

SKILLS TRAINING PROJECT FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUTH FROM MABVUKU AND TAFARA HIGH DENSITY SUBURBS

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 SCHOOL LEAVER PROBLEM AND UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS

At independence Zimbabwe witnessed a tremendous expansion in the education system. Both government and the communities invested heavily in education in order to increase access and educational attainment. Zimbabweans had and continue to have high expectations of education. Parents invest a great deal in the education of their children in the hope that, when they complete school, will be gainfully employed and provide for themselves and for other members of the family.

Primary school enrolments which stood at 800 000 in 1980 increased to 2.5 million in 1995. Secondary school enrolment increased even more rapidly from 66 000 to 712 000 pupils during the same period. Promotion from primary to secondary school which was prior based on attainment of good grades in grade 7, became automatic. This allowed those inadequately prepared for secondary school to go through. While this shift in policy increased the number of school leavers with 4 years of secondary education it left many unable to access further education in tertiary institutions which require at last 5 'O' level subjects for entry.

Statistics show that only 20% of the nearly 300 000 students completing 'O' level have 5 "O" level passes. The remainder does not. Most of them cannot be absorbed into public tertiary education institutions, which required a 5 "O" level entry. Some enrol in private sector colleges and institutions, which are quite expensive. The majority of them does not enrol any further education institutions and stay at home. This leaves a very large number of school leavers without many options and opportunities for further studies. Because of the academic nature of the "O" level curriculum, they are not ill equipped to engage in economic activities, and continue to be a burden to their parents.

1.2 NATURE OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

As indicated most secondary schools in Zimbabwe write the Cambridge ‘O’ and ‘A’ level examinations. The curriculum is heavily academic and does not offer employment skills. Except for schools that were modelled after those established in refugee camps in Mozambique and Zambia, that adopted the philosophy of education-with-production, the curriculum in the rest of the schools remained predominantly academic. Some schools offer practical subjects such as woodwork, metalwork, home economics, dress making and art. The skills developed do not adequately prepare recipients to get into self-employment ventures because the training is not accompanied with business development skills. A further constraint is that the spread of practical subjects is very limited and not diverse enough to cater for all the possible self-employment opportunities that may exist in the economy. The education system has therefore over time been producing educated but unemployable graduates.

There is also a disturbing trend, in which even those graduating out of technical colleges are now failing to secure formal sector employment in certain trades, proving that possession of technical skills does not necessarily result in employment in both the formal and informal sectors.

1.3 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

Over the years the economy has not experienced any real growth. The estimated annual growth rate of 5% of GDP has never been achieved. The absence of economic growth has had a negative impact on employment growth. The implementation of Economic Structural Adjustment Programme and the Civil Service Reform Programme has witnessed retrenchments in all sectors of the economy. The retrenches have added to the already swelled unemployment problems experienced by school leavers. The Second Five-Year National Development Plan (1991-1995)¹ estimated that over 106 000 new jobs would be created during the plan period, in manufacturing, trade and tourism, agriculture, education, construction, transport and communication sector and

¹ Second Five-Year National Development Plan 1991-1995 December 1991.

the personal and business services sector. The actual jobs created fell far short of this figure, at a time when more and more workers were being retrenched from both the private and public sectors including the armed forces.

The employment and productivity solutions for many therefore lie in the informal sector and SMEs. But they need some basic skills to be able to participate effectively in these sectors.

The problems of youth unemployment that have been highlighted so far have equally affected Mabvuku and Tafara, two high density suburbs of Harare. Being urban where there is a concentration of populations the problem is more serious and more visible, than a rural setting. The socio-economic problems associated with unemployment are more apparent, in such places as Mabvuku and Tafara. The rural-urban drift has also affected the suburbs and has increased the level of unemployment, and resultant problems.

In the face of diminishing employment opportunities in the formal sector the informal sector remains the most viable for offering employment opportunities. It is against this background that the project at Masasa VTC was launched.

1.4 MABVUKU AND TAFARA PROFILES

1.4.1 HOUSEHOLDS AND POPULATION

Mabvuku and Tafara are 2 high-density suburbs situated 19km to the east Harare. The suburbs were initially established to provide accommodation for cooks and gardeners for the whites in the Greendale and Highlands suburbs during the colonial era. However other people employed in commerce and industry and the public sector in Harare now also reside there. Mabvuku was established in 1952 and Tafara in 1967. Based on the 1992 census (the latest done) the population of Mabvuku is 46 881 composed of 52,8% males and 47,2 females. The total number of households is 10 599 with an average size of 4.4 persons per household.

Tafara has a population of 30 551 composed of 52,8 males and 47.2 females. The total number of households is 7 368,

with an average family size of 4.1. Given that half the population of Zimbabwe is under the age of 15, it means that half the total population of the two suburbs of 54 249 inhabitants is under the age of 15.

Both Mabvuku and Tafara are among the suburbs with the poorest populations in Harare, because most of the inhabitants have low incomes from their jobs as domestic workers and gardeners in the “white suburbs”. Even those employed in the private and public sectors are employed in low-income occupations. A fair amount of the inhabitants are retired and have very little or no income at all, because the jobs they retired from had no pension benefits. Being saddled with unemployed children in this harsh economic climate aggravates the level of poverty in the two suburbs.

The unemployment prevailing in the country has equally affected the residents of Mabvuku and Tafara since the formal sector is unable to provide employment to the large number job seekers. As a result some residents are involved in informal sector operations for economic survival. There are over 200 home industries in Mabvuku alone offering services in over 20 trades.

1.4.2 SCHOOL ENROLMENTS AND SCHOOL LEAVER POPULATION

Mabvuku has 6 primary schools. Enrolment statistics of 1998 show that the six schools had a total enrolment of 7 442 pupils comprising of 3 743 boys and 3 699 girls.

Tafara has four government schools primary schools with a total enrolment of 4 742 comprising of 2 407 boys and 2 335 girls for the same period. Thus the total primary school enrolment for 1998 for the two suburbs was 12 184.

There is one secondary school in Mabvuku with a total enrolment of 2 431 pupils comprising of 1 212 males and 1 219 females. Of this total only 258 were doing ‘A’ levels and the remainder, 2 173 were doing ‘O’ level. Mabvuku High School is the only secondary school offering “A” level classes in both suburbs. Of those in ‘O’ level 502 were doing the final year of ‘O’ level. This shows that many of

those completing ‘O’ level who do not proceed to ‘A’ level each year, given that zoning is not strictly adhered to for “A” level classes. As a result pupils from outside Mabvuku and Tafara enrol for “A” level in Mabvuku High School thus limiting further opportunities for “local” students.

Tafara has two secondary schools with a total enrolment of 4 097 pupils in 1998, comprising of 2 195 males and 1 902 females. Both schools do not offer ‘A’ level. Of these pupils 790 were in the final year of ‘O’ level. Thus those would aspire for ‘A’ will have to be considered at Mabvuku High School or seek places outside Tafara and Mabvuku. These statistics reveal that of the 502 pupils who were in their final year of ‘O’ level at Mabvuku High and 790 at the two schools in Tafara, compete for the 258 ‘A’ level places available at Mabvuku High. This suggests a 20% absorption rate at this level.

