

**European Commission: Investing in People Programme (2007 - 2013)**

**Developing Vocational Training for Informal Economy in Somalia (DVTIES) Project**

***Reference: EUROPEAID/129-128/C/ACT/TPS***

Final Report on

THE TRACER STUDY OF DVTIES PROJECT

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*November, 2012*



 

Funded by EU The project is implemented by DIAKONIA SWEDEN , IAS and CARE.

***This report has been prepared with the financial assistance of the European Commission.***

***The views expressed herein are those of the consultants and not necessarily those of the EC or the consortium members***

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Technical and Vocational Education and Training **(TVET)** in conflict and post conflict areas is a critical component of the socio-economic development programs as well as a fundamental component of reintegration. Thus, a consortium led by Diakonia Sweden and consisting of CARE Somalia and International Aid Services (**IAS**) has implemented a ‘**Developing Vocational Training for the Informal Economy in Somalia** (**DVTIES**) project in major towns of Somaliland, Puntland and Galmudug states. The project targeted the youth and was intended to equip them with necessary skills that will allow them to use their potential to the maximum. As the two year project nears its conclusion, it has been found desirable to conduct a tracer study in order to establish the employment rate of the graduates and document lesson learnt. Diakonia Commissioned AMS to conduct the study.

The study employed a number of data collection methodologies to collect data, both qualitative and quantitative. Secondary data was reviewed and primary data were collected from a number of respondents mostly the primary beneficiaries. Questionnaires were administered, group discussions conducted, key informants were interviewed and observation methods used in the field. The training providers availed two lists of trainee graduates from which we picked randomly and interviewed them mostly through face-to-face discussion but occasionally through telephone. Key aspects of the data collected were triangulated from other sources.

There were a number of limitations to the study including security concerns, limited time to trace the respondents, some of whom could not be reached due to the communication complexity in the region, while others have been detached from the training centres, not forgetting the underlying suspicion which limits information provision.

The findings revealed that the trade skills provided to the project’s beneficiaries were relevant as most of those employed were utilizing them with a high level of appreciation. It further reveals that most of those trained would want to make a career out of their profession and thus would appreciate more advanced training of the same skills.

The findings further reveal that people in the region appreciate certification which they feel is a plus to their life and will create for them better job opportunities that would improve their livelihoods. This suggests that the absence of certificates might hamper or slow the access to employment opportunities.

The study concludes that the project was well implemented and has met its objectives by empowering its beneficiaries and reducing the poverty level of the targeted group by providing them with skill-based employment and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

A number of recommendations have been made including the setting up of dynamic graduate tracking system of up to one year with the project, the timely issuance of certificates to the graduates and initiation of a post –training support including credit facility system that will provide initial capital for self employment.

# INTRODUCTION



## Project background

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (**TVET**) in conflict and post conflict areas is a critical component of the socio-economic development programs as well as a fundamental component of reintegration. Acquisition of livelihood skills results in battling poverty and social exclusion in favour of self-employment. It is in this respect that a consortium led by Diakonia Sweden, **CARE** Somalia and International Aid Services (**IAS**), with financial support from EU, has implemented a two-year ‘**Developing Vocational Training for the Informal Economy in Somalia** (**DVTIES**)’ project in major towns of Somaliland, Puntland and Galmudug states. . The overall objective of this project was to **improve the employment opportunities of disadvantaged Somali youth across the country**. The specific objective of the project was to “***Strengthen TVET system and training delivery methods that will foster employment promotion in Somaliland, Puntland and Galmudug states of Somalia***”. The action intended to achieve by targeting three result areas:

* **Result 1**: Expanding access to employment-driven vocational trainings
* **Result 2:** Building the capacity of training providers (training centres, training administrators and instructors)
* **Result 3:** Enhancing carrier progression and trainee competency by developing a Vocational Qualification Framework (**VQF**) for the three lowest levels of vocational training.

