government	Juan José Sauré
CEG SA	Implementation Partner	- Clara Torres
ILO staff collaboration	ILO	- Diana Salcedo - Paola Campuzano
Next Servicios	SME	- Andrés Araque
Productora Alimentos Alina	SME	- Marcela Romero
Chamber of Commerce of Bucaramanga	Implementation Partner (Prospective)	- Natalia Camacho, Maria Eugenia Largo
ILO SCORE Regional Leader	ILO	- Olga Orozco
Efigas	Lead Buyer implementing SCORE Training	- Monica Cristina Posada Cifuentes (Directora Administrativa)
Meeting with UniMinuto	Implementation Partner (Prospective)	- Ma. Teresa Bedoya

#### Ghana, 29 September to 05 October 2019

Organisation	Name	Position
Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations	I Baffour Awuah	Minister
	Bright Wireko-Brobby	Deputy Minister
	Kizito Ballams	Chief Director
	Emma Ofori Agyemang	Deputy Director/PPME
SCORE Training Solutions, Ghana (STSG) (IP)	Gabriella Koranteng	Certified SCORE Trainer
	John Wilson	Certified SCORE Trainer
	Emmanuel Asamani	Certified SCORE Trainer
	William Kagya Agyemang	Certified SCORE Trainer
Management Development and Productivity Institute (MDPI) (IP)	Dr Kwaky Odame Takyi	Director
	John Mensah Abosso	Senior Consultant
Ghana Hotels Association	Dr Kwasi Nyameke	President
Ghana Employers Association	Kingsley Lar	CEO
Ghana Trade Union Congress	Naa Ayele Sekyere	Senior Industrial Relations Officer
SECO	Emmanuel Awuni	Economic Advisor

Norad	Fred Pappoe	Senior Private Sector and Political Affairs Officer
Buck Press Limited (Enterprise)	Irene Sam	Human Resources Director
	Nana Yaw Ofosuhene	Graphic Designer
Solidaridad West Africa (Lead Buyer)	Nikolas Dodoo	
Secondi Takoradi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (IP)	Vincent Annan	CEO
Skills Development Fund (Lead Buyer)	Dunswell Eku	Deputy Fund Manager
	Roland Akabga	MLE Officer
Jireh Micro Finance (Enterprise)	Akorfo Ahiofor	CEO
ILO SCORE Country Office	Samuel Asiedu	NPC
	Christine Owusu	Assistant

### Indonesia, 17-23 November 2019

DATE	ORGANISATION	INDIVIDUALS
18/11/19	ILO Indonesia Director	Michiko Miyamoto
	ILO SCORE team	Januar Rustandie Dewi Budhiwaskito
	Indonesia trade unions (KSBSI, KSPSI-AITUC, KSPI) (including union trainers)	Ayu and Edoard (KSBSI) Eddie Kustandi (KSPSI-AITUC) Helmi and Agung (KSPI)
19/11/19	Focus group with government representatives from: - Ministry of Manpower (MoM) incl. Vocational 2 Training Center, Central Java's Province (BLK2), - Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), - Ministry of Industry incl. Politehnik APP Ministry of Industry (Mol), - Pusdiklat Ministry of Trade (MoT), - Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs (CMMA), - Ministry of Cooperative & SMEs. - Indonesian Small and Medium Enterprise Association.	At least one representative from each named organisation was present. Not all names were recorded, but included: Julia Silalahi (Director of Trade Education Centre, Ministry of Trade) Syahnan Phalipi (Indonesian Small and Medium Enterprise Association)
	Focus group with Indonesia Employers Association (APINDO) and implementing partners: - Semut Management Indonesia (SMI), - Parahyangan University, - Riwani Globe, - Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) - UN Woman	At least one representative from each named organisation was present. Not all names were recorded, but included: Isnanto (SMI)
20/11/19	SECO	Rémy Duiven (head of office) Dine Chandra Devi (national program officer)