While the school curriculum is generally academic the three secondary schools offer practical subjects, which could provide some skills for self-employment. Mabvuku High and Tafara High offer Woodwork, Metal Work, Fashion and Fabrics, Food and Nutrition, and Technical Graphics. Tafara High 2 offers Agriculture, Building, and Fashion and Fabrics.

1.4.3 MAIN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN MABVUKU AND TAFARA

Mabvuku and Tafara suburbs have very limited potential for formal sector employment. Circle Cement is the largest factory that has capacity to provide employment for the

Box 1 INFORMAL SECTOR ACTIVITIES

Vegetable and fruit vending
Building materials and hardware
Tuckshops
Tailoring
Electrical appliance repair
Motor cycle repair
Metal fabrication and welding
Granite design, tombstones, coffins and funeral services
Motor car repair
Panel beating and spray painting
Upholstery and car trimming
Motor spares distribution
Car wash and engine cleaning
Grinding mill
Scrap metal dealer
Hair dressing
Dress making
Radio and TV repair
Second hand clothes dealer
Cement block manufacturing
Carpentry and joinery
Fire wood vending
Basket weaving and quilt making
Umbrella repair
Auto electrician

inhabitants, but it does not limit its employees to residents of these two suburbs only. Near by are the two industrial areas of Masasa and Ruwa that could offer employment opportunities with the necessary skills. The majority of the youth do not possess the skills required by these local industries. There are also a number of retail outlets owned and managed by indigenous businessmen. These provide limited employment opportunities for the unemployed. Box 1 shows some of the trades and businesses in the two suburbs. These are usually one-person operations with limited employment opportunities.

As a result of this limitation of employment opportunities Mabvuku and Tafara, like all other high-density suburbs have a wide array of informal sector activities. The most prevalent is vending in vegetables, fruit and other agricultural products in a season. These activities provide much needed income for sustenance of many families. Most of this vending occurs along the street and at street corners, and at bus stops, which provide a good catchment for customers.

The informal sector therefore offers the most in terms of employment opportunities. In recognition of this the City of Harare has set aside some industrial areas where local entrepreneurs can set up workshops. However some of these business stands are not serviced, and lack basic facilities like running water, electricity and toilets. Some informal sector operators prefer carry out their business operations in their back yards, where some basic like electricity and running water are available, violation of the City's by-laws which prohibit this practice.

The two suburbs have experienced an influx of people from other centres who live as lodgers in wooden shacks constructed at the back of many of the houses. This development has over the last few years increased the number of residence beyond those recorded during the 1992 census. This development, in addition to increasing the number of unemployed persons, also creates opportunities for goods and services that can be exploited to create employment opportunities.

The project was therefore designed to provide the unemployed youth of these two suburbs so that they could create employment for themselves and in the process address the needs for goods and services for an expanding population. The discussion will focus on the training initiative and the results of that training. It will also highlight some of the problems and constraints that inhibited full achievement of the objectives and the challenges that still lie ahead.

2. INTRODUCTION

The unemployment of the youth in the Mabvuku and Tafara poses a serious problem to socio-economic development and human development. It needs to be addressed in order to reduce the socio-economic problems associated with the unemployment of youth, such as crime, prostitution, drug addiction and alcoholism. It is also acknowledged that for the youth to engage in informal sector activities, they need some skills, which the academic curriculum they went through was not able to impart to them. The skills required would include both technical and entrepreneurial skills.

Noting the constraints to employment created by too academic school curriculum, the Member of Parliament for Mabvuku and Tafara approached the ministry with a request for the construction of a vocational training centre in her constituency. A short survey conducted by the Ministry of Higher Education & Technology revealed that indeed there were many youths in these suburbs that spent a greater part of the day milling around not doing anything useful and productive. It was further noted that the vendors selling vegetable wares are mostly mothers and not the youth.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Technology noted its financial constraints in constructing a vocational training centre as requested and offered the use of Masasa VTC during the weekend as an option. This approach would achieve the two objectives of increasing the utilisation of the centre and of providing skills to the disadvantaged youth of Mabvuku and Tafara. The centre had the added advantage of proximity to the two suburbs. This would keep travelling costs for the students to a minimum.

2.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The objectives of the projects were

- 2.2.1 To provide the youth in Masasa and Tafara an opportunity to acquire skills for employment.
- 2.2.2 To provide goods and services needed in Mabvuku Tafara and the surrounding areas.
- 2.2.3 To increase the utilisation of the facilities at Masasa VTC.
- 2.2.4 To pilot a model for the delivery of skills to unemployed youths in other parts of the country where under-utilisation of training institutions exists.
To tap human productivity potential in Zimbabwean youth through the provision of skills for self-employment.
- 2.2.6 To promote the policy of indigenisation through the participation of more indigenous people in the economy. [See Box 2.]
To alleviate poverty in Mabvuku and Tafara through income generating projects for recipients of the skills training programme.

BOX 2

EXTRACT FROM ZIMPREST DOCUMENT

The government believes that people must be empowered to use the nation's resources to meet their aspirations and to become self-reliant

2.2 STAKEHOLDERS

As indicated the initiative came from discussion with the political leadership. These formed the main stakeholders including the students who were the beneficiaries of the training. Staff at Masasa was also an important group. Responsibilities for the implementation of the project were distributed among the stakeholders as follows:

2.2.1 MASASA VCT STAFF

- Curriculum development
- Organisation and implementation of training programmes
- Evaluation and assessment of student
- Follow-up of students after graduation from the programme (although this still has to be done)

2.2.2 POLITICAL AND LOCAL LEADERSHIP

- Determining areas of training, taking into account of the needs for goods and services, and informal sector activities in the two suburbs
- Selection of students, since there were no stringent entry requirements

- Providing fees for the less fortunate students
- Soliciting funds and opportunities for self –employment (this still has to be done)

2.2.3 PARENTS/COMMUNITY

- Provision of fees and financial support for transport and sustenance
- Providing moral support to the students and the project
- Assisting with the planning and selection of students
- Assisting with determining of areas of training

2.3 RESPONSE TO THE INITIATIVE

The response to the initiative was overwhelming in both suburbs and other centres. The response by school leavers was high with the local party office being inundated with many applications. It partly the reason it why the decision not to involve the VTC in the selection of participants, as this would have meant increased administrative costs.

Other centres in Zimbabwe who got wind of this project made enquiries into why such projects could not be introduced in training institutions in their areas.

2.4 MASASA VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

Masasa Vocational Training centre is an institution of the Ministry of Higher Education & Technology situated 14 Km from the city centre along the Harare-Mutare road.

It was established in 1984 to provide upgrading training for semi-skilled workers from industry. It is one of two such centres, which does not require the traditional ‘O’ level entry. The only requirement for entry is employment in the formal sector in the designated area and a level of literacy and numeracy. Fees for the upgrading training is provided for from the Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (ZIMDEF).

