



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

SCORE - Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises

Quick Facts

Countries: Colombia, China, Ghana, Viet Nam, Switzerland

Final Evaluation: July-November 2012

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

ILO Administrative responsibility: EMP/SEED

Technical Area: Enterprise Development

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Project End: March 2013

Project Code: GLO/10/52/NAD,

Donor: SECO (US\$ 4,2 Million), NORAD (US\$ 4,2 Million)

Keywords: Enterprise Development, Workplace Practices, Productivity, Working Conditions

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

SCORE is a practical training and workplace improvement project to increase the productivity of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) while promoting respect for workers' rights. The project demonstrates best international practice in manufacturing and service sectors and helps SMEs to

participate in global supply chains. Through the SCORE technical cooperation project, the ILO is assisting government agencies, training organizations, employers' organizations, industry associations and trade unions in emerging economies in Africa, Asia and Latin America to offer SCORE training to enterprises.

SCORE's development objective is that SMEs are more sustainable through being cleaner, more productive and competitive and providing more sustainable and decent employment. The project is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- 1. Industry associations can market and coordinate enterprise-upgrading services to their local members.*
- 2. Service providers can effectively deliver training and advisory services for workplace upgrading on a commercially sustainable basis.*
- 3. Labour inspectorate services work with mass media to disseminate progressive workplace practices.*

The project is based on the participation of SMEs to a maximum of five training modules covering essential aspects (workplace cooperation, quality management, clean production, human resources, occupational safety and health). Each module is implemented through a combination of classroom training and on-site enterprise coaching with a minimum of three enterprise visits undertaken by SCORE service providers.

Present Situation of the Project

The project started in 2009 and has developed the following:

- 1. The global SCORE training package consisting of five training modules approved by representatives from unions and employer organizations. The package is available in eight languages and adapted to several sectors.*
- 2. A comprehensive training of trainers and capacity building programme for organizations that want to offer the training. To ensure quality, the ILO has introduced a trainer certification system that allows only qualified consultants to use the SCORE and training materials.*
- 3. A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework that follows the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) standard for results measurement including a database to monitor project activities and enterprise impact in real-time.*
- 4. The project piloted a public-private partnership agreement with the Swiss retailer COOP who is currently funding training of its suppliers in China using the SCORE training package.*
- 5. The project has built capacity in 19 institutions (government agencies, industry associations, training organizations) in seven countries to offer the training programme.*
- 6. 253 trainers (33% women) have been trained. These trainers have trained 233 SMEs representing more than 46,000 workers. Training consists of two days of classroom training of two managers and two workers, with typically three follow-up visits of consultants over the course of two months. More than 1781 managers and workers (65% managers / 35% workers; 33% women 67% men) have jointly participated in classroom training.*
- 7. All enterprises (233) participated in training on SCORE Module 1: Workplace cooperation, which is considered the mandatory module for enterprises*

interested in the programme. About 43% of enterprises take at least one more module after module 1 (the SCORE success criterion was set at 30%).

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The objective of the final independent evaluation is to assess the SCORE intervention, examine the approach, assess current impact and sustainability, and provide recommendations and lessons learned. The evaluation findings and recommendations will be used to inform future project strategy and operations design.

The evaluation covers the period from September 2009 to present, looking at the linkages between the various country projects and the global component to generate findings on the six evaluation criteria for all country projects and the global components and compare the lessons from other countries' implementation. A mid-term evaluation was undertaken in March 2011 which will be used as the baseline for appraising progress in countries where no fieldwork was undertaken (South Africa, Indonesia, India).

Methodology of evaluation

A mixed methods approach was used for the evaluation. An initial desk review was undertaken based on available project documentation and data through the SCORE papyrus platform and M&E database.

Fieldwork was undertaken in four countries, using the following methods:

- a) Key informant interviews using semi-structured interviews with primary stakeholders and tripartite constituents;*
- b) Enterprise visits including i) enterprise walkthrough ii) Senior management interviews iii) workers interviews in gender disaggregated groups*
- c) In-depth group discussion with SCORE trainers*
- d) Structured observation*

The evaluation followed a transparent and participatory methodology. In each country a

national consultant was recruited that contributed to contextual understanding of the project, in addition to speaking the local languages that the international evaluator doesn't speak (in China and Vietnam). The evaluation is carried out according to UNEG and OECD/DAC quality evaluation standards.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Validity of the intervention design and relevance

SCORE is not a typical ILO tripartite project – there is little involvement of the Ministry of Labour or Trade Unions – but its nature to be a demand-driven product places it more specifically on the employers' side.

More time is needed to specify the product brand, clients and implementation modalities: up to end 2013 for defining the product and a clear marketing and communication strategy, and a second phase over four years with a branded product and gradually increasing cost-recovery in line with an exit strategy accepted by the national partners.