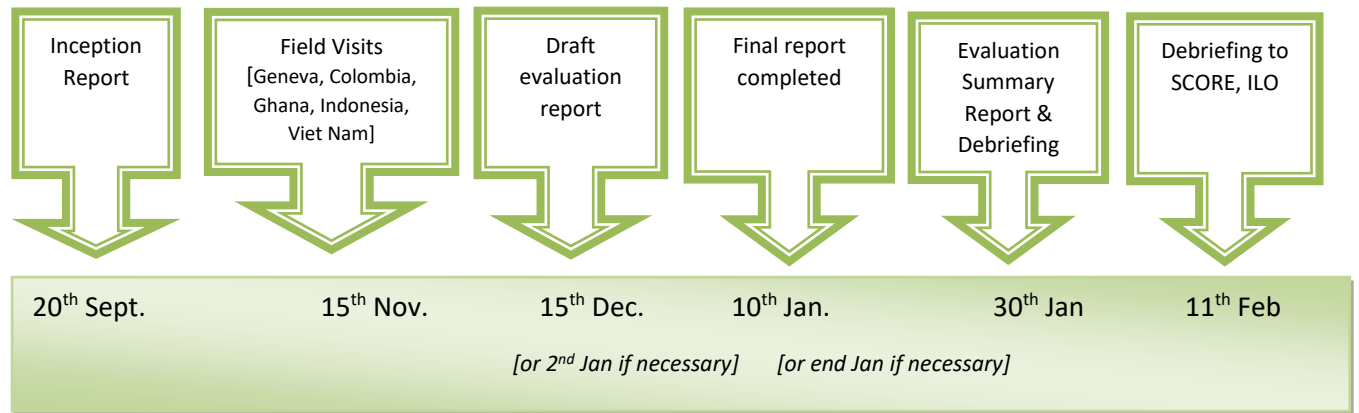


		Dewi (ILO project doordinator)
	Karya 2 Perempuan	Marta
	Sampoerna Tbk (funder), Bali	Agung (CEO)
21/11/19	Business & Export Development Organization (BEDO), Bali	Jeff (CEO)
	Rosada factory, Bali	Rosada (owner) + factory tour
	Spa Factory Bali, Bali	Owner + factory tour
22/11/19	ILO SCORE team	Januar Rustandie
	Better Work, Indonesia	Maria João Vasquez (CTA) Anis
	ILO Enabling Sustainable Environment for Sustainable Enterprises	Tendy Gunawan
	ILO (potential tourism project)	Muce Mochtar
	ILO Indonesia Director (debrief)	Michiko Miyamoto, Tendy Gunawan, SCORE team

### Viet Nam, 13-19 October 2019

DATE	ORGANISATION	INDIVIDUALS
14/10/19	SCORE team, Hanoi ILO National Programme Officer	Stephan Ulrich Nguyen Thi Hong Mai
	ILO Labour Economist	Valentina Barcucci
	HAWA/EU FLEGT Facility	Pham Duc Thieng
	Viet A Factory	Luong An Nguyen (Factory Manager) + various workers
15/10/19	SECO	Jonas Grunder Do Quang Huy
	Vietnam Industry Agency (VIA)	Nguyen Xuan Thuy
	SCORE regional coordinator	Stephan Ulrich
	SIPPO	Director Tran Nhu Trang
	VIA Industrial Development Centre	Le Xuan Tho + management team
16/10/19	SCORE team, Ho Chi Minh City	Phung Duc Hoang
	SME Technical Assistance Centre	Le Van Khuong
	Handicraft and Wood Industry Association (HAWA)	Nguyen Chanh Phuong + management team
	SCORE trainers and expert trainers	Le Phuoc Van Le Minh Quang
	Binh Duong Furniture Association (BIFA)	Le Phuoc Van
	Centre for Supporting Industries (CSID)	Le Nguyen Duy Oanh
17/10/19	SCORE team, Ho Chi Minh City	Phung Duc Hoang
	SAKI factory	Mr Thao + workers
18/10/19	Better Work Viet Nam	Nguyen Thi Phuong Thanh Pham Quoc Thuen
	Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI)	Bui Thi Ninh (Head of Bureau for Employers' Activities) Nguyen Le Nhat Thanh (SCORE Coordinator)
	SCORE team, Ho Chi Minh City	Phung Duc Hoang