BOX 3 **PROGRAMMES OFFERED AT MASASA VTC**

UPGRADE TRAINING

Broad Aim

This type of training provide an opportunity for supplementary training all those skilled workers who are registered with the trade design department but have not yet acquired SKILLED WORKER CLASS ONE status

Target Population

Skilled workers, who are registered and or have been certificated though a trade test, or have been interviewed by the centre, are eligible for enrolment.

Masasa VTC caters for skilled workers throughout the country. Accommodation is paid for by Zimbabwe Manpower Development fund (ZIMDEF) and all arrangements are made for the trainee by the centre.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Broad Aim

To give the apprentices theoretical and practical skills to meet the requirements of industry

Target population:

All registered apprentices referred to the centre by the Registrar of Apprenticeship are enrolled for training.

In addition to providing upgrade training it runs some adult education courses during vacations. There is always demand for such courses, which lead, to a local certificate. The aims and objectives of the training offered at Masasa VTC are outlined in Box 3. The upgrade courses and adult education courses offered at Masasa are shown in Box 4. As a Government institution Masasa has an allocation for recurrent expenditure provided from the national budget. It also benefits from funds allocated from Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund, set up from a mandatory 1% payroll levy, mainly for capital expenditure and training consumables. The vacation courses are self-financing.

There is general under-utilisation of capacity in public institutions in the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology because of lack of finance to purchase equipment and consumables, and low staffing.

A study on the Provision and Utilisation of Facilities of Vocational and Technical Institutions carried out in 1993 by the Ministry's Research Department had as one of its recommendations

“To maximise the use of facilities, these institutions training departments should remain officially open throughout the year except for public holidays. The training should be extended to late evenings---- this is particularly practicable for institutions located in urban areas, which can capture evening students.”

BOX 4

UPGRADE AND APPRENTICESHIP COURSES

AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERING

- Motor Mechanics
- Auto electric's

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

- Fitting, including Machining
- Tool-jig and Die making
- Boiler Making

COURSE DURATION

Class 1 and 2: 8 weeks per session

Class 3 and 4: 4 weeks per session

Trainees are expected to attend 2 separate sessions before they can progress to the next class.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

DURATION

Three terms of 13 weeks for all NCC courses

ADULT EDUCATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

The courses are designed to impart theoretical and practical skills to interested persons. The courses are run during the weekends and college term breaks.

COURSES OFFERED

1. Hydraulics and Pneumatics
2. Introductory Mathematics and Technical Drawing
3. Introduction to Machine shop practice
4. Boilermaking (Introduction to Surface Development)
5. Milling
6. Engine Tune-up
7. Heat Treatment/Material Testing
8. Diesel Fuel Injection
9. Welding(Arc and Gas)
10. Motor Vehicle Maintenance
11. Auto-electrics(basic)
12. Technical Drawing (basic and intermediate)
13. Transmission systems
14. Wheel Alignment and Balancing

There is room therefore for greater utilisation of such institutions, by introducing programmes and courses that can be run during evenings, and over weekends at all colleges and VTCs, if additional resources can be mobilised.

Masasa VTC had not up the time of the project run any courses during weekends. It was therefore feasible to introduce self-financing skill training programmes that would increase utilisation of the VTC and also respond to the needs of the informal sector and the youth of Mabvuku and Tafara.

2.5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

2.5.1 COURSE DESIGN

After indications from the Education Committee, on the areas of training that would provide self-employment opportunities, staff at Masasa VTC drew up the necessary curriculum. The following nine courses were offered:

- ❑ Basic motor maintenance
- ❑ Advanced motor mechanics
- ❑ Basic electronics
- ❑ Basic technical mathematics and draughting
- ❑ Basic milling
- ❑ Basic turning
- ❑ Basic hydraulic and pneumatics
- ❑ Basic arc welding
- ❑ Oxy-acetylene gas welding

2.5.2 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

In order not to exclude most of the youths who were target of the training, the entry requirements were reduced to literacy and numeracy, and not the usual 5 'O' level entry required for technical colleges. This is consistent with the current policy for enrolment in this institution. The requirement that persons are already employed in industry and in the trade they were seeking enrolment was waived. This was necessary given the problems of achieving 5 "O" levels discussed in paragraph 2.2.

2.5.3 STUDENT SELECTION

In order to reduce administrative costs associated with recruitment of students and processing of applications the selection of students was left entirely left to the local leadership, since there were no stringent entry qualifications required for enrolment.

Table 1 shows the number of students enrolled into the courses that were on offer, and the fees paid for each course.

Table 1

COURSES OFFERED IN THE PROJECT

COURSE	ENROLMENTS			PASSES			FEES PAID
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	
Basic Motor Maintenance	60	15	75	51	12	63	\$525.00
Advanced Motor Maintenance	11	2	13	2	0	2	\$525.00
Basic Auto-electrics	18	6	24	14	6	20	\$525.00
Basic Mathematics and Technical Drawing	10	2	12	7	0	7	\$420.00
Basic Milling	5	1	6	3	0	3	\$700.00
Basic Turning	5	2	7	3	0	3	\$700.00
Basic Hydraulics and Pneumatics	22	1	23	8	1	9	\$700.00
Basic Arc Welding	18		18	18		18	\$525.00
Oxy-acetylene Gas Welding	7		7	7		7	\$525.00
TOTAL	156	29	185	113	19	132	

2.5.4 FINANCING OF THE PROJECT AND STUDENTS

The initial response to the offer of training was overwhelming. The numbers were however limited by the level of fees. As indicated earlier the students come from low-income families and some were not able secure the required fees. In some desperate but deserving cases the Education Committee managed to secure funding for the students.

The programme started in the middle of the financial year it had therefore not been included in the VTC's annual budget. It therefore had to be self-financing as far as possible. Students were expected to pay fees for the training. The fees would cover the payments for trainers, consumables and other training materials required in the delivery of training. To cut on the fees, the centre

absorbed costs related to the use of equipment and other running costs such as water and electricity.

This approach is consistent with the new philosophy and requirements of ZIMPREST in the provision of tertiary education and training which advocates for the need to bring in other partners who have hitherto not played an active role in the financing of education and training. [See Box 5]

3. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

3.1 OUTCOME OF THE TRAINING

Of the 185 students who enrolled at the beginning of the programme, 132 graduated, at a colourful ceremony at the centre. Local political leadership and other local authority officials from surrounding centres attended the graduation ceremony to get more information. Executive Mayors from nearby local authorities also attended the ceremony. The Minister of Higher Education and Technology was the guest of honour. The local Member of Parliament also spoke at the ceremony and emphasised the importance of self-reliance as a way forward for the graduates of the programme.

3.2 FOLLOW-UP TRACER STUDY

Follow-up on the graduates of this programme was done by a questionnaire, which was distributed with the assistance of the Education Committee. The distribution was left entirely to the Education Committee. Initially it was intended that all graduates of the programme would complete a questionnaire, but the Education Committee experienced some difficulties in the total distribution of the questionnaires. Of the 200 hundred questionnaires that were given to the Education Committee only 75 were returned completed, representing a 37.5% return rate. There is no record of how many of the questionnaires were actually distributed. In the absence of a sampling technique being employed in the distribution of the questionnaires it is highly unlikely that those who responded were fully representative of the various trades. Of the returned questionnaires, 49 came from Mabvuku and 26 from Tafara. Only 11 women from both suburbs returned completed questionnaires.