The project targeted vulnerable groups, mainly the youth and was intended to equip them with necessary skills that will allow them to use their acquired potential to the maximum. The primary target beneficiaries were **1898** youth of age group **16-24** years comprising persons with disabilities, youth including school drop-outs un-employed school leavers, untrained IDP youth and returnees, ex-militia and people from socially and economically excluded minorities. This was broken down into 600 in Institute Based Technical Vocational Education (IBTVET), 938 in Enterprise Based Technical Vocational Education and Training (EBTVET) and 360 in Technical Institutes (TI) that were trained at intermediate skill level. Additionally, 2400 persons mainly ex-militia, minorities and people living with disabilities, Women and youth were also trained in literacy and numeracy under Non Formal Education (**NFE**) component. There were a total of 20 skills available to the trainees, distributed in relation to relevance in each of the regions. The training period for **DVTIES** was nine months unlike other TVET programs run by other organizations which run for only six months - a factor the stakeholders considered of great significance. The Ministries of Education in Puntland, Somaliland and Galmudug, in collaboration with the **DVTIES** consortium have played significant roles in catering for the training needs of the youth and other vulnerable groups.



# **Purpose of the study**

The Tracer study is aimed at establishing the employment rate of youth that have been trained under the **DVTIES** project. The Tracer study will also generate information about the competitiveness of TVET graduates, their income level and common employment destinations. Results of this study will also be used to inform the final project evaluation and TVET programming as a whole.

## Specific objective of the study

Specifically, the study was aimed to;

* Identify employment destinations/career paths of **DVTIES** graduates, factors determining post-training careers and performance in their different career destinations. In this regard it is expected that the study will collect information/data on employment rate (formal, informal and self employment), graduates’ salaries/incomes, the duration of finding a job after training, job retention rates, career differences by gender, regional distribution, match between training and jobs taken up as well as overall economic and social empowerment of the graduates.
* Comprehensively analyze factors affecting external efficiency and relevance of training provided by the EBTVET and IBVET centres and determine factors inhibiting unemployment.
* Review and evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of the training from both the graduates and employers’ perspectives to assess whether trainees get the quality of training that matches labour market demands, job situations and performance standards.
* Make recommendations for improving employment opportunities and competitiveness of TVET graduates as well as effectiveness and relevance of the training.

## Scope of the study

The tracer study constituted the first batch and second batch of project beneficiaries (1898), of which 360 are level two graduates. Specific task of the assignment included but was not limited to:

* Review of the project document(proposal); past tracer study reports (from PETT and STEO projects); labour market survey reports; local economic development reports; Employment promotion service report; TVET policy documents; MoE standardized TVET curriculum materials and training guides used by the centres.
* Structured questionnaire for a representative sample of trainees that have completed their training by the time of the study.
* Focus Group Discussions (**FGD**) were held with **DVTIES** project graduates (employed and unemployed)
* Semi structured Interviews (**SSI**) were carried out with IBTVET and EBTVET instructors, a sample of employers and staff from the chamber of commerce.
* Observations of some of the trainings in session and observation of working conditions of graduates that have got employment.
* Organized and facilitated an introductory workshop for the project staff and selected enumerators, to ensure their understanding and acknowledgement of the framework, tools and proposed methodologies/processes.
* Undertook data collection using agreed upon methodologies and tools as well as supervised the project’s officers and enumerators during the data collection.
* Undertook a detailed analysis of the collected data using appropriate data analysis tools
* Prepared a comprehensive report detailing findings, challenges, lessons learnt and recommendations including how best tracer studies can be utilized

# STUDY APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY



## Approach

The total population size of **DVTIES** graduates that were targeted by this study was 1898 which was the sum of first and second batch of the trainees as explained in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NO** | **TRAINING COMPONENT** | **NUMBER OF TRAINEES** | | | | |
|  |  | Total | GENDER RATIO PER COMPONENT | | | |
|  | Male | | Female | |
| Total | % | Total | % |
| 1 | Technical Institute(TI-Level II) | 360 | 233 | 65% | 127 | 35% |
| 2 | IBTVET-Level I | 600 | 282 | 47% | 318 | 53% |
| 3 | EBTVET-Level I | 938 | 424 | 45% | 514 | 55% |
| Total for all components | | 1898 | 939 |  | 959 |  |
| Gender Ratio for all training components | | | 49% | | 51% | |

Of the above, the study took a representative sample of 25% that was distributed within the major towns of Puntland (Garowe, Qardo, Bosaaso, and Galkayo) and Somaliland (Hargeisa, Burao) and Galmudug (south Galkayo) on the basis of the relative numbers trained in of each town.

