Swisscontact—the development organization of the Swiss private sector—provides support to entrepreneurs in developing and transition economies. By helping develop vocational training programs, assisting small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and undertaking projects to improve the environment, Swisscontact empowers people to improve their living conditions and gradually free themselves from poverty.

Swisscontact uses non-formal training to increase poor people’s access to skills for employment and self-employment. Non-formal training is market oriented and competency based. Its content is modular and the delivery methods are adapted to the needs of specific target groups.

1 Summary
Swisscontact’s experience shows that some occupations do not necessarily require a lengthy and formal training to master them. Through its non-formal training (NFT) approach, Swisscontact develops short-term competency-based training oriented to market demand. This approach rationalizes time and resources allocated to each training activity, reaching more people with the same scarce resources. Shorter training periods are more appealing to beneficiaries because they can provide quicker access to an income-generating occupation. Swisscontact’s NFT approach also caters to people with very poor educational backgrounds, limited employment opportunities, and/or who often live in very isolated areas. In such cases, NFT ensures that the content is accurately transmitted, that training reaches remote areas, and that beneficiaries see a tangible result in the form of new sources of income. Matching delivery of training with the local market and stakeholder needs has proven to be an essential factor in Swisscontact’s successful approach.

2 Relevance of Action
2.1 Background
In developing and transition countries, poor people cannot fully participate in economic activities (either as employees or in self-employment) due to a lack of skills. Formal Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems do little to cater to the needs of people without formal educational backgrounds (e.g., school dropouts) or who cannot afford it. Besides, training provided through formal TVET systems often lacks quality and a true market orientation. Changing formal TVET systems is a lengthy and difficult process. NFT, therefore, has been devised as an alternative or complementary approach intended to increase poor people’s access to skills for employment or self-employment.

Swisscontact’s NFT is:

a. **affordable**, requiring minimal investments of time and money; it is provided in 1 to 6 months, which reduces the dropout rate;

b. **content focused**, endowing people with the specific skills they need for employment or self-employment; it caters to those with poorer educational backgrounds and who are not eligible for formal training;

c. **mobile**, reaching out to people in remote areas who can’t afford the cost or time to commute to training centers.

---

1 **Non formal education**: “Any organised and sustained educational activity that does not correspond exactly to the definition of formal education. Non-formal education may therefore take place both within and outside educational institutions, and cater to persons of all ages.” NCVER 2008

Formal education: “Education provided in the system of schools, colleges, universities and other formal educational institutions that normally constitutes a continuous ‘ladder’ of full-time education for children and young people, generally beginning at age five to seven and continuing up to 20 or 25 years old.” NCVER 2008

Informal education: “The acquisition of knowledge and skills that usually occurs outside the classroom.” NCVER 2008

2 Training duration depends mainly on the occupation, delivery model, and the standard required in the respective country.
Swisscontact’s experience shows that NFT interventions benefit from close cooperation with local stakeholders (e.g., local government, entrepreneurs) who can help enable better training delivery and a more effective school-to-work transition:

a. Creation of a participative model;
b. Local leaders are encouraged to plan and request training measures; because they know their community, they can promote and enable Local Economic Development (LED).

2.2 Target Group
As a facilitator, Swisscontact works with local partners (such as public and private training providers, business associations, entrepreneurs, local governments, trades unions, and employer associations) to reach poor jobless and/or underemployed men and women with limited access to skills.

The beneficiary groups include:
- Vulnerable people, namely young adults (15-35 years old) and/or people living in isolated areas;
- Youths living in the slums of major cities;
- School drop outs and people who cannot read or write;
- People with special needs (e.g., disabilities);
- Single mothers.

2.3 Contribution to Pro-Poor Growth
NFT aims at improving the livelihoods\(^3\) of people by providing them with skills to gain:
- employment,
- self-employment, or
- improved income through increased productivity.