### Appendix 3: Evaluation timeframe



## ILO Lesson Learned Template

**Project Title: Mid-Term independent Evaluation of ILO’s Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme, Phase III**

**Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/08/MUL**

**Name of Evaluator: NRI**

**Date: 2020**

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	<p>SCORE training is a well-regarded and to a degree innovative method, well-suited to the needs of smaller SMEs (under 250 workers) and, with adaptation, to micro-enterprises as well. It provides workers and managers practical knowledge and experience to improve productivity and working conditions and increase decent work.</p> <p>The extent to which there is demand for the training varies considerably according to local market conditions. SMEs in the SCORE target group tend strongly to be unwilling or unable to invest in training. However, it is possible to deliver SCORE training and SCORE-influenced training on a sustainable basis (i.e. without ILO support), but not in all countries or sectors.</p>
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	<p>SCORE is most impactful where the target SME group is not already served by other productivity-related training (e.g. Kaizen).</p> <p>Sustainability is best achieved where SMEs are a priority for development organisations, and they are able to fund SME training. In some countries/situations this funding is necessary to persuade SME owners to invest in training that has a public good component, especially when what they see as similar training is cheaper, less time consuming and does not address issues around working conditions and decent work.</p>
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	<p>SMEs and micro-enterprises with less than 250 workers.</p>
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cost of SCORE training is too high for many enterprises.</li> <li>• Enterprises are reluctant to pay for training if they are used to training subsidies (e.g. from government).</li> <li>• Third party funding is not available in every case.</li> <li>• SCORE is not seen as unique in some markets, or the social justice component is not valued by SME owners/managers.</li> </ul>

<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	SCORE methods can be adapted to suit local market conditions and demand. The training is of consistent high quality and well-regarded. Third party funding is available in a significant number of countries. SCORE methods are considered superior to other products.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	The market conditions that affect SCORE's sustainability need to be understood early on and taken into account in the design of training products as well as in marketing and capacitating local partners.  Indicators to allow sustainability in the market to be tracked should be incorporated into M&E and other management systems.

## ILO Lesson Learned Template

**Project Title: Mid-Term independent Evaluation of ILO's Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme, Phase III**

**Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/08/MUL**

**Name of Evaluator: NRI**

**Date: 2020**

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

<b>LL Element</b>	<b>Text</b>
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	SCORE highlights the importance of having a strong link between Outputs and Outcomes/Immediate Objectives and making sure these are incorporated into programme design and management. If this is not the case, then progress against Outputs can appear positive even though there are doubts as to whether the Outcome will be realized. For instance, capacitating implementation partners to engage with lead buyers (IO 2, Output 6) will not help achieve Immediate Objective 2 if the assumption that lead buyers are present in a sector or country is false. This situation can lead to an inefficient allocation of resources, either by investing in Outputs that are not adequately contributing to Outcomes, or by overlooking activities that have Outcome-level significance.  A review of the contribution of Outputs to Outcomes (including the validity of assumptions) would help in the prioritization of activities in the remainder of Phase III. This would include testing the assumptions in the Phase III Project Document and the underlying assumption implicit in the Theory of Change.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	Output-Outcome links are important for any programme built on causal linkages as set out in logframes and/more theories of change. Weak links are more likely to happen when the theory of change is not properly integrated into programme design and/or management. One potential

	consequence is that a programme sets targets and KPIs that are achievable rather than emphasizing outcome targets which are the most important to achieve.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	SCORE national and global management  ILO EVAL
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	Output-level indicators seem to have been developed based as much on <i>what can be achieved</i> as <i>what needs to be achieved</i> to deliver Outcomes. If a theory of change was integral to programme design and implementation, one would not expect this to happen.
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	Good progress is being made with many of the prescribed Outputs.  The programme introduced a revised Theory of Change during Phase III, although this was too late to affect design and it could be improved.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	A review of current Outputs in the context of Outcomes could be carried out by programme management in order to identify if there are any revised Outputs and activities that are feasible in the time remaining and which could better ensure Outcomes/Immediate Objectives were met.