## Sampling

All those trainees who were interviewed were picked from a list of trainees for batch 1 and another for batch 2 that were provided by the centre managements. It is from this that the sample population indicated in the tables below was generated.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TOWNS** | **TOTAL POPULATION** | **Batch 1** | | **Batch 2** | | **SAMPLE POPULATION** | |
|  |  | IB/TI | EB | IB | EB | Batch 1 | Batch 2 |
| Garowe | 288 | 50 | 88 | 50 | 100 | 41 | 31 |
| Galkaiyo | 248 | 120 (TI) | 45 | 0 | 83 | 45 | 17 |
| Qardo | 162 | 50 | 30 | 50 | 32 | 41 | 16 |
| Galmudug | 578 | 100 | 130 | 100 | 248 | 70 | 75 |
| Bosaaso | 120 | 120 (TI) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 0 |
| Hargeisa | 222 | 50 | 80 | 50 | 42 | 30 | 26 |
| Burao | 280 | 120 (TI) | 100 | 0 | 60 | 55 | 15 |

## Data collection

The study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to collect and analyze data. Five survey questionnaires were designed to be used for data collection from training centres, graduates (employed and unemployed), as well as employers.

The questionnaire for graduates solicited information on their personal details, training details, employment status, on how often they change jobs, what they consider as strengths and weaknesses of the vocational training system and satisfaction levels of the graduates with the system, amongst other questions.

In addition to the structured questionnaires, the study also made use of group discussions where a number of graduates were given lead questions to discuss their situation. Stakeholders were interviewed with the aid of a list of probatory questions while observation method was used to triangulate data gotten from the interviews. Enumerators were used to collect field data under the supervision of the consultant after having undergone an intensive training that included a thorough understanding of the questionnaires.

The study also relied on secondary data sources supplied mainly by the project staff and the both the ministries of Labour and Commerce.

Data obtained from the field was cleaned and analyzed to obtain the findings presented in the tables/graphs below.

## Data Analysis:

The Data that has been analyzed was based on what was collected from primary and secondary sources. At the secondary level, the consultancy sourced data from the different EBTVET service providers, relevant Ministries and employers in the study sites. Categories of information gathered include data about the average incomes/salaries of the graduates, the duration to find job after the training, the job retention rates, the skills offered and their marketability/employability.

Further, a content analysis of the relevant government policies and documents, industrial memos and writings of the academia were undertaken.

In addition to conducting a review of available project documents from Diakonia and its consortium partners, the questionnaires were drafted with the intention of collecting mainly qualitative and inferential data. However, a portion of the findings included quantified and enumerated data reflecting personal and demographic information of the subjects who were interviewed; and was to help to construct a general purview of the employment rates for informal, formal, and self-employment sectors; the employment destinations/career paths of the **DVTIES** graduates.

The questionnaire was designed to gather the following information:

* Personal information such as age, marital status, gender, contact details and etc.
* Economic background of trainees
* Employer information & nature of employment.
* Obstacles faced by trainees in securing employment
* Training gaps as identified by trainees

A sample of randomly selected employers in each town was drawn from different sectors/industries and interviewed. These sectors include Construction, hospitals, computer colleges, media studios, Manufacturing, fishing, Restaurants and Financial institutions.

The team visited the participating training centres and altogether held discussions with centre managers. The centre visits were selected using the following criteria.

* The location of the centre distributed over the major targeted towns
* The institutes with a relatively large number of skill training courses
* The trainee enrolment ratios vis-à-vis the courses offered

The collected data was subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis using a variety of analytical tools. Triangulation of the information was a key element in the process of analysis given that for some graduates, it may have taken a considerable period since they graduated and thus the possibility of diminished memory.

Most of the information was presented graphically and presented from an individual region perspective recognizing the unique circumstances presented by this geographical, economical and social diversity.

