

Ex Post-Evaluation Brief

Uzbekistan: Vocational Education Promotion Programme



Programme/Client	Vocational Education Promotion Programme BMZ 2001 65 356	
Programme executing agency	Centre for Secondary Specialised Vocational Education	
Year of sample/ex post evaluation report: 2011*/2011		
	Appraisal (planned)	Ex post-evaluation (actual)
Investment costs (total)	EUR 18.7 million	EUR 27.7 million
Counterpart contribution (company)	EUR 10.0 million	EUR 17.8 million
Funding, of which budget funds (BMZ)	EUR 8.7 million	EUR 9.9 million

* random sample

Project description: The cooperation programme comprised the promotion of information and communications technology (ICT) at 32 selected vocational colleges teaching the obligatory grades 10 to 12. FC financed equipment for classrooms, PC laboratories and workshops and learning materials. As part of a complementary measure the production of teaching material, technical teachers' training and support for introducing an operation and maintenance scheme were financed. Complementing this, TC was engaged in revising ICT occupational profiles and teaching materials as well as training teachers in method and didactics.

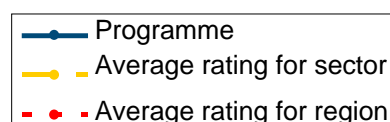
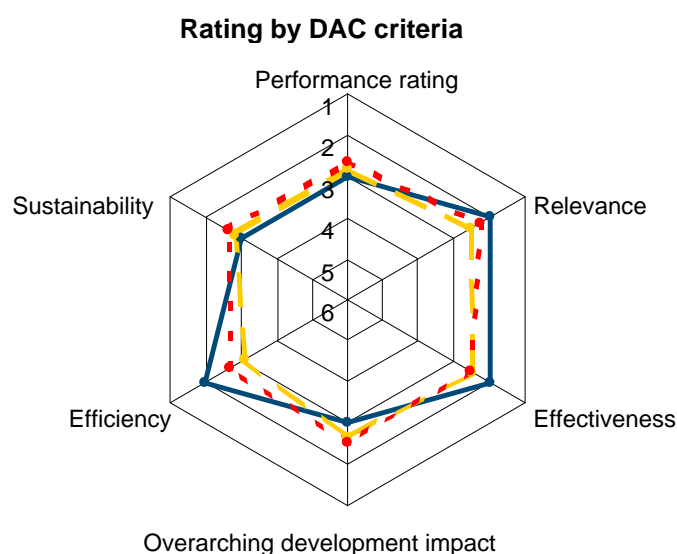
Objective: The overall development objective of the FC programme was to raise the employment prospects of graduates in ICT occupations. It aimed at upgrading training in ICT occupations in the selected vocational colleges. The postulated results chain is plausible: The improved quality of training at the programme schools has upgraded the labour-market relevance of graduate qualification, enhancing the employment prospects of ICT vocational school leavers.

Target group: Youth aged 15-19 undergoing vocational training at the supported 32 vocational colleges.

Overall rating: 3

Despite high relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, the programme is rated as satisfactory due to shortcomings in sustainability.

Of note: The very large counterpart contribution of Uzbek institutions amounting to 2/3 of total costs.



EVALUATION SUMMARY

Overall rating: Despite high relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, the programme is rated as satisfactory overall, particularly due to shortcomings in sustainability. **Rating: 3**

Relevance: The core problem of the shortage of ICT specialists in Uzbekistan was correctly identified in programme planning. The related forecasts have proved to be accurate and helpful. The results chains underlying the design were generally plausible. The analysis in the programme appraisal report was correct and all recent data (e.g. on eReadiness) indicate that ICT has been making inroads into almost all walks of life in Uzbekistan for years and has become an important national factor for business and industry and private households. There was a pronounced sub-sectoral bottleneck in ICT specialists from the outset in every respect. The objectives of the programme were fully in line with the needs of the target groups. The objective of improving vocational training in ICT subjects was highly relevant, as underscored by the large national counterpart contribution of 64% of total costs. The programme was also fully aligned with the key points and guiding principles of the BMZ sectoral strategy on vocational training in development cooperation (activity-based, practical training, young trainees as target groups, direct employment effects, raising productivity in enterprises).