## ILO Lesson Learned Template

**Project Title: Mid-Term independent Evaluation of ILO's Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme, Phase III**

**Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/08/MUL**

**Name of Evaluator: NRI**

**Date: 2020**

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	The M&E system has been revised/restructured at various stages during the programme, and the current one is intended to be more practical and accessible for implementation partners and trainers as well as SCORE management. However, it is still awkward to use, and more importantly is not delivering the kind of information that enterprises, future evaluators and implementation partners need.

<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	<p>The M&amp;E system is intended to capture information that can demonstrate progress and achievements to multiple audiences: SCORE donors, enterprises, SCORE managers, potential SCORE sponsors, etc. In Phase III, implementation partners have also become an audience for this data rather than just a data provider.</p> <p>The system has been built up over the three phases of the programme. It has been adapted to meet changing demands, but in terms of the underlying software and structure it does not seem to have been rebuilt and there is room for improvement, particularly if the programme is to continue.</p>
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	SCORE donors, enterprises, SCORE managers, potential SCORE sponsors, implementation partners
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	The current M&E system does not meet the needs of key stakeholders who will drive SCORE forwards beyond Phase III (i.e. implementation partners, trainers). It is already apparent that where ILO is not helping to fund training, they are reluctant to input data. This will worsen after Phase III.
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	Some implementation partners have taken responsibility for managing the system at country level.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	A major overhaul of the system is not feasible at this stage, but improvements could be made, through pilots to generate more evidence and programme managers could consult with implementation partners.

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**Date: 2020**

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	<p>In order to mainstream gender, any gender strategy needs to be integrated into the programme design from the outset. In SCORE's case, this would mean ensuring that the training methods (including materials) were robust from a gender perspective, and as importantly that sectors and regions were chosen based on gender criteria. Likewise, implementation partners should be capacitated in gender mainstreaming.</p> <p>If gender impact is not the primary goal for a programme, then its position in relation to other management and performance criteria needs to be clear (e.g. in the Project Document). For example, in selecting a sector to work with, what weight has been given to gender compared to factors such as market size, SME management capacity and prevalent working conditions? Are there trade-offs between gender and other aspects of a non-discrimination agenda (e.g. disability), and how are they addressed?</p>
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	<p>Sectors where SCORE is active are often male-dominated. In some regions, women are more likely to be entrepreneurs for cultural and historical reasons. The gender impact of a programme is intuitively greater in sectors where women workers predominate.</p> <p>Gender participation has been consistently emphasized in SCORE activities. Other areas of discrimination that are an ILO focus have not been given the same attention (e.g. disability, youth).</p>
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	<p>SCORE management.</p> <p>Implementation partners</p> <p>ILO departments</p>
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	<p>Women workers are less likely to benefit from SCORE than men because they form a smaller part of the workforce in the sectors receiving SCORE training.</p> <p>Entering into new sectors/regions using gender criteria is difficult in Phase III because implementation partners are focused on sustainability and capacitation.</p>

<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	SCORE has tried to ensure women's participation to the extent the underlying programme design allows. Although women are less likely to have been trained than men, they are present in Enterprise Improvement Teams, and performance against gender-specific indicators is largely positive where they exist.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	This lesson is primarily relevant for future programmes.

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**Date: 2020**

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	The SME target group is often unable to afford or do not see the benefit of SCORE Training unless there is financial support and, in some cases, even with financial support. Some SCORE national programmes and their implementation partners have been able to leverage such support, and there can be funding or other resources available because of the importance attached to SMEs by government. The lesson here is that market conditions that affect SCORE's sustainability need to be (and can be) understood early on and taken into account in programme and product design.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	The competitive landscape for SCORE Training varies between countries, and affects the uptake of offerings. In countries such as Ghana and Colombia, features of the competitive landscape such as the availability of free training for SMEs has had a significant effect on uptake.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	SCORE global and national managers.  Implementation partners.