3.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA

3.3.1 Profile of the Respondents

Analysis of the ages of the participants shows that they were indeed youth as most of them were below that age of 30 years with only 12 being above the age of 30. The majority (35) were between the ages of 20 and 25.

The majority of respondents (66.7%) indicated that incomes of their parents/guardians were below Z\$1000.00 (US\$25.00 at the current exchange rate of 40:1), while 24.0% indicated a salary of between Z\$1000.00 and Z\$3000.00 – confirming that residents of these two suburbs fall in the low-income group. As a result of the fees for most of the students (81%) were paid by donations from the Mabvuku and Tafara Education Committee. A few paid part of their fees from other sources, with supplementation from this Committee. Only two students paid the full fees from their own resources. Four (0.05%) borrowed their fees, while 11 (14.7%) had their fees paid by parents/guardians.

Although 5 “O” level subjects were not a requirement for enrolment the majority of them did have some “O” levels ranging from 1 to more than 7. Only 31.1% of them did not have “O” levels.

Further analysis of the data revealed that 66.7% of those respondents were unemployed before they enrolled in the programme. Twenty percent (20%) were employed in the formal sector in various trades and occupations, while only 2 were employed in the informal sector. Eight (10.2%) were self-employed.

3.3.2 Employment Outcome Of The Training

Whilst it was not possible to follow up on all the graduates of the programme indications were that they had come different fates after the training.

The break down of the courses attended by the 75 respondents to the questionnaire is as follows:

□ Basic motor maintenance	29	37.2%
□ Advanced motor mechanics	4	5.4%
□ Basic electronics	12	15.4%
□ Basic technical maths and draughting	8	10.3%
□ Basic milling	5	6.4%
□ Basic turning	3	3.9%
□ Basic hydraulic and pneumatics	8	10.3%
□ Basic arc welding	6	7.7%
□ Oxy-acetylene gas welding	4	5.1%

[Some students participated in more than one course. Some who took Basic motor mechanics also took the advanced course.]

Analysis of the responses to the questionnaire suggests that the training did not substantially improve employment for participants. Forty-six of the respondents (61.3%) remained unemployed after the programme. The number of those who were initially employed in the formal sector reduced by one after the training, while those who were self-employed increased from 8 to 13 reflecting a 62.5% increase. While this increase is substantial the actual increase in employment remained low as reflected by the 61.3% who still unemployed at the end of the training. The disturbing trend is that very few of those who were employed either in the formal sector or informal sector were using the skills they had acquired at Masasa. They all tended to go back to the occupations they were in before the training programme. There is the example of persons who had trained in Basic Motor Maintenance who ended up being employed as a barber, a temporary teacher, a builder, and a cook in a fast food outlet, a wholesaler and a cemetery attendant. There is also the example of someone who had trained in Oxy-acetylene gas welding who completed the course and went back to his original occupation of moulding bricks. However 15 did end up working in occupations that were related to the training they had received. This was mostly in the Auto-electrician and welding courses.

Discussion with members of the Education Committee suggested that there was evidence that some were able to get employment in the formal sector, something they were not able to do so before the training. This was particularly so for those who had undertaken the Basic and Advanced Motor Maintenance, Auto-electrician, Arc welding and Oxy-acetylene, basic milling and turning courses. Some were able to engage in self-employment activities. Courses that were identified as not having afforded employment opportunities for graduates both in the formal and informal sectors were Technical Drawing, Hydraulics and Pneumatics. However it was not possible to verify this claim, from the returned questionnaires.

The biggest constraint identified by graduates, which attributed to the lack of employment, was that the training provided was too basic to be of interest to employers in the formal sector, hence their request for additional and more advance training. Those who would have liked to get into self-employment sighted the lack of capital as the main constraint (60.3%). Lack of credit facilities was sighted by 12.7% as a constraint to self-employment, while 7.9% sighted too much competition in the sector as a constraint. This was particularly so for those who had taken the Basic Motor Maintenance course.

While the majority of graduates indicated they had found the course either useful (45.0%) or very useful (48.3%), the majority of them (63.85) indicated that they needed further training for them to be able to get into employment. Only 20.3% suggested that they needed additional financial support, and 16% indicated that they needed support services and advise from Masasa VTC.

Graduates were more interested in skills training that support that would facilitate their entry into the informal sector. Additional comments made by the respondents suggest that they did not perceive the training as being aimed at self-employment. It is clear that they expected to get jobs in the formal sector. Obviously the self-employment philosophy does not seem to have been emphasised during the training programme. [See appendix 1 for some typical comments.]

3.4 COMMENTS FROM THE VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

As part of the evaluation of the project, a meeting attended by some beneficiaries of the project, parents, and members of the Education Committee, and other youth who had not participated in the project, but hoped to in the future. The various groups made comments on the project.

3.4.1 Youth

Those graduates who were able to secure employment in both the formal and informal sectors are very happy with programme. Those who had not participated are keen to see the programme continue so that they too can be afforded an opportunity to get high levels skills for employment in the formal sector or for self-employment. Appendix 1 gives a sample of some typical comments that were given by some graduates of the programme who responded to the questionnaire.

It is apparent from the comments that students prefer employment to self-employment. Their orientation is to seek employment rather than create employment for themselves. They advocate for further training in spite of their current status of unemployment. They believe that further training will make them more acceptable on the formal employment market.

Some suggested that they should have been given attachment opportunities as part of the training. They believed that such attachments would have exposed to how businesses are organised and run, and would have provided a more practical approach to their training.

The graduates also noted the need for the allocation of serviced stands from which to conduct business. Some believed that it was necessary to gain some work experience before venturing out on their own.

Lack of finance was seen as critical to the success of the project, and the graduates would have liked to have access to some form of finance to enable them to get into self-employment activities. There is a continued expectation on the MP to do more for the graduates, in sourcing capital for the graduates of the project.

There are limitations to what the MP on her own can do for the graduates to get them into self-employment. There is therefore a need for other stakeholders to be brought in to play their part. e.g. local authority, NGOs, church groups and the private sector.

The graduates also suggested that some of the courses offered were rather difficult and some entry requirement beyond literacy and numeracy is needed. Such courses had a fail rate of 41%.

3.4.2 Community

The parents of those who were able to secure employment are happy with the programme. Some indicated that their children were able to get money from their employment and were assisting with upkeep of their families. There is however some despondence among those whose children have not been able to secure employment, and would like to see the efforts to assist them in employment or self-employment continue so that they can benefit from the investment made in the training.

The Mabvuku and Tafara community is generally happy with the programme because they have identified its potential in creating employment for the youth. They would therefore like to see the programme continue with additional courses that will address the needs for goods and services in the area and that have potential to create employment opportunities in the two suburbs.

3.4.3 Local Politicians

The local party officials are very enthusiastic about the programme because of its development aspect. They recognise its potential to alleviate poverty among the inhabitants of the 2 suburbs and to reduce the crime rate.

