



# Evaluation Summary



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## Skills for Employment and Productivity in Bangladesh - Independent Midterm Evaluation

### Quick Facts

**Country:** Bangladesh

**Mid-Term Evaluation:** Jul-Sep, 2016

**Mode of Evaluation:** Independent

**Administrative Office:** ILO Country Office for Bangladesh (CO-Dhaka)

**Technical Office:** EMP/SKILLS

**Evaluation Manager:** Pamornrat Pringsulaka

**Evaluation Consultant:**

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**Project End:** March 31, 2018

**Project Code:** BGD/12/01/CAN

**Donor & Project Budget:** Government of Canada (Global Affairs Canada, GAC); Budget CAD 19,500,000

**Keywords:** Skills for employment & productivity; effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development System; youth, women and people with disability

### Background & Context

The B-SEP project is a follow-up to the past ILO implemented TVETR Project that has helped address some of the critical structural weaknesses in the national skills system particularly the development of the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP). B-SEP's aim is on improving the national enabling environment for

industry skills development and the increased employability of young and adult women and men with a focus on disadvantaged groups. It targets government agencies, employers, workers, and training institutions. B-SEP aims to enhance the market-relevance and effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development system. It operates with a complex administrative, social and political environment -

1. Skills Funding, Planning-Support Services
2. Competency Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) Quality and Relevance
3. Industry Skills Development; and
4. Improved Access to Skills

The Project also helps create a better trained and qualified workforce with increased economic opportunities in five target sectors - Agro-Food Processing; Tourism and Hospitality; Pharmaceuticals; Ceramics; and Furniture Manufacturing.

### Purpose, scope of the evaluation

It covers the project implementation between December 2013 and June 2016. Key focus were -

- To assess the progress made against the immediate objectives, expected outputs, as well as the delivery of quality outputs.
- To what extent the Project has already had a positive impact on its various stakeholders.

- To evaluate the management of the Project and Project-internal processes in view of yielding optimum results; the Project internal financial management; the coherence of Project documents, its communication with key stakeholders, the visibility of the Project and its results.
- To assess whether B-SEP has supported capacity building of its institutional counterparts.
- To evaluate how the Project has engaged with the tripartite constituents.
- To identify the challenges faced during the project implementation and ensuring sustainability of the project achievements.

### Methodology of evaluation

In planning and implementing this evaluation, the ET adhered to two guiding principles: triangulation and stakeholder consultation.

### Data Collection Methods (DCM)

- **Desk Review** of available secondary information - project documents, progress reports work plan, relevant policy papers.
- **Individual and/or group interviews (KII)** with key project partners, policy makers and strategic level officials, donor and other stakeholders.
- **Focus group discussions (FGD)** with partner representatives, Industry Skills Councils (ISCs), Employers Forum, Industry Training Institutes, workers trained by the project and master trainers, and co-trainers.
- **Field visit/Observations** to project beneficiaries (PB), target people, partners.

### Main Findings & Conclusions

### Validity of the project design

The fundamental premise of the project, i.e., developing skills and thus creating income generating opportunities for youth, and raising productivity is valid and sound, that features strongly in the project document.

### Relevance and strategic fit

B-SEP's programme objective is in line with the National Skills Development Policy – 2011, especially with the NSDP's major objective: 'Improve access to skills development for various groups of citizen including women and people with disabilities, encourage participation in skills development by industry organizations employers and workers and improve skills acquisition in communities'.

### Project progress and effectiveness

At its half-way of implementation, trends show B-SEP is making appreciable progress toward achieving its set target through activities of the four components.

Effectiveness of the project is characterized by its strong and effective management process, innovation in the Public-Private partnership models, partnerships with all key stakeholders. E.g. for the first time in Bangladesh, B-SEP project has created a mechanism within the NSDC to coordinate other skills ministries through inter-ministerial meetings and developed a reporting mechanism through G20 Coordination Progress Assessment Format. The above was accompanied by rigorous training involving ministries and departments dealing with skills in monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the NSDC Action Plan.

### Efficiency of resource use

B-SEP represents a good example of value for money (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity) and judicious use of resources.

## Effectiveness of management arrangements

The project so far demonstrates strong management arrangements with an effective and competent team of professionals. However, the effectiveness of management arrangement could be enhanced through the presence of a small but dedicated Knowledge Management and M&E team.

## Impact

While it is a little early to comment on the impact of B-SEP, its advocacy and institutional building actions have brought some visible positive changes to the development of the TVET sector - relates especially to development of the qualification standards and materials, apprenticeship models, employee-employer engagement through the ISC, private-public partnership, and gender and social inclusion, within the fold of TVET in Bangladesh. There are also emerging impact on gender, livelihood, and entrepreneurship development among various end beneficiaries.

## Sustainability

Evidences so far reveal the prospect for B-SEP to achieve a high degree of sustainability, from social, policy and economic dimensions. Enhanced capacity of partners, and focused, yet flexible approach to implementation would significantly increase its sustainability.

### Cross-cutting issues: Gender and Persons with Disabilities (PWD)

B-SEP is strategically focusing on gender and persons with disabilities integrated within its project document and, it is also creating tangible and appropriate opportunity for them by enhancing their capacity and skills.

## Recommendations

### Regarding design:

1. The project must undertake a quick survey on current market needs together with a rapid re-shaping exercise of incorporating a standard 4x4 LogFrame with quantitative and qualitative SMART targets.
2. Flexibility for including market driven new trades should be considered. A quick current Training Need Assessment (TNA) should be done to realign focus if required.

### Regarding Relevance and strategic fit:

3. The re-shaped design document could look at areas of alignment with the new SDGs and 7th FYP, and UNDAF.

### Regarding Project progress and effectiveness:

4. The PPP good practices across all sectors should be replicated and expanded where possible. Apprenticeship model and respective obligations of different stakeholders should be made clear to all parties.
5. B-SEP to play more proactive role in advocating with policy makers to ensure apprenticeship as a mandatory criteria at grass root level. B-SEP should also address branding of TVET/skills, similar to TESDA in the Philippines.
6. B-SEP to consider and contribute to sub-classifying jobs as the polytechnic curriculum is broad and not upto date for employment overseas and within the country.

### Regarding Efficiency of resource use:

7. The project need to pay more attention to important strategic activities such as Communication, Knowledge Management,

M&E and Organizational Learning which remain low with 3.6% allocation so far.

8. Similarly, targeted and results oriented study tours and overall knowledge management activities also need greater attention, both in terms of their strategic positioning in the project and resource allocation.

**Regarding Effectiveness of management arrangements:**

9. A dedicated Knowledge Management M&E Manager needs to be hired with a TOR delineating roles, not just for data entry task but for holistic M&E.

**Regarding Impact:**

10. The project must develop a strategy regarding expansion and replication of good practices.
11. Managing expectation of ISCs and clarity of roles need reiteration, possibly also coupled with workshops and exposure visits.

**Regarding Sustainability:**

12. ISC's ownership need to be strengthened among the private sector employers.
13. Appropriate communication and knowledge sharing practices need be in place in Bangla as first priority and translated as necessary in English.

**Regarding Gender and persons with disabilities:**

14. The proposed M&E Framework / tracking tool needs to centrally incorporate gender disaggregated data for future monitoring and evaluation actions.