<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ILO has little influence over the competitive landscape.</li> <li>- Barriers were either not identified or given sufficient weight during design and implementation stages.</li> <li>- Government policy-makers did not always deliver on what they promised.</li> </ul>
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The mixed-funding model for SCORE Training enables its sustainable delivery (although it is not feasible in every country).</li> <li>- SCORE has acquired a great deal of knowledge about how to build enterprise-level training.</li> </ul>
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	Global and national managers need to identify where there is interest in this kind of development, and identify who the right parties are to engage with.

## ILO Lesson Learned Template

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**Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/08/MUL**

**Name of Evaluator: NRI**

**Date: 2020**

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	<p>In some countries, there is an expectation that SME training will lead to certification or accreditation of some kind for the enterprise. There are various factors that prevent SCORE from providing this service (e.g. ILO policy; the cost of maintaining a robust accreditation system). However, there is a growing trend for emerging economies to pay attention to standardisation and accreditation of training (e.g. Indonesia), and the potential impact of this on SCORE Training’s sustainability needs to be considered.</p> <p>Recognising this issue as an opportunity and a barrier is something that should be included in any future programme design, and where it is already an issue there is an opportunity for country and SCORE Global</p>

	<p>management to propose options to address it during the remainder of Phase III (e.g. collaboration with ISO or national accreditation bodies). This would contribute to SCORE Training's sustainability, and equally address an issue that is likely to reoccur in other enterprise training initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Context and any related preconditions</b></p>	<p>ILO policy does not allow the kind of certification/accreditation that some SMEs want (and believe they can get from other training). A robust system run by SCORE would be too costly, and a weak one would be a risk to ILO's reputation.</p>
<p><b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b></p>	<p>SCORE global and national managers.</p> <p>Implementation partners.</p>
<p><b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b></p>	<p>Not addressing certification affects SME interest in SCORE Training, especially where this is an expectation amongst SMEs of some kind of recognition, or where countries are moving towards standardisation and accreditation of training.</p>
<p><b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b></p>	<p>Insofar as there is a national interest in standardization and accreditation, SCORE national and global management could play a positive role in helping to develop systems and processes suited to SMEs.</p> <p>SCORE has a wealth of experience that makes it an attractive partners for stakeholders wanting to extend standardization and accreditation in the formal economy.</p>
<p><b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b></p>	<p>Global and national managers need to identify where there is interest in this kind of development, and identify who the right parties are to engage with.</p>

Appendix 5: Emerging good practices

<b>ILO Emerging Good Practice Template</b>	
<b>Project Title: Mid-Term independent Evaluation of ILO’s Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme, Phase III</b> <b>Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/08/MUL</b>	
<b>Name of Evaluator: NRI</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Date: 2020</b></span>	
The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.	
GP Element	Text
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	Creative methods of networking and learning amongst stakeholders such as implementation partners, trainers and SMEs have emerged from the programme. These are often spontaneous and additional to SCORE capacitation activities, but they are clearly a positive contribution to the overall programme goal of building the sustainability of SCORE Training. The networks are largely self-supporting, and participants highlight their contribution in terms of creating awareness of the linkages between productivity and working conditions.
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	In Indonesia, the ILO SCORE approach built upon existing SME associations, facilitating the creation of communities of practice amongst trainers and amongst companies, including peer learning visits and exchanges. In Colombia, where the context is very different, recently an Academy approach has been facilitated which brought multiple-stakeholders together to share the SCORE approach. In Viet Nam, SCORE trainers have established a mutual learning ‘club’ for enterprises that have taken SCORE. In China, a more formal approach has been adopted (the SCORE Academy).
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	The learning practices facilitated have played a crucial role in building communities of practice in Indonesia and Viet Nam, and have begun to create basic awareness in Colombia of the linkages between productivity and decent work. This is a necessary precursor to creating market demand and/or identifying joint solutions to related challenges.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	Such approaches need to be designed in a context-specific way and should maximize participation, two-way communication and creative learning approaches to build up ownership and action. Impact assessment is not feasible due to the nature of the M&E data, but detailed qualitative beneficiary feedback provides evidence that such approaches can be effective in practice.
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	ILO and other actors supporting SME development can support such approaches in future SME development programming.
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or</b>	Such approaches are important to help deliver higher ILO Goals. Although process-oriented, they are key participatory practices which are essential to realise desired outcomes.

ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	
Other documents or relevant comments	n/a

### ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

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**Date: 2020**

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	Implementation partners have the capacity and commitment to deliver SCORE training (or -influenced training) beyond Phase III. This is central to Outcome 1 and the Development Objective. Given the right market conditions, they are able to carry out essential activities required for sustainability (e.g. attract funding, promotion, training delivery, training of trainers, market growth).
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	The above is only possible where market conditions are suitable (e.g. the SME market is underserved; funding is available/accessible). SCORE's goals for long-term impact are unrealistic if market conditions are uncondusive.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	SCORE provides implementation partners with the knowledge and resources to build their own programmes. The SME target group may not be able to afford SCORE training, but alternative non-ILO funding may be available locally and there are several country programmes that have successfully implemented a mixed-funding model.. The SME target group is an underserved market that stands to benefit from SCORE-based knowledge.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	The targeted beneficiaries are the implementation partners which may also employ trainers. Impact can be measured in terms of the amount of training delivered, the number of active trainers used, the number of enterprises reached, and the independence of the training (both financial and logistical).
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	Other SCORE countries. Subject to a detailed theory-based study of institutional development, this experience could be replicated in other ILO programmes where institutional embedding is important.
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country</b>	n/a

Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	
Other documents or relevant comments	n/a

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The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	<p>Integrating SCORE Training into other organisations' programmes. It is not necessary for SCORE Training to continue as an independent brand if there are other organisations that can adopt the materials and methods into their own activities. This contributes to sustainability, especially in cases where other financial models are not feasible or implementation partners are constrained. Three examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCORE Viet Nam is looking to have SCORE training embedded into the programmes of government agencies (SME TAC, VIA-IDC).</li> <li>• SCORE China has succeeded in integrating SCORE Training into government SME training programmes.</li> <li>• The Ministry of Productive Development in Bolivia has recently integrated SCORE Short Course as part of its training programme.</li> </ul>
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	<p>This approach to securing SCORE Training sustainability is most relevant where there are local organisations with the capability and mandate to build SME capacity, and where there are insufficient implementation partners to meet training demand. In some instances, it is quite possible that SCORE-influenced training and SCORE-branded training can flourish side by side (e.g. if there is strong demand and a large number of implementation partners as is the case in Indonesia).</p>
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	<p>SCORE national programmes build relationships with potential government partners, introducing them to SCORE through promotional activities and training. SCORE then works with these partners at the appropriate level to help them design training curriculums, build training capacity and develop business plans. After this, SCORE can help mentor trainers and supervise training where appropriate.</p>
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	<p>The intermediate beneficiaries are appropriate government training agencies/departments. The indicators are the amount of SCORE-influenced training offered, the number of enterprises taking the training (including worker and management participation), and the amount of training by the agency that uses features of SCORE methods (e.g. factory floor training).</p>

<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	Government training agencies (and other established training organisations with their own funding) in SCORE countries.
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	n/a
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	n/a

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The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

<b>GP Element</b>	<b>Text</b>
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	<p>In countries such as China, Viet Nam and Indonesia, SCORE Training is delivered through a mixed funding model that appears sustainable for the foreseeable future. This is important because although SMEs are reported to contribute 30-40% of costs on some courses, and there are mechanisms for matched funding in some countries, it is unlikely that SCORE Training will be fully SME-funded in the short to medium term because of barriers identified in the main report.</p> <p>However, SCORE offers a number of examples of good practice in creating mixed funding models. It is important to note that where these models are most developed (e.g. China, Indonesia, Viet Nam), ILO funding is not simply being replaced by another donor or funder: rather, the total amount of funding for SCORE has increased significantly. Implementation partners are accessing multiple sources of funding to deliver training and requiring SMEs to contribute as well.</p> <p>These mixed funding models are sustainable for as long as private and public sector agencies prioritise SME development (something that is unlikely to change for the foreseeable future). In China and Indonesia they already allow a large amount of training to be delivered with little or no ILO funding. The models themselves are devised by the implementation partners, and reflect local opportunities and conditions.</p>
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	<p>The success of mixed funding models for training depends on the presence of funders (private and public sector), their willingness to provide funds for SCORE Training. Mixed funding is difficult to establish where government or the private sector is already vested in other programmes or the value of SCORE Training is not recognized.</p>