3.4.4 Local Businesses

The local Member of Parliament who held a meeting with management of Circle Cement indicated that Circle Cement has been very responsive to the approaches made to it in providing casual and temporary employment for prospective students for the

programme. Such employment would provide financial resources that participants of the project could use for paying fees and starting their own self-employment activities.

3.4.5 Ministry of Higher Education and Technology

Judging from the reception of the programme in the two suburbs and the potential of the project has to create employment opportunities for some of the graduates, the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology would like this innovation to continue with the necessary modifications to make it more effective. It is now encouraging its other institutions across the country to offer similar programmes for unemployed youth that do not possess the 5"O" levels required to enter into the regular programmes offered in their institutions. Note has been taken of the shortcomings of the pilot which will have to be addressed in future projects.

3.5 EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The success or failure of the project has be measured against the objectives that were initially set at the start of the project, and discussed in Paragraph 4.2. The analysis will necessarily be qualitative since no success indicators were established at the start of the project.

Analysis by Objective.

- **Objective 1:** *To provide the youth in Masasa and Tafara an opportunity to acquire skills for employment in their location.*

This objective was achieved in that youth from Mabvuku and Tafara were afforded training at Masasa. The pass rate of 132 out of 185 students is fairly reasonable. It should be noted that the concept of a pass was not important as it is presumed that if those who "failed" had acquired a viable level of skill competency for self-employment.

- **Objective 2:** *To provide goods and services that were identified as essential in Mabvuku Tafara and the surrounding areas.*

Given the low employment rate in the informal sectors of Mabvuku and Tafara the achievement of this objective is very limited, given that there was an increase of 62.5% in those who joined the informal sector after the training. Since most of the graduates who were employed were employed in the formal sector, the service they were able to offer were not offered directly to the residents of Mabvuku and Tafara. In the absence of performance indicators to assess achievement of this objective it is difficult to determine with any degree of certainty to what extent it was achieved.

- **Objective 3:** *To increase the utilisation of the facilities at Masasa VTC.*

The project increased the utilisation of the facilities at Masasa VTC. The courses were offered on 12 consecutive Saturdays, which the VTC would have been lying idle.

- **Objective 4:** *To pilot a model for the delivery of skills to unemployed youths in other parts of the country where under-utilisation institutions exists.*

The achievement of this objective can only be limited to the utilisation of facilities and to imparting skills to the youth. Skills were imparted to the youth that participated in the project, although most of them felt that the level was too basic and would have preferred more advanced levels.

- **Objective 5:** *To tap human productivity potential in Zimbabwean youth through the provision of skills for self-employment.*

Whilst the skills imparted to the youth this did not lead to self-employment for the majority of them. The pilot had limited success in the development and facilitation of employment for the recipients of the training. The 62.5% increase in those who joined the informal sector should be noted. Recipients seemed to be of the view that the training should have increased their chances of employment in the formal sector rather than self-

employment. Hence the preference of the graduates for skills levels that would make them acceptable to formal sector employers.

At its inception the project did not include other components, vital for the promotion of self-employment activities. For instance the recipients indicated lack of capital as a serious constraint to self-employment. Without some provision of tools, and in the absence of start up capital, it is difficult for recipients of this training to create employment for themselves. The project did not facilitate acquisition of business stands for the graduates. This just increased to the constraints that the graduates had to contend with in an already difficult situation.

The pilot may have achieved a training objective, but training on its own is not and cannot be the ultimate objective of such projects. Training alone does not facilitate employment creation. Some participants stressed the importance of employment in either sector first, before self-employment, because this initial employment would enable them to create saving from which they can then start their own income generating projects. It is however doubtful, given the level of the wages, whether the anticipated would be realised. To this extent it can be argued that the project did not really have an employment creation focus from its inception, but a training focus.

- **Objective 6:** *To promote the policy of indigenisation through the participation of more indigenous people in the economy.*

Given the observations made under Objective 5 indigenisation of the economy is not going to be achieved, particularly in the absence of an expanding informal sector, increased employment opportunities, support and deliberate policies that promote indigenisation.

Another major constraint was non-availability of serviced business stands from which to conduct business. The few who were able to secure the un-serviced stands had

difficulty in setting up viable businesses, because of the absence of critical services like electricity and running water. Some therefore resorted to setting up their businesses in their back yards, the services are available.

While operating from backyards does alleviate the problems of services, it presents a marketing problem for the new entrepreneurs, in that they are not able to display their products where people are able to see them. Without good marketing and a viable market niche businesses are not likely to succeed.

- **Objective 7.** *To alleviate poverty in Mabvuku and Tafara through income generating projects for unemployed youth that would have acquired skills through this training programme.*

To the extent that the project did not achieve the ultimate objective of employment creation, this objective is not likely to be achieved in both the short and long term unless recipients receive additional support in the form of loans, serviced stands, and viable markets for their goods and services. To alleviate poverty there is a need to ensure that employment is created on a sustainable basis, and that the new businesses do not fold up within a short period of operation.

While the objectives set for the project were worthwhile the focus, design, planning and implementation of the project was not comprehensive enough to achieve these objectives. The design left out some important components that are essential for facilitating the creation of employment opportunities by the recipients of the project.

4. EXPLAINING SUCCESS OF PROJECT

There are number of factors that can be attributed to the successful aspects of this project. These factors provide lessons that have been learnt in the implementation of this project. Whilst the project has not been able to adequately address all its set objectives, it has managed to promote self-employment for the youth of Mabvuku and Tafara, and

increase the utilisation of Masasa VTC. There are some positive aspects, which should be taken note of, when replication of similar projects are contemplated. There are also some constraints that should be avoided if the objective of providing skills for self-employment is to be achieved with such projects.

4.1 SUCCESS FACTORS

As a new initiative and approach to providing skills to unemployed youth there was general enthusiasm from all stakeholders. This is probably as a result of the severity of the unemployment problems being experienced in the country, including the two suburbs. From interviews with the students and other stakeholders, the success factors of this initiative were identified as:

- 4.1.1 Consultation of the all stakeholders, which included staff at Masasa VTC, the Education Committee, parents, youth and Ministry of Higher Education and Technology.
- 4.1.2 Involvement and leadership of the political leadership meant that support was available at the highest level and this facilitated assistance with fees for most of the students.
- 4.1.3 Dedication and willingness of the Masasa VTC staff to the programme and their desire to play a role in the elimination of unemployment among the youth of these two suburbs.
- 4.1.4 Support from the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology.
- 4.1.5 There was flexibility in the selection criteria, which did not insist on the usual 5 “O” levels.
- 4.1.6 The VTC was flexible on the payment of fees. Most of the fees were paid towards the end of the programme. This enabled even those who did not have money to start on training. It is noted however that this can also affect sustainability of a self-financing project.

4.2 CONSTRAINS TO IMPLEMENTATION

A number of factors prohibited the reasonable achievement of the set objectives. These are listed

- 4.2.1 The planning did not include an impact assessment model and critical performance indicators that are necessary for evaluating the success of the project.