This primary goal of NFT can be reached only if there is at least some economic growth. The pro-poor rationale is illustrated by the following impact chain:

3 Methodology
3.1 Methodology, Description of Proposed Activities, and Expected Results
Swisscontact operates as a facilitator in close cooperation with vocational training institutes and training providers, collaborating with experts from local enterprises to create occupation standards and, in some cases, to act as instructors. Swisscontact transfers technical knowledge to the vocational training system and

---

\(^3\) By “livelihood” we mean social, economic, psychological and physical assets for subsistence.
contributes its expertise to enhance training providers’ performance. Swisscontact always adopts the role of a facilitator to intentionally avoid the crowding out of local players or investors.

Non-Formal Training Modules share the following characteristics:
- 1 to 6 months intensive training (refer to footnote\(^2\) on page 1);
- Responsive to the target group;
- Competency-based and market-oriented modular curricula and training materials;
- Inclusion of some degree of enterprise-based skills training;
- Mobile delivery in order to reach those who cannot afford to commute to a training center or facility and/or who live in remote areas;
- Counseling and active support through moderators to promote vocational training and employment.

An NFT intervention follows several steps as illustrated in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Activities/Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Diagnosis/Trade Work Analysis                       | • Swisscontact conducts a local labor market analysis in cooperation with local stakeholders and/or specialized consultants in order to assess:  
  o The demand of the business sector;  
  o Vocational training needs;  
  o Opportunities for self-employment;  
  o Socio-economic conditions. |
| Trainee Identification                              | • Swisscontact holds a workshop, which includes a career guidance component, to raise awareness of the program and mobilize participants.  
  • Swisscontact forms a learning group to train local stakeholders and to identify and mobilize interested people in the community. |
| Financing the Training                              | • Swisscontact co-finances training (e.g., through training vouchers) and gradually reduces its contribution until local stakeholders cover the full cost.  
  • Local training organizations finance training.  
  • Participants always pay a percentage of the total cost (e.g., 10-25 percent in West Africa); when they cannot afford it they are allowed to pay in kind with goods and/or services. |
| Development of Training Modules and Programs        | • Swisscontact uses a variety of approaches to develop curricula and training materials (please refer to Figure 2 on p. 4 for an example).  
  • Swisscontact provides assistance during the complete cycle, from the trade or occupation analysis to the implementation and monitoring of pilot trainings. |
| Training of Trainers                               | • Swisscontact trains master trainers from successful training centers (those delivering higher quality training) and industry.  
  • Instructors are trained on:  
    o teaching material development;  
    o methods and use of modern media;  
    o training planning (e.g., workshop and laboratory management);  
    o adolescent psychology and adult learning approaches;  
    o application of modern, modular, and competence-oriented curricula;  
    o curriculum development.\(^5\) |

\(^4\) Crowding out takes place when an increase in public investment reduces private investment. A typical example would be the government increasing its debt, which increases the interest rates, thereby increasing the cost of lending for private investors.

\(^5\) People trained as curriculum development moderators are usually located at the regional or national level, and not at local training centers.
### Development of an Assessment Process
- Swisscontact selects assessors for various trades.
- Swisscontact trains assessors on how to assess qualification standards.\(^6\)
- Swisscontact develops assessment tools.

### Development of a Qualification System
- Swisscontact assists in the development of qualification systems,\(^7\) bringing together the training providers with industry (chambers and business associations) and regulatory bodies (mostly government institutions).

### Transition from School to Work
- To enable access to self-employment, modules in starting a business and entrepreneurship training are provided; internships are organized to allow trainees to gain real-world practical experience.
- Local stakeholders:
  - provide employment services;
  - organize product fairs for new start-ups as well as a start-up credit fair;
  - negotiate favorable conditions for start-ups (e.g., free spaces at the local market).

### Monitoring and Evaluation
- Qualified personnel revise the training programs (typically a specialized public training authority that also receives feedback from the private sector).
- Ongoing monitoring of the training quality and tracer studies provide impartial information to the authorities and to Swisscontact to enhance the program.

---

**Figure 2. Example of a Curriculum Development Methodology**\(^8\)

---

6 All standards are derived from industry. Swisscontact facilitates the development of standards by forming a sector committee (composed of recognized specialists in that trade, with practical experience and knowledge of the trade) to set training standards to ensure that training matches industry requirements.