<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	ILO funding enables trainers and implementation partners to establish SCORE Training's credibility. The training is then promoted to funders as a way of delivering their objectives. In order to avoid over-reliance on a single organization, SCORE national programmes build relationships with multiple implementation partners each with its own non-ILO funding sources.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	The higher level of training conducted in countries where the mixed funding model is established compared to other SCORE national programmes. Cost-recovery and independence of training.
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	Other SCORE national programmes. Other ILO market-based training programmes
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	n/a
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	n/a

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<b>GP Element</b>	<b>Text</b>
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	Over the course of three phases, SCORE has moved from a standardized model of delivery to one that is more adaptive. The shift towards adaptive management that makes SCORE Training better suited to local conditions is an example of emerging good practice that can be built on in the future. Since Phase II there has been an increase in local ownership of SCORE Training and local stakeholder input has played a greater role in shaping national programme activities. This is very important for successfully achieving Immediate Objective 1.  This move towards bottom-up design and implementation can be seen in the growing array of training offerings available and the different funding models both of which are made possible because of adaptive management. Lessons about understanding and adapting to national conditions are part of good practice that can be taken forward in new country programmes and similar projects.
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of</b>	This type of adaptive management can be adopted wherever suitable implementation partners exist. These partners and the ultimate beneficiaries are important to developing and testing key assumptions in

<b>applicability and replicability</b>	the Theory of Change so that they are as accurate and meaningful as possible. Colombia and Indonesia provide positive examples of local capacity, but there is no reason to think such capacity is not widespread.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	This kind of bottom-up approach ensures that the eventual products satisfy a need before developing a tool and institutional architecture for delivery which may not be sustainable. The most significant difference between such a bottom-up programme and SCORE as it was originally designed is that any tools/methods do not have to be engineered centrally in the first instance, and then rolled out to national programmes; rather, they are an input designed around local needs and conditions, and only used where there is a demonstrable likelihood of worthwhile impact.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	Adaptive management enabled by strong local ownership is a feature of SCORE national programmes with the greatest amount of training activity (China and Indonesia). It benefits implementation partners by enabling them to deliver more training, and SME owners and workers by increasing their exposure to training.
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	Enabling strong local ownership also highlights the roles SCORE Global can play in building a supportive infrastructure (e.g. accessing technical expertise, fundraising, fostering international networks, winning support of ILO constituents, brokering relevant partnerships, ensuring ILO principles are adopted in national programmes).
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	n/a
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	n/a



**Outcome 1: Implementation partners have embedded SCORE Training in national programmes and budgets Lead buyers support suppliers through SCORE Training**

**Output 1: Implementation Partners (IPs) and service providers have developed business plans to market, sell and organize SCORE Training and to apply for subsidies**

Nr of IPs receiving support for the development of a business plan for SCORE/BDS Training

Nr of IPs providing SCORE Training

% of SCORE Training cost covered by non-ILO resources

% of modules delivered with high independence

Nr of enterprises (% unionized) trained by IPs

Nr of enterprise staff (% women) trained by IPs

Average nr. of gender-sensitive practices per module per enterprise

**Output 2: Aspects of SCORE Training have been embedded in training programmes**

Nr of training programmes improving BDS (based on SCORE Training)

Estimated number of enterprises trained by programmes influenced by SCORE Training (indirectly trained)

Estimated number of enterprise staff (% women) trained by programmes influenced by SCORE Training (indirectly trained)

**Output 3: National training of trainers and quality assurance systems in place**

Nr of active certified trainers available (% women)

Nr of active expert trainers available (% women)

Average satisfaction with training (%)