- 4.2.2 The project was initiated as training project, and did not have the support system and infrastructure that is necessary for employment creation projects of this nature. Access to some capital and or tools are essential, and some facility should have been organised as part of the project. There were no efforts at establishing viable markets for the graduates of the project. The ISTARN approach would have assisted this project a great deal.
- 4.2.3 There were no arrangements for the attachment of students to local industry, even to the local informal sector. This would have assisted in positive orientation of the students towards self-employment, as they work with those who have already done so. It would have also provided students with much needed practical experience of working in a productive environment.
- 4.2.4 It is doubtful that staff at Masasa fully understood the dynamics of the informal sector in Mabvuku and Tafara. This understanding would have assisted them in adequately preparing the students for this sector.
- 4.2.5 The provision of serviced stands is a must so that extension service support can be organised easily and more efficiently. It is difficult to organise such support if operators are engaged in business in their back yards. Operating from back yards also poses problems of marketing of the goods and services provided by the “young entrepreneurs”.
- 4.2.6 Although there was a built-in follow-up mechanism to support those recipients who had graduated and had engaged in self-employment projects, this has still not been done.
- 4.2.7 It would appear that the notion of self-employment was not fully accepted by the students as most expected the training to lead to employment in the formal sector. The problem of orientation unless fully addressed will always pose a problem for such projects, which are, designed to address the lack of expansion of employment opportunities in the formal sector.
- 4.2.8 Although the response was good, some youth were not able to secure the fees necessary to enrol in the project. The evaluation shows that the Education Committee played a very important role in providing fees for the majority of the students.

5. VALUABLE LESSONS AND APPLIABLE PRACTICES

There are a number of valuable lessons that have been learnt from the implementation of the Mabvuku and Tafara pilot project, which provide some useful pointers for adoption and replication in other situations and environments. As a pilot it has identified a specific problem of youth unemployment in the two suburbs, which is also prevalent at a national level and need to be addressed. The recognition by all stakeholders of the importance of addressing the serious unemployment gave rise to the level of commitment that is essential for success. It was obvious that the nature and type of problem could not be solved without partnerships being established, although the project design failed to recognize other components that are crucial for achievement of set objectives.

Before its inception it was recognised that a great number of school leavers, in spite of having spend over 11 years in school, they were inadequately prepared for economic activity.

Some valuable lessons to be learnt from the pilot project are:

5.1 Need to identify and fully understand the problem to be addressed.

- The problem of youth unemployment was attributed to lack of skills and steps were taken to provide these skills. However not enough effort was made to fully understand what components were needed to address the problem of unemployment fully. It was assumed that training would be a panacea to the problem. Whilst skills are a useful component to self-employment, it is not enough. There is need to develop entrepreneurial skills in addition to basic business management.
- If the informal sector is the target for the employment creation, information on the dynamics of the sector is also necessary. There is need to have a fully understanding of the key players, the skills required, the nature of clientele and its spending levels. In this case there was no studies were undertaken to identify the main economic activities in the sector for which graduates were being prepared for.

- It is important to get the right focus and orientation of such initiatives. All participants, particularly students, need to be clear on the objectives and expectations of the project. In the project it turned out that a sizeable number of participants joined the project with the expectation of getting jobs in the formal sector, when the objective was for them to create their own employment through self-employment. Some parents were of the same orientation as the participants. This incongruity of expectation of outcomes between the project and recipients lead to frustration and dissatisfaction and is a waste of time and resources.
- Planners did not fully recognised that skills that could be used for employment creation could not be adequately imparted in a VTC environment and that some practical industrial experience would be essential to make the training as relevant as possible.
- While there was full recognition that there were a number of stakeholders whose participation was essential for the success of the project, the identification fell short and excluded those who would have provided loans and stands which were essential for setting up businesses. There was need to create a network in which the responsibilities of each of the members of the network were identified and delineated.
- Women tend to bear the brunt of poverty as they attempt to provide for their families. In days of economic hardships they have to play an active role in providing for their families and therefore equally need to be economically empowered like men. This project had a rather participation of women. This should be addressed as the project is adopted in other centres. This requires the introduce courses that address the skills development of women. This may require the involvement of diverse training providers since one provider may not be able to provide all the courses required.

5.2 Post training support

For self-employment ventures to be successful and sustainable the “new” entrepreneurs need post graduation support. Those who have set up their own enterprises need to be followed up to ensure that they continue to apply what they learnt. They continue to need advice on the intricacies of running business. Those who

have not should be followed up to determine what assistance they need to set up their own businesses. In this pilot, there was not follow up at all. It was as if the graduates were abandoned from the time they left the training programme. In these days of economic hardships “young” businesses remain fragile and will collapse unless continually support is given.

5.3 Commitment from Stakeholders

Little success would have been registered in the absence of commitment from the stakeholders. The project was fortunate to have committed staff of Masasa VTC and the education committee. Commitment of the Ministry is also critical, as it is able to mobilise resources for the project.

6. CHALLENGES

Whilst the project may have suffered from so many constraints that have prohibited it to fully achieve its objectives, particularly those related to employment creation through self employment, it has at least made a start which should be built upon. The challenge is obviously to build on the strengths that have been identified and turn the constraints into opportunities, by adopting measures that will address them fully. There is need to adopt a model similar to ISTARN, one that will allow the project to go beyond a technical skills training initiative with a sprinkling of entrepreneurial training. There are a number of challenges that the programme will face as plans for its continuation are being put in place. These are highlighted with possible solutions.

6.1 Change of attitude

Recipients had the attitude that the training should lead to employment in the formal sector, and were naturally disappointed when this did not happen.

Solutions:

- *There is a need for the right orientation at selection of students, so that they fully understand the purpose and objective of the programme they are going to embark on. They should be made to understand that the focus of the training is self-employment and employment creation. Students should learn to be more self-reliant, and not expect things to be done for them.*

- *The selection process should attempt to identify those with the right orientation who will be able to benefit from the programme without too much difficulty. They would act as role models if they succeed.*
- *A change in mind set is also required in the lecturers who teach the students, because they are often accustomed to training students who are already in employment. The attitude change required of the students must be reinforced during the training period. This will not happen unless the attitude changes have already taken place in the lecturers themselves.*
- *Attachment to some informal sector enterprises during training can assist with positive attitude change towards self-employment. Proved good economic performance of the enterprise should be the criteria used for the selection of enterprises to attach students.*

6.2 Project should contribute to employment creation

In the absence of the project directly contributing to employment creation, participants will continue to aspire for employment in the formal sector. The project should have components that address the problems of employment creation and self-employment. There is therefore a need to incorporate adequate employment support structures as part of the project.

Solutions:

- *An extension service for those who have engaged in income generating projects is essential to ensure that the projects remain sustainable in the long term and to allow for growth.*
- *A network of stakeholders and support service providers needs to be created. It will not be feasible for Masasa VTC to provide training in the courses that have been identified in paragraph 7.4. Other training institutions with the capacity and expertise will have to come in and provide this training. Further efforts should be undertaken to determine whether Masasa VTC still has additional capacity that can still be used for other training programmes. The arrangements being developed with Circle cement will go some way in providing additional financial resources for the trainees, but there will be need to look at ways of providing inexpensive loans in order to facilitate self-employment. The Education Committee and*

Masasa with assistance from the Ministry, should take responsibility for establishing the required network initially as part of the network.