The FC programme was an adequate follow-up to predecessor projects in Uzbekistan and cooperated closely with a parallel measure in vocational training in ancillary construction occupations now approaching completion as well as the Swiss Skills Development Project. In the view of the evaluator, however, too little account was taken of the need to support adequate capacity development in the executing agency. Considering its various, extensive tasks throughout the country, it was given far too little organisational, infrastructure and sectoral assistance. The financial capacity of the programme executing agency and/or the vocational colleges was also overestimated. Due to the insufficient focus on capacity development for the programme executing agency and the lack of direct gender measures, such as special admission regulations for young women and specific promotion of female applicants, the otherwise very high relevance is assessed as good (Sub-rating: 2).

Effectiveness: The FC programme objective was defined as follows at the time of appraisal: Improvement of training in ICT occupations in the selected vocational colleges. Objective achievement was measured with the following indicators: After programme implementation, 80% of the ICT training vacancies created are fully occupied (Indicator 1) and 80% of ICT trainees in the selected vocational colleges have passed their final examination (Indicator 2). Raising the quality of training at programme schools was aimed at enhancing the labour-market relevance of graduate qualifications and improving the employment prospects of ICT vocational school leavers. The FC measures have made a considerable contribution to these outputs. Without the equipment supplied, an acceptable standard in training quality would not have been achieved. Without the other FC contributions, up to 12,000 training places would not have been made available. The

complementary measure also contributed substantially to the success of the programme by preparing teaching material and training the technical teachers. Measured by the two FC indicators, the objective has been achieved in full. 85% of the ICT training vacancies created had been filled by the end of the programme, 5% higher than planned. At 87.2%, the success rate in final examinations surpassed the planned target by 7.2%. Altogether, effectiveness is assessed as good (Sub-rating: 2).

Efficiency: In its implementation phase, the programme made efficient use of the financial and personnel resources provided. Cooperation between GIZ and KfW proved to be generally effective, though considerable delays occurred in the early phase, above all in procurement (FC). Altogether, though, the collaboration of the different development cooperation instruments made a considerable contribution to production efficiency.

As to training costs, the available reference figure for the similar training provided by the Swiss Skills Development Project highlights the high production efficiency of the programme. At EUR 1,080 the training place costs in the evaluated ICT programme are lower by an average EUR 348. With the programme funding, considerable results have therefore been achieved in the qualification and employment of ICT personnel and also in promoting productivity in Uzbek companies. The outcomes of the calls to tender for supplies and services also indicate competitive procurement costs. The procurements themselves were hampered by lengthy local procedures and/or bureaucratic obstacles, but the scope of influence here was presumably limited.

The Uzbek vocational education authority has declared the newly introduced training as a showcase course for modern basic vocational training. This clearly shows the positive systemic contribution of the cooperation programme to improving the Uzbek vocational training system. The future employment prospects and career options for ICT graduates are good, although a distinction must be made between town (quite good, in part very good) and country (less good). Moreover, the promoted vocational colleges make large use of the buildings, rooms and equipment. At about 2/3 of total costs, the large national counterpart contribution attests to high allocative efficiency, although the current shortage of funds for running the colleges and the rather low pay of graduates by international standards, also resulting in a small number of emigrants, tend to detract from this. In all, the positive elements outweigh these shortcomings, so that efficiency is assessed as good (Sub-rating: 2).