SCORE as a product generally responds to the needs and requirements of most of the SMEs encountered, but it needs further tailoring and grounding on local context and legislation to be more marketable to SMEs. More demand-side contents are needed.

The technical approach based on sector studies that was followed is questionable: some assumptions did not materialize and many countries are feeling the economic crisis in a way that affects the clusters/sectors of the SCORE clients.

Quality and competency of the trainers is a key issue for the success of SCORE but also a challenge. There is some loss of motivation linked to the slowly implemented certification process for trainers.

A major effort is being done in providing M&E information that follows DCED standards and contains gender disaggregated information at the global, country and enterprise levels. At the global level the M&E information is very

detailed and comprehensive and provides valuable information to appraise real-time progress. This needs to be matched at field level by reliable data collection. More effort and supervision is needed regarding the data collected from the enterprises.

Gender is insufficiently addressed in SCORE, and there is no gender strategy. More efforts are needed to promote gender awareness and non-discrimination, as well as ensuring gender mainstreaming.

There needs to be a much more aggressive communication and information campaign regarding SCORE, not enough is being done to advertise it and publicise it.

Progress and Effectiveness

SCORE has clearly achieved some important results in SMEs in all four countries visited. Implementation of 5S, creation of an Enterprise Improvement Team (EIT) and preparation of an Enterprise Improvement Plan (EIP), knowledge development of the workforce, improved productivity and lower defect rate, generally better working conditions (cleanliness, social aspects) are all visible in the participating SMEs visited. However there is not yet a critical mass (e.g. sufficient number of participating enterprises) in each country that could ensure project sustainability. Different speed of implementation across the countries means that in some countries only module 1 has been rolled out.

Module one on workplace collaboration is effectively the cornerstone of SCORE and is rightly compulsory. In those countries where the module is passed down to the workforce level (Colombia, Ghana) there is a major change in management/workers relationship. This is a direct result of SCORE but the current qualitative indicators used by SCORE are not specifically capturing it.

Effectiveness of the project is generally very good as relates to the results of module 1. Overall it varies from country to country depending on level of implementation of the five modules, sectors and industries concerned,

and the quality/capacity of the trainers, the understanding of the national counterparts, and the support received from the various levels within the ILO. The implementation strategy should be more country specific in line with the partnership strategy to increase effectiveness. One potential way forward is to multiply the Public-Private Partnerships in supply chains where SCORE can address second tier enterprises – such as is being done with the Swiss retailer COOP in China.

Effectiveness of management arrangements and efficiency

The human resource structure for the project is very small, both at the Global Component level as well as in the field offices, which means that resources are quite stretched to ensure the smooth implementation of such a complex and innovative project. This is a very positive indication, although human resource level may be overstretched in a second phase and additional resources may be required.

The project had to deal with unforeseen constraints and events of various nature (covered in the body of the report under each country section) that caused a slow implementation of the work plan at the country level and led to an extension of the implementation period up to the end of 2013 for certain countries.

Impact orientation and sustainability

Impact cannot be seen in such a short period of time. The development results of the project can only be achieved over the long-term.

Sustainability is one of the challenges of the project for the next phase. To consider the three levels of sustainability as defined by the project (financial, technical, institutional) requires also a longer time frame, in which a branded product is being marketed to both SMEs and service-providers. This is not yet the case and should be one of the foci of the last year of the project 2013 before a new phase begins.

SCORE is a good and useful project that fills a gap and has great potential. It has further

benefited from the support of a very pro-active donor SECO at the global and country levels.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

R.1 The project needs to consolidate before it expands. It should use year 2013 for consolidation in all countries.

R.2 SCORE requires a second four years phase to become gradually sustainable from 2014 until 2017.

R.3 SCORE needs to develop a gender strategy and mainstream gender in the project.

R.4 SCORE has to define the product, branding, partnership and communication strategy for the second phase.

Important lessons learned

GP1. Trainers have in almost all countries made more enterprise visits than agreed, showing commitment and responsiveness to SME needs.

GP2. Inclusiveness of the tripartite members in SCORE training is a good approach.

GP3. The National Tripartite Advisory Committee in project countries is a forum where SECO has been able to contribute to SCORE implementation.

GP4. The SCORE training structure that combines two-day classroom with practical coaching in the enterprise for each module is a good structure.

LL1. SCORE is rightly targeting the SMEs with 50 to 250 workers as its target group.

LL2. A communication and visibility strategy has to be developed from the start of the project.

LL3. Results in complex regional projects are highly context specific and understanding of the context, culture, socio-economic situation, are key elements of analysis.

LL4. A case study analysis based on partnership strategy as an entry point can be used as an alternative to traditional sector studies.