- *There should be efforts at carrying out thorough study on the nature and dynamics of the informal in the two suburbs and surrounding areas to include Masasa and Ruwa industrial parks.*
- *Organisations like ZNCC, CZI, donors and other micro-lending organisations should be approached to support this programme, by providing start-up capital and business advice for starting new enterprises.*

6.3 Access to Serviced Stands

Business stands where graduates of the programme can set up shop are crucial. This removes the need for such students to have to set up businesses in backyards where marketing of goods and service are difficult. Having them operating at business stands also makes follow up activities easier.

Solutions:

- *The local authority responsible for the allocation of stands should be involved in the project at the right level.*
- *Stands need to be serviced and graduates given some preference in the allocation of such stands.*
- *Graduates should be encouraged to form an association that will lobby for their interests in the business sector, and in the allocation of stands.*

6.4 Lack of capital

Graduates of the programme highlighted lack of capital as the biggest constraint to self-employment. There is a need therefore the set up a system that will provide some form of loan either as capital or access to tools, which are necessary for one to establish themselves.

Solutions:

- *The relationship being established with Circle Cement should be strengthened and expanded to provide graduates with initial employment, which can then generate the necessary capital, required. Such a relationship will also bring graduates in contact with the way businesses are*

organised and run and will assist them in their own enterprises in the future.

- *Various organisations that lobby for the indigenisation of the economy, like IBDC, AAG and IBWO should be encourage to participate in this project and to provide financial and logistic support. They organise some form of micro-lending facilities for graduates of the programme.*
- *Mechanisms must be found for making funds donated by donors like the World Bank for the establishment and strengthening of SMEs accessible to graduates of the programme. The Education Committee could act as guarantor for the loans.*
- *Comments from some students indicate that they are willing work together. This should be encouraged to do so as this facilitates the pooling together of skills and resources.*

6.5 Link Between Training and Entrepreneurship

It was noted that provision of technical skills does not necessarily lead to self-employment. There is a need to develop in the student some entrepreneurial skills.

Solutions:

- *There is a need for the integration of technical skills training with business and entrepreneurship training.*
- *There is need for in-depth study into the dynamics and operations of the informal sector in Mabvuku and to clearly determine the skill requirement of this sector.*
- *Attempts should be made to identify ways of attaching trainees during the training period so that they can be exposed to real customers and the operations of informal sector businesses. The informal sector in the two suburbs, Masasa and Ruwa industrial areas could provide some attachment opportunities. A possible apprenticeship programme could be examined so those students spend more time on attachment rather than in the training institution.*

6.6 Lack of markets

The success of the employment creation initiative and the strengthening of the informal sector depend on the establishment of viable and sustainable markets for the goods and service provided by the sector and graduates of the programme. Presently markets remain constrained and fluctuate with the spending power

of the residents. In these days of economic hardships this remains a serious constraint to a higher demand for goods and services.

Solutions:

- *While graduates should be able to provide their services outside Mabvuku and Tafara, there is need to fully understand the levels of demands for goods and services in these two suburbs.*
- *Indigenisation lobby groups together with ZNCC and CZI could provide the market subsidiary role to source markets in the formal sector for graduates of the project.*
- *There is a need to look for sub-contracting contracts from Masasa and Ruwa industrial areas and Circle cement.*

6.7 Lack of Effective Monitoring and Follow-up Mechanisms.

From the start, the project did not have an effective and monitoring mechanism. Success indicators were not established. While there were plans to follow-up graduates after completion this has never been done.

Solutions:

- *There is a need to follow up the graduates of this pilot who are not economically active and determine the type and level of support they need for them to engage in income generating projects. Otherwise this initiative will remain a “waste of time and resources” as indicated by a number of the recipients of the project.*
- *Success indicators should have been set at the start of the project for evaluation purpose. Impact assessment should also have been included as part of the design of the project. This needs to be done in the next stage of the project.*

6.8 Gender Balance

The statistics shown in Table 1 show that the number of women who participated in the project was little compared to men. Women play a critical role in the running of families and have a great need for money. There are also many widows arising from AIDS-related deaths, who need to provide for themselves and their

families. The programme therefore needs to provide for the access of more women.

Solutions:

- ❑ *The curriculum should be diversified to include more courses that address the employment needs of women.*
- ❑ *Women should be encouraged to join the male dominated courses. This could be done through guidance and counselling, and offering fees incentives.*

7. FUTURE OF THE PROJECT

7.1 Financing

One of the biggest constraints to self-employment was the shortage of capital for most graduates. The Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce has been approached to provide a micro-lending programme for some of the graduates.

The local Member of Parliament has also approached Circle Cement for part-time employment for graduates and future graduates of the programme. The cement factory is embarking on an expansion programme that offers many opportunities for such casual and part-time employment. The remuneration from such part-time and casual employment will provide the resources required for fees for further training, and for purchasing equipment and tools necessary for their self-employment projects.

This is an innovative approach, which will boost the training programme and employment creation.

The next step is to negotiate for some of these youths to be taken on a full time basis when openings arise at the cement factory. The management is being asked to identify the basic skills that the youth would need for full time employment, so that the Masasa VTC can offer courses to provide these skills. The youth would pay for the training using the wages they get during their periods of casual employment with the factory. Those who do not get absorbed on a full time basis by the factory will be given the necessary support to start their own informal sector projects.

7.2 Business Stands

The Ministry of Higher Education and Technology is now following up with the local authority the issue of providing serviced business stands for the graduates.

7.3 Follow Up By Institutions

Masasa VTC is organising follow-up activities for the graduates and is currently compiling with the assistance of the local leadership the location of those graduates who are engaged in economic activities.

7.4 Further Training Initiatives

After this initial phase plans are afoot to continue with the project. Some the youth who did the basic motor maintenance have already enrolled in the advance motor maintenance course. After a thorough study of some of the current economic activities in Mabvuku and Tafara additional courses that have potential for self-employment activities have been identified and negotiations with the VTC are underway to determine their capacity to provide this training if viable numbers can be mobilised. Some of the new courses will include:

- Domestic electrical installation
- Electrical appliance repair
- Radio and Television repair
- Building
- Glazing
- Hairdressing
- Plumbing and jobbing
- Boilermaker
- Fitter and turner
- Art and sculpture

The planning for this second phase of the project now under way, taking into account the short comings of the first phase

8. CONCLUSION

The Masasa project came out of a need to address the unemployment problems of two suburbs of Mabvuku and Tafara. It was intended to achieve this goal by providing skills to the unemployed youth in these two suburbs. Although technical skills were provided, there was very little impact on youth unemployment as a result of this initiative. There was limited success in the achievement of the prescribed objective of the project for the reasons that have been highlighted above.

Although the project does not seem to have achieved much it has provided a framework that should be improved upon in the process of addressing the problems of youth unemployment that Zimbabwe is experiencing. The success and future of the project depends on the extent to which the challenges that have been identified will be addressed. The possible solutions that have been offered are by no means exhaustive but provide a starting point. There is need for more innovation and flexibility as the project develops. It is important however for each and every stakeholder to play their part to ensure the success of the project. The lessons from the project are already being implemented in five similar projects that have been launched in Bulawayo, the second largest city in Zimbabwe, and in Gokwe, a growth point in the Midlands, with resources that have been provide by UNESCO.