Overarching developmental impact: The overall objective of the FC programme was defined as follows: Improvement of employment opportunities of graduates in ICT occupations in the selected vocational colleges. Objective achievement was measured with the following indicator: 75% employment rate 12 months after the end of training in keeping with qualifications. According to relevant available tracing studies, 67% of the graduates find employment a year after their qualification and/or 50% in specific ICT positions as mid-level specialists. Accounting for graduates who wish to take up an activity after their

training (that is, 79% of all graduates), altogether 88% of these have managed to make the transition to working life a year after their training certificate, 72% of whom with an ICT-specific position. 14% are still unemployed a year after completion of training. In comparison with 2008-2009, the number of graduates has risen sharply and the number who are still unemployed a year after completion of training is slowly declining. Altogether, the available information indicates that the training courses are very popular. They are held in high regard and are known for their high standard of recognised qualification and for being practice-oriented and activity-based. In summary, the programme has currently fallen slightly short of the overall objective, but the prospects for improvement are good so that in view of the largely positive results developmental efficacy is assessed as satisfactory (Sub-rating: 3).

Sustainability: The Centre for Secondary Specialised Vocational Education is still the executing agency and planner of the ICT initiative after the end of the programme and more or less actively pursues previously developed strategies for qualification. It cannot be assessed to what extent new management personnel were adequately trained after the end of the programme. The present staff turnover or rotation may have a detrimental effect on sustainability. The teaching aids prepared as part of the programme are still in use. To make sure the training courses keep in line with demand there will be a need for revision in the near future, which seems rather unlikely at present.

The current financial and personnel capacity of the Centre indicates that its budget is very limited. How far the much increased education budget at national level will benefit the vocational training sector in future remains to be seen. In the estimation of the evaluator, the quality standards of training cannot be maintained in future under the present budgetary framework of the centre and/or the ICT system. The assessments of local experts differ greatly on this. In particular, the heads of the vocational colleges see a great danger of not being able to maintain standards. Reportedly, 'little has been done' in the executing institution itself in recent years so that the organisational structure has remained more or less static. The important division for information technologies is understaffed and the previously developed EDP monitoring system is neglected.

The 32 vocational colleges involved till now have a good record of commitment, above all in the larger towns. In rural areas of some regions, the motivation and the inclination towards ICT qualification has diminished, however. The urban colleges can also cope better with such deficits in future by soliciting funds from sponsors than those in the more remote areas. That some 30 vocational colleges are now preparing for future training in the new ICT subjects in addition to the 32 participant schools attests to the ongoing large national commitment. In view of the financial constraints facing the vocational colleges already in operation, however, this strategy may prove ineffective. A positive development is the foundation of a network for information exchange among the growing number of colleges. Altogether, sustainability is assessed as satisfactory (Sub-rating: 3).

Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects (and programmes) are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and overarching developmental impact. The ratings are also used to arrive at a final assessment of a project's overall developmental efficacy. The scale is as follows:

1	Very good result that clearly exceeds expectations
2	Good result, fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings
3	Satisfactory result – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate
4	Unsatisfactory result – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results
5	Clearly inadequate result – despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
6	The project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated

Ratings 1-3 denote a positive or successful assessment while ratings 4-6 denote a not positive or unsuccessful assessment

Sustainability is evaluated according to the following four-point scale:

Sustainability level 1 (very good sustainability) The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to continue undiminished or even increase.

Sustainability level 2 (good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline only minimally but remain positive overall. (This is what can normally be expected).

Sustainability level 3 (satisfactory sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline significantly but remain positive overall. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability of a project is considered inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation but is very likely to evolve positively so that the project will ultimately achieve positive developmental efficacy.

Sustainability level 4 (inadequate sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project is inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation and is very unlikely to improve. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability that has been positively evaluated to date is very likely to deteriorate severely and no longer meet the level 3 criteria.

The overall rating on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all five individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Ratings 1-3 of the overall rating denote a "successful" project while ratings 4-6 denote an "unsuccessful" project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally "successful" only if the achievement of the project objective ("effectiveness"), the impact on the overall objective ("overarching developmental impact") and the sustainability are rated at least "satisfactory" (rating 3).