## **Study Limitations**

The following limitation may have affected the accuracy of the findings in this report

1. Some of the beneficiaries could not be reached since some information like contacts retention and tracking system for the graduates with the training providers was by and large meagre.
2. Some of the sites could not be accessed by the consultants due to security concerns leading to the over-reliance on data collected by enumerators without requisite supervision and guidance.
3. Language barrier in the collection of primary data as the questionnaires were in English and had to be administered using the Somalia language. This was however mitigated by the comprehensive training provided to the enumerators.
4. Lack of cooperation from some of the beneficiary respondents because the issuance of certificates were delayed.

# STUDY FINDINGS

This chapter aims to present the findings from the beneficiary towns of Puntland, Galmudug and Somaliland. The sample was taken from the graduates and the stakeholders that include the employers, government Ministries/Departments and Centre managers. The findings will reveal the trend from each of the main areas that were outlined by the terms of reference. It will attempt to go further and provide a regional perspective of the trends, recognizing the fact that some have unique economic, social and geographical diversities that would impact differently on employment for the graduates.

The study findings showed that for **82%** of the beneficiaries the **DVTIES** program has given them the opportunity to attain an empowering skill that will bring a change to their life. It showed that the duration of the 9 months engaged them in more practice and that is what made it better than the other programs. However, the beneficiaries still request to be engaged more in practical lessons.

The study participants consisted of **58%** female and **42%** male. Of these, **63%** belonged to the first batch while **37%** belonged to the second batch. The graduates favoured a wide selection of taught skills. Hospitality and catering proved to the most popular skill at 13%, followed by ICT, tailoring, electricity and office management at 12%, 11%, 11%and 10% respectively. Beauty, basic journalism, tie and dye, cooling systems, handcraft, mobile repair, computer, plumbing and auto mechanic all scored under 10% with accounting being the lowest score at 1%. The figure below depicts the various types of skills as selected by the graduates.

Figure 1.0: Preferences by Skill Type

## Motivations for choice of skill

When questioned about the motivations for the choice of skills selected, the graduates pointed out the highest potential for employment, at 52%, as the foremost motivation for choice of skill. Ease of learning, at 34%, was the second most popular reason for selecting a skill. 6% of the respondents took up the skill because it was the only one available at the time. While 5% chose the skill because the training place was close to their residences and 3% had their skills selected for them by their parents.

The figure 2 below shows the different reasons for the choice of skills selected by the graduates.

## Means through which graduates learned of project

Information about the project was disseminated via various means including through the radio, project staff, friends and relatives. According to the data collected, means through which the information about the project spread most effectively, to a large number of people, was through friends at 37%. The radio was the second most effective means of spreading information about the project at 32% followed by through the project staff at 23% and through relatives at 8%.

The figure below depicts the various means of communication about the project.

## Sources of income prior to joining the project and type of employment sought.

Prior to joining the project, many participants relied on their relatives for income, while others were employed or self-employed. Respectively, the percentages were 76%, 11% and 13%. According to the data, none of the respondents relied on illegal activities to earn a living for themselves and their families. Asked whether they sought formal, informal or self employment, the responses were relatively uniform as 38% sought formal employment, 33% informal and 30% self employment. The figure below gives a visual presentation of the types of employment as sought by the graduates.

## Levels of employment by training centres and length of time before 1st employment after graduation

For a large majority of the graduates, 65% had not been employed by their training centres while the remaining 35% had been employed by their training centres. The length of time taken by graduates before securing their first employment, varied from less than three months, more than three months to more than six months. 79% had secured their first jobs, after graduation, in less than three months, 14% in more than three months and 7% in more than six months. . The graph below gives a representation of the various time durations before the graduates secured their first jobs after graduation.

## Length of time in current employment

Majority of the graduates, **78%** had been in their current employment for less than three months. **15%** had been in employment for more than three months, while **7%,** had been in employment for more than six months. . The figure below depicts the variations in the duration of time that the graduates had been in employment.

## Likelihood of selecting a similar skill

Queried whether, given another chance, they would choose a skill similar to the one taught, **62%** responded that they would indeed choose a similar skill. Of this number, 79% said that they would select a similar skill in order to improve or perfect their skill. 10% said they would do so in order to develop a career out of it. 6% said they would choose the same skill because they had already gained experience on the skill while 3% responded that it was because the skill they already had was easy to learn and 2% did not give a reason for selecting a similar skill. The figures below show the views of the respondents on whether they would choose a similar skill and the reasons for selecting the skill a second time round.