SKILLS TRAINING PROJECT FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUTH FROM MABVUKU AND TAFARA HIGH DENSITY SURBURBS..... 1

1. BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1 SCHOOL LEAVER PROBLEM AND UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS.....	1
1.2 NATURE OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM.....	2
1.3 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH.....	2
1.4 MABVUKU AND TAFARA PROFILES.....	3
1.4.1 HOUSEHOLDS AND POPULATION.....	3
1.4.2 SCHOOL ENROLMENTS AND SCHOOL LEAVER POPULATION.....	4
1.4.3 MAIN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN MABVUKU AND TAFARA.....	5
2. INTRODUCTION.....	7
2.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT.....	8
2.2 STAKEHOLDERS.....	8
2.2.1 MASASA VCT STAFF.....	8
2.2.2 POLITICAL AND LOCAL LEADERSHIP.....	8
2.2.3 PARENTS/COMMUNITY.....	9
2.3 RESPONSE TO THE INITIATIVE.....	9
2.4 MASASA VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE.....	9
2.5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT.....	11
2.5.1 COURSE DESIGN.....	11
2.5.2 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS.....	11
2.5.3 STUDENT SELECTION.....	12
2.5.4 FINANCING OF THE PROJECT AND STUDENTS.....	12
3. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS.....	13
3.1 OUTCOME OF THE TRAINING.....	13
3.2 FOLLOW-UP TRACER STUDY.....	13
3.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	14
3.3.1 Profile of the Respondents.....	14
3.3.2 Employment Outcome Of The Training.....	14
3.4 COMMENTS FROM THE VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS.....	17
3.4.1 Youth.....	17
3.4.2 Community.....	18
3.4.3 Local Politicians.....	18
3.4.4 Local Businesses.....	18
3.4.5 Ministry of Higher Education and Technology.....	19
3.5 EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT.....	19
4. EXPLAINING SUCCESS OF PROJECT.....	22
4.1 SUCCESS FACTORS.....	23
4.2 CONSTRAINS TO IMPLEMENTATION.....	23
5. VALUABLE LESSONS AND APPLIABLE PRACTICES.....	25
5.1 NEED TO IDENTIFY AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED.....	25
5.2 POST TRAINING SUPPORT.....	26
5.3 COMMITMENT FROM STAKEHOLDERS.....	27
6. CHALLENGES.....	27
6.1 CHANGE OF ATTITUDE.....	27
6.2 PROJECT SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO EMPLOYMENT CREATION.....	28
6.3 ACCESS TO SERVICED STANDS.....	29
6.4 LACK OF CAPITAL.....	29
6.5 LINK BETWEEN TRAINING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP.....	30
6.6 LACK OF MARKETS.....	30
6.7 LACK OF EFFECTIVE MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP MECHANISMS.....	31

6.8	GENDER BALANCE	31
7.	FUTURE OF THE PROJECT.....	32
7.1	FINANCING.....	32
7.2	BUSINESS STANDS.....	33
7.3	FOLLOW UP BY INSTITUTIONS	33
7.4	FURTHER TRAINING INITIATIVES.....	33
8.	CONCLUSION	34
	APPENDIX 1.....	38
9.	COMMENTS FROM GRADUATES	38

Appendix 1

9. COMMENTS FROM GRADUATES

In order to improve our future we should come together as a group of Auto-electricians, we must have a sight where we can start (to use) our skills after getting sponsored, this will make our life easier to work as a group than to work as individuals

I want to go further with training

The course was helpful to me even though I did not manage to obtain a vacancy for attachment. I think Masasa VTC must look for companies to attach their students. I also think it will be good to do the advanced level.

The programme was very useful and I would like to say that the MP should continue doing so. I also would like to say that if we can be helped in finding attachment places and jobs or even helped with finance so that we can start our own projects then it would be much more successful.

The training should be done at a lengthened period so that people can really understand the concepts.

The future recipients should be taken through the course up until they reach trade test level. Even if they are going to be self-employed they still need to be technically up to standard so as to be the image of the informal sector. In fact to me the programme or the knowledge gap from VTC is going a long way in poverty alleviation as I am still going to VTC doing Diesel injection through the course I underwent.

Do not allow anybody to select hydraulic and pneumatics if he/she doesn't possess 5 "O" levels including English and maths

Because of unemployment I will see the course as a matter of wasting time. I have approached a number of companies but all they said was the course is too short so we cannot attach you.

It is a great stepping stone (I got a job after the course because I had technical mind in drawing so I could understand diagrams). I wish after completing not the basic and advanced stages we should be helped to get places/vacancies at high institutions like Harare Polytechnic as a special group to further our studies. I wouldn't mind even to spend four years of part-time doing draughting technology. Lastly hats off to Amai Tungamirai for implementing this programme. Keep it up with your team. Hope it will go places.

To me the programme was of high quality in which a competitor can have a goal when all stages are done alternatively thorough to the trade test.

It is a useful course if you are to get employed. We attended the course and passed well but the problem is everywhere you go they will tell you that you're not qualified enough. In other companies you get a job but earn useful salary. So I can suggest to start my own that (is) if I have enough capital and enough tools.

The programme was okay but I think it need further training for example those who did auto electronics must also do electrolysis and electronic engines because modern cars are different from the ones

The information I feel could improve the programme for future recipients is to continue to advance and then in advance we will pay the fees by ourselves and not to wait to be paid or donated by Mabvuku/Tafara Education Committee so that they can have a chance to donate for other those who have not yet done those course so that they can have the same courses like what we have

First and foremost I want to thank you for your wonderful idea but this would not be completed without completing the courses o the advanced last stage so I would urge or ask for advanced stages as well as organising attachments. We beg for

It was very useful course. I gain advanced method of machining so my aim is to be tested for upgrading for higher classes as skilled worker.

I think it a waste of your time and resources because people will only have little knowledge that is basic. With basic you cannot have attachment and all you can never daydream of getting employed. People should have further training with

First and foremost we would like your programme to be well-organised things, because of the following I can praise Mrs Tungamirai for a wonderful idea of taking youth out of the streets to do courses at VTC. But it is of no use to take your son to do grade one and then left him in the open space doing nothing and then goes back to the street doing nothing. Your idea was good at first but it ended a waste of time and losing your money. For some unfinished courses. But I can thank you for your effort may God bless you in your future plans. Please keep it up next time it was a wonderful thing for me to do the course you offered. It was a great experience. We wish something better next time. Thank you.

Those doing the programmes must be attached to some companies so that they gain more experience and get some money to pay for other stages (of training). The programme must encompass the entire course not to end at the first stage as we did. Our MP has to liase with the city council for her to be apportioned an area where graduates can do their jobs under the supervision of an experienced personnel in their initial stages to gain experience and later be able to stand on their own. There must be some source of capital to boost the successes of the Masasa VTC programmes.

The programme is useful if we go for further training. We are not employed because they say you did the beginners course only so your cannot do the job properly. Please if you can help us by giving us further training.