Presence of national SCORE Training quality assurance system, managed by IPs

**Output 4: Policy-makers and social partners have increased knowledge on productivity, working conditions and SME policies**

Nr of policy makers and social partners trained (% women)

Nr of Tripartite Advisory Committee meetings

**Outcome 2: Lead buyers support suppliers through SCORE Training**

Nr of lead buyers promoting SCORE Training in their supply chains

Nr of lead buyers sponsoring SCORE Training in their supply chains

**Output 5: Comprehensive promotional materials and guidance notes (incl. on how to deal with due-diligence concerns) when targeting lead buyers have been made available**

Nr of guidance notes and promotional material developed or adapted by national SCORE team for country level use

Nr of case studies documented

**Output 6: Implementation partners have been capacitated to market SCORE Training to lead buyers and MNE sponsors using different engagement models**

Nr of trainings on engagement models provided to implementing partners

Nr of proposal presented by IP to lead buyers

**Output 7: Awareness has been raised of lead buyers on advanced supplier development practices that go beyond social compliance audits**

Nr of lead buyers that request specific meeting, information sessions, training etc. (with the potential objective to establish collaboration)

Appendix 7: Percentage of MTE countries meeting Output-level targets for SCORE Phase III

Outcome or Output	Percentage of countries meeting target
<b>Output 1: Implementation partners (IP) and service providers have developed business plans to market, sell and organize SCORE Training and to apply subsidies</b>	
Number of IPs receiving support for the development of a business plan for SCORE/BDS Training	83%
Number of IPs providing SCORE Training	83%
% of SCORE Training cost covered by non-ILO resources	83%
% of modules delivered with high independence	67%
Number of enterprises (% unionized) trained by IPs	50%
Number of enterprise staff (% women) trained by IPs	83%
Average number of gender-sensitive practices per module per enterprise	67%
<b>Output 2: Aspects of SCORE Training have been embedded in training programmes</b>	
Number of training programmes improving BDS (based on SCORE Training)	83%
Estimated number of enterprises trained by programmes influenced by SCORE Training (indirectly trained)	67%
Estimated number of enterprise staff (% women) trained by programmes influenced by SCORE Training (indirectly trained)	83%
<b>Output 3: National training of trainers and quality assurance systems are in place.</b>	
Number of active certified trainers available (% women)	50%
Number of active expert trainers available (% women)	67%
Average satisfaction with training (%)	67%
Presence of national SCORE Training quality assurance system, managed by IPs	100%
<b>Output 4: Policymakers and social partners have increased knowledge on productivity, working conditions and SME policies.</b>	

<b>Outcome or Output</b>	<b>Percentage of countries meeting target</b>
Nr of policy makers and social partners trained (% women)	100%
Nr of Tripartite Advisory Committee meetings	83%
<b>Outcome 2: Lead buyers support suppliers through SCORE Training.</b>	
Nr of lead buyers promoting SCORE Training in their supply chains	17%
Nr of lead buyers sponsoring SCORE Training in their supply chains	17%
<b>Output 5: Comprehensive promotional materials and guidance notes (including on how to deal with due diligence concerns) when targeting lead buyers have been made available.</b>	
Number of guidance notes and promotional material developed or adapted by national SCORE team for country level use	83%
Number of case studies documented	67%
<b>Output 6: Implementation partners have been capacitated to market SCORE Training to lead buyers and MNE sponsors using different engagement models</b>	
Number of trainings on engagement models provided to implementing partners	50%
Number of proposals presented by IPs to lead buyers	67%
<b>Output 7: Awareness of lead buyers has been raised on advanced supplier development practices that go beyond social compliance audits</b>	
Number of lead buyers that request specific meeting, information sessions, training etc. (with the potential objective to establish collaboration)	83%

Appendix 8: Bolivia desk review  
See separate document

Appendix 9: China desk review  
See separate document

Appendix 10: Colombia country report  
See separate document

Appendix 11: Ghana country report  
See separate document

Appendix 12: Indonesia country report  
See separate document

Appendix 13: Viet Nam country report  
See separate document