7 Usually ministries and/or their examining boards, for example Workers’ PAS (see Annex 1).

8 Workers’ PAS is a Swisscontact project in Uganda that aims to develop a non-formal training competence recognition for graduates to be able to “prove” their competences in the labor market.
### 3.2 Implementing Partners, Roles & Responsibilities

Swisscontact works with various stakeholders and partners to effectively support NFT. Examples of stakeholders and partners, as well as their various responsibilities, are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder/Partner</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training Providers</td>
<td>• Mobilize/identify potential beneficiaries;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobilize financial and/or physical resources (e.g., land, classrooms, workshops, tools, and equipment);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Implement NFT;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Act as assessment center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>• Mobilize/identify potential beneficiaries;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobilize financial and/or material resources (e.g., land, classrooms, workshops);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Include NFT in local government development plans and budgets;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Actively participate in NFT stakeholder forums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Government</td>
<td>• Provide added credibility in the market for accreditation by recognizing NFT⁹;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Push for inclusion of NFT in local government development plans and budgets;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Actively participate in NFT stakeholder forums’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobilize public training providers to implement NFT;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pass regulatory framework for NFT and qualification systems;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide staff (e.g., to be trained as curriculum development moderators).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Commerce and Associations</td>
<td>• Identify needs for skilled human resources;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobilize/identify potential beneficiaries;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobilize financial and/or physical resources (e.g., land, classrooms, workshops, tools, and equipment);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contribute expert workers for curricula development;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide specialized trainers and instructors;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Manage the private sector qualification system, (e.g., Workers’ PAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobilize public and private training providers to implement NFT;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitor NFT activities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contribute to regulatory framework for NFT and qualification systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4 Sustainability

Swisscontact works to enhance local partners’ technical skills and help them acquire the experience needed to master the provision of NFT, ensuring the beneficiary group’s access to skills. Operational costs are covered from the very beginning of the project by local institutions and participants to create local ownership. In some cases training costs are co-financed, and Swisscontact gradually reduces its contribution until the project ends. Swisscontact invests only in system change, so financial sustainability is guaranteed if the partners have the will and financial ability to continue the training after the end of the project.

---

⁹ In order to achieve recognition of NFT from employers and the private sector at large, qualification framework also has to be recognized by the government (i.e., Ministry of Trade and Industry, the ministry in charge of the TVET portfolio, Ministry of Labor).
### Project References (Status July 2010, not exhaustive)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Constraint/Oppportunity</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Benin:** Training and employment support programme (phase III 2009-2012) | • When training is relevant and affordable (in terms of both time and price), small farmers and entrepreneurs are willing to invest in training to gain relevant skills. | • Develop a dual apprenticeship training system that combines enterprise and training center based learning.  
• Build capacity of system members, entrepreneurs, and trainers.  
• Strengthen trade associations.  
• Assist in development of quality assurance and financing schemes. | • In 2009, over 100 women have benefitted from training in technical vocational modules (making *gari* and derivatives, as well as other products) and associative management.  
• Training modules were developed in 12 trades for capacity building of over 2500 craftsmen (40% of which are women).  
• 35 vocational training centers have been strengthened through the management of Vocational Training Centre and the technical development of responses to calls for proposals.  
• 3 officials from the liaison offices of FODEFCA were trained on training techniques supervision.  
• The people in charge of coordinating training at the decentralized level of CNAB were trained on the organization, implementation, and monitoring of vocational training.  
• Databases have been established at three liaison offices and the agency’s regional FODEFCA.  
• 176 trainers have received a methodical and technical training (20% of which are women). |
| **El Salvador:** Training Unemployed Youth (phase III, 2009-2012) | • Young poor people (15-35 years old) in rural areas, (often school drop-outs or members of gangs known as *maras*) do not have access to training for employment or self-employment.  
• Private vocational training centers do not match. | • Creation of round tables (composed of multiple stakeholders: local private sector, labor ministry, civil society orgs., microfinance institutions, and the national training agency) that:  
  a) identify job opportunities;  
  b) identify the | • 12 fully operational multi-stakeholder coordination groups established, covering the whole country.  
• 10,000 participants trained with 70% placement rate, up from 35%.  
• 70% of trainees were women, 20% employed, and 80% self-employed; |
### Mali: Vocational Training Support Project (Phase II, 2008-2011)