Of the **38%** of respondents who said that they would not select a similar skill, **71%** indicated that the need to have another skill was a motivating factor for selecting a different skill. **12%** argued that they now had a lot of experience about the skill and hence the need for experience in a different field. **6%** responded that their choice of a different skill was because there was no demand for their current skill. **12%** did not give reasons for selecting a different skill a second time round if given another training opportunity. The figure below give an indication of the various reasons of selecting a different skill as discussed above.

## Number of jobs held since graduation

Majority of the graduates, 91%, had only had one job since graduation while 9% had had two or more jobs. .

The following graph shows the number of jobs the graduates had held since graduation.

## Adequacy of current income

While comparing previous income and current income, majority of the graduates, 68%, maintained that their current jobs offered better remuneration than the one before. 14% said that their current income was just the same as the one offered in their previous employment while 18% said that it was worse than the one before. Still being questioned about their current income, 64% responded that it was just enough for daily living, 20% said that it was not enough for their daily expenses while 16% perceived that it was enough for daily expenses as well as for some small savings.

The figures below show the adequacy of current income and the differences between current and previous income

.

## Utilization of skills taught in current employment

Asked about whether they were using the skills learned in their current employment, 95% responded that they were indeed using their skills while 5% said they were not.

The figure below shows the levels at which the graduates are using their skills.

## Determining factors for selecting current employment

For the graduates, the reasons for being in their current employment varied from the jobs being the only ones available, having skills for the job, parents or relatives choice, encouragement from other people’s success in the chosen career and comparatively higher income compared to other professions. Having the skills for the job proved as the most popular reason for settling for a specific employment while choices of relatives or parents and a comparatively higher income each proved to be the least important at 7% each.

The figure below depicts the various reasons for selecting a particular type of employment.

## Levels of job satisfaction in current employment

In addition to finding out the motivating factors for choice of employment and the graduates’ satisfaction with their current remuneration, it was important for the study to evaluate the satisfaction levels of the graduates with their current employment and the reasons for their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. 86% of the employed graduates responded in the affirmative while 14% were dissatisfied with their jobs. Of those who were satisfied with their jobs, 40% were satisfied with in the current employment because the job generated income for themselves and their families. Due to being able to use their skills at work, 36% said that they were satisfied with their jobs. A further 7% were satisfied with their jobs because they had gained a lot of experience in their respective fields.

Of those that were dissatisfied with their jobs, lack of tools and a low income were the leading factors contributing to their current job dissatisfaction. Need for a better job was the least contributing factor.

The figures below give more details of the level of job satisfaction and the various reasons for the job satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

## Adequacy of skills and additional training

Given the level of job dissatisfaction among the employed graduates, it was relevant to find out the adequacy of skills of the graduates for effective performance in their current jobs. Less than 50% of the respondents, 45%, thought that their skills were just enough while 39% though that their skills were more than enough and 16% perceived that their skills were not enough. Pursued about their desire for additional training, an overwhelming majority, 97% responded that they needed additional training. Whether they preferred additional training in the same skill at an advanced level or a complementary course, 78% responded that they preferred to have additional training as an advanced level of the skills that they already possessed.

The figures below give detailed depictions of the level of skills adequacy among the graduates, desire levels for additional skills training and the preferences for additional training.

## Additional assistance to help get and retain a job

The respondents were also asked of other assistance that they needed in order to retain their jobs and get other jobs. EPS services was the most popular assistance cited by the graduates followed by support for tools, support from parents, availability of a certificate and finally the support of parents and relatives. The figure below gives an indication of the assistance required to aid the graduates to get and retain jobs.

The graduates finally gave suggestions which they thought would improve future skills training programmes. Top of the list was to increase the length of training period. Including a job placement in the curriculum and increasing the skills of the trainers was also key. The following figure gives a more detailed picture of the urgency of the various issues that the graduates deemed relevant for effective future training programmes.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

## Conclusion

The findings of this tracer study conclude that the DVTIES project has met its objective of providing alternative income source through the provision of demand driven skills training. The project was able to reach an employment rate f 82% although short of the projections due to reasons mainly related to issuance of the certificates. The prevailing economic hardships occasioned by the prolonged drought, over dependency on income from relatives especially those in the Diaspora, incidences of nepotism.

