Brief Description of the Vocational Education Training Project in El Salvador

Background Information
The project aims to facilitate improved conditions for disadvantaged young women and men in El Salvador, enabling them to attend vocational trainings within the educational and vocational training system of the nation. The target group of the project, consisting of jobless or underemployed young men and women, has limited or no access to any kind of income: due to a lack of professional qualifications these people can not participate in economic activities, either as employees or independent small or micro-entrepreneurs.

The principle idea is to make a contribution to the vocational training system, in order to achieve the aspired results. The results can be measured by the number of trainees who completed the vocational training and therefore are able to earn a salary or increase their current income. The project therewith contributes directly to the reduction of poverty. In El Salvador, vocational training is offered by private and semi-private educational institutes. The semi-private Institute for Vocational Training, Instituto Salvadoreño de Formación Profesional (INSAFORP), assigns the instruction and vocational training courses through public bids.

Intervention Strategy
In order to achieve sustainability, the following strategic principles are applied within the project: Swisscontact’s operation will be limited to technical assistance in close cooperation with the semi-private institute for vocational training and training providers. Consequently Swisscontact will transfer technical knowledge to the vocational training system and contribute with its expertise to the enhancement of training providers.

Assistance provided by Swisscontact:
- Development of new, modular curricula and training material which are competence- and market-oriented
- Training instructors on development of curricula, designing teaching materials, utilization of media, training planning, adolescent psychology and the application of modern, modular and competence-oriented curricula
- Counseling and active support through moderators for the promotion of vocational training and employment1 in the rural area.
- Training of moderators and members of the working groups on training planning, local labor market analysis, monitoring of the training measures, placement service and aftercare of trained individuals
- Assistance during the planning and implementation of the pilot trainings
- Support in networking between different actors of the vocational training system

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1 Mesas de Gestión para la Formación y el Fomento de Empleo y Autoempleo
Basically, Swisscontact does not provide any funding to cover operational costs for the training of the target groups; this funding has to be provided by the national partners. INSAFORP plays an essential role in funding this part of the project. Swisscontact supports activities which are based on a previous diagnosis. Funding of equipment\(^2\) for the improvement of the vocational training providers facilities will only be provided by Swisscontact in exceptional cases and on a very small scale.

**Target Groups and Project Beneficiaries**
Jobless or underemployed young men and women in the rural area and suburban neighborhoods, young persons at risk\(^3\), young (within the last year) released detainees, small and micro-entrepreneurs as well as instructors.

**Impact**
The success rate\(^4\) of current 30% in basic vocational training was increased to 60% with the new vocational training courses offered. The average income increase of the trained persons went from a previous average of 1 - 2 USD per day to a new average of 8 USD per day.
Gender: In the training measures that have been organized by the local work groups, women have currently reached a participation of 84%. At the level of the whole project, women participation has achieved 70%, considering the training measures in the suburban area.
Ecology: The protection of the environment and careful management of the natural resources are taken into consideration in all newly developed curricula.
Social Standards: The engagement of private companies in vocational training is being promoted by the project.

**Outreach**
Up to this moment, the project is covering the whole territory of El Salvador. The expansion to Guatemala is ongoing right now.

**Some Data**
The following results have been achieved from March 2004 until Februar 2011:
Occupation descriptions developed: 37
Vocational training programs developed: 29
Trained young persons: > 9000
Training capacity: currently 2000 persons/year
Trained instructors: > 800
Trained unsalaried personnel\(^5\): 32
Trained moderators: 4
Swisscontact staff: 4 local, 1 international

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\(^2\) Machines, tools, a.o.
\(^3\) Young ex-gang members or young people at risk of being recruited by gangs
\(^4\) Number of persons which recently achieved an income through the vocational training measures or which have been able to noticeably increase their income
\(^5\) Members of the working groups in the rural area
**Funding Sought**
The project is looking for additional funding to facilitate the expansion of the project to Guatemala. In addition, we are looking for supplementary funding for new activities, like for example, working on the vocational training and preparation for life of children and young persons.

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