- 90% of all Malians work in the informal economy; short modular training courses are well suited for their needs.
- The training sector aims to extend its programs to more than 7,000 people per year and to further develop training in new sectors adapted to the demands of people in rural areas and the agriculture sector, which remains relatively weak.
- There is a national training fund financed by the private sector and flexible training service providers to train people in remote areas.

#### Objectives:

- Identify training needs with local stakeholders (entrepreneurs, municipalities, provincial governments, etc.).
- Develop new training programs in:
  - a) curriculum development
  - b) supporting training providers.
- Facilitate training in 5 regions by networking training providers, the national training fund, government services, and provincial governments.
- Support training graduates in creating or strengthening their own businesses or to implement local development projects/initiatives (technical and financial support).

#### Results:

- In 2010, 7,000 (mostly young) Malians trained in short-term modular courses in local trades such as poultry, fish farming, bee-keeping, beef-fattening, car repair, masonry, etc.
- Training financed by the Malian government, the beneficiaries, and the national training fund.
- An average of 10 new training modules adapted to the local context developed every year.
- Up to 30 work experience projects/initiatives put in place after training reaches more than 1,200 local stakeholders.
- In sectors such as bee-keeping, poultry, and fish farming (especially in rural value chains), revenues of the beneficiaries increased by more than 50%.

### Vietnam: Strengthening the Vocational Training Centers (SVTC; 1994-2008)

- Existing training centers were ineffective in:
  - i) delivering short term skills training to poor people;
  - ii) providing effective job

#### Objectives:

- SVTC involved 37 vocational training centers.
- During the last 4 years, gender issues, life skills, and entrepreneurship training were included in technical

#### Results:

- More than 100,000 trainees per year benefit from better training.
- Job placement rate increased from 29% to 63%, on average.
placement services. training courses; people with disabilities were also included in mainstream training activities.

- Linking training centers, training authorities, and industry through joint activities, such as the development of curricula, job fairs, and opportunities for industry exposure for trainers.
- Training of management and key staff of training centers and training authorities.
- Training of instructors.

- 20 curricula and related training materials developed with industries.
- 500 managers and 16,000 staff of training centers and training authorities trained.
- 1,000 instructors trained.
- 150 instructors trained in gender and life skills, and integrated training piloted with 4,000 participants.
- 190 instructors trained in entrepreneurship and integrated training piloted with 900 participants.
- 160 stakeholders trained in inclusion of people with disability in mainstream training and inclusion piloted in 16 training centers.

### References

Annex 1 - An example from Swisscontact Uganda
Technical Qualification Process (TQP) for Workers' Passport

Candidates submit applications to TQP accreditation support office

UGAPRIVI reviews data

Diamond ICT enters data Qualification Progress Matrix

UGAPRIVI reviews process & criteria and decides if ready to pursue access

Candidates, Examiners & Assessors guided on process and accreditation criteria

UGAPRIVI plans and schedules assessment chart

Diamond ICT updates lists of trades, applicants and assessors

Candidates & Assessors are prepared on total no. of competencies in occupation or trade standard

Ready for accreditation?

Yes

Schedule on site accreditation review

Supervisor prepares the team, tools, equipments among others on site

Team conducts site accreditation review

No

UGAPRIVI10
delays decision of process & criteria and decides if ready to pursue access

Ready for accreditation

Yes

Schedule accreditation panel

Accreditation awarded

No

Training Provider upgrades deficiencies

Team submits report to UGAPRIVI

UGAPRIVI upgrades areas for improvement identified by team

Workers' Passport

UGAPRIVI - Uganda Association of Private Vocational Training Institutes