The study also concludes that there is a high level of appreciation of the trainings and all were found to be relevant and in demand; some more in some regions than others.

The study also concludes that there is a high level application of the skills learnt in employment but there is a need to advance the skills to more advanced levels.

It is the conclusion of this study that the issue of non issuance of certificates or delay thereof has negatively impacted on the employment rate of the beneficiaries and requires immediate attention

The study also reveals that there exists a high demand to offer more advanced skills training to those that have graduated in order to ensure that the employment levels so far achieved are not eroded on account of doubtful competence. The graduates themselves have given strong indications that they need to be trained further in order to perform better or even access more employment opportunities with improved incomes

The Findings also concludes that there is a direct relationship between the acquisition of skills and income from the employed graduates. This should be further enhanced through the government implementation of the labour laws to ensure that the employers pay their employees just wages. As it is, most of the employed graduates indicated that what they earn is just enough for their sustenance with little left for savings.

The study also concludes that the first six months after the graduation of the trainees are critical in accessing employment. It is assumed that beyond this period, the enthusiasm to look for employment wanes and the confidence levels of the graduates also fall. Some employers also doubt the ability of the potential employee to perform, having stayed out for far too long.

Finally the study concludes that this project was well implemented and was able to achieve its objective in relation to the ***strengthening of TVET systems that would foster employment creation in Somalia.***

### Recommendation

This study makes the following recommendations

* It is recommended that the stakeholders in the Somalia TVET subsector should initiate a programme that would offer more advanced skills training to the graduates in order to expand and enhance their employment and income opportunities. But in order to achieve this, there should be an audit of the availability of trainers who can offer such trainings within the country. As it is, both the graduates and the employers have voiced concern over the capability of the current trainers who are being used to offer basic skills.
* Employers should be encouraged to take in trainees as interns in their businesses beyond the training period. Most of those interviewed welcomed the idea in order to offer more practical experience to them.
* The training centres should issue certificates of completion or attained competencies to all the trainees on the day of their graduation while awaiting the outcome of the results after which National Certificates for the respective Skill trade should be offered. Furthermore the TVET sub-sector stakeholders should work closely with the Ministry of Education to resolve any outstanding issues that may prevent or delay the graduates from being issued with certificates.
* The study recommends the establishment of a tracking system for the graduates and continuous updating of their employment status for up to one year as part of monitoring and evaluation system. This would be the best source of determining the employment rate. Such information will only be triangulated with data from the centre managers and the graduates. This would leave the tracer study to deepen other aspects of employment.
* Most of the TVET programmes fail to acknowledge that although the trainees are youth and women, the fact that they come from vulnerable situations also means that they have responsibilities that require financial resources. Some could even be bread winners and household heads.
* The trainer capacities are often low in most of the training institutions. Also the EB trainers may have the knowledge but are not trained on delivery methodology. There should be a capacity assessment of trainers and a training plan developed. The current use of master trainers to help improve on the delivery and content of the training should be encouraged as a mitigating factor
* The Ministry of Labour has developed a comprehensive data bank of all the TVET graduates in Puntland including the skills competences. It is now the work of the ministry to approach potential employers and seek jobs for the graduates. The host trainers should also be obligated in the projects’ designs, regulatory frameworks and through Public Private Partnership Practices to take up a pro-active role in seeking employment for their graduates
* The chamber of commerce, being a major partner in the employment sector, should be involved in the **DVTIES** or such other TVET project as a key stakeholder
* The chamber members can play a crucial mentorship role to the TVET programme during training (where they could give motivational lectures) and after the training to guide those who want to be self employed.
* The chamber members should be encouraged to recruit the graduates especially if they are involved at early stages.
* Support to graduates after the training is commendable but rather than giving tool kits to individuals, it would be better if they are given within the business association.
* Proper coordination between the supporting organizations as well as the sponsors so as to avoid duplication and overlapping of activities (training)