

A Local Economic and Social Development initiative in Ghana

The Sub-Committees for Productive and Gainful Employment

Documentation of two pilot districts' experiences



*Prepared by Sophie Grooten
ILO- Ghana Decent Work Pilot Programme
December 2005
Accra*

Executive Summary

The Ghana Decent Work Pilot Programme (GDWPP), which is an initiative of the ILO and the Government of Ghana aims at contributing to the achievement of the national priority goal of poverty reduction through the promotion of decent work in the informal economy. Since the beginning of its implementation in 2003, the pilot programme applies a flexible strategy and has two separate but related components. At the national level, the programme assists ILO constituents (Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment – Ghana Employer’s Association and the Trade Union Congress) to influence the national policy framework for poverty reduction and the incorporation of Decent Work, in particular the GPRS. At the local level, the aim is to build capacities of the key stakeholders in the local economy to design and implement a Local Economic and Social Development (LESD) approach. For the development and testing of tools and policy proposals at the local level, the programme selected two districts in the Central Region, namely Ajumako-Enyam-Essiam (AEE) and Awutu-Efutu-Senya (AES). In these two pilot districts, the LESD approach was based on participative, demand-driven and integrated development principles, which in practice resulted in the creation of a public-private forum in the form of Sub-Committees for Productive and Gainful Employment (SPGEs).

This report is a documentation of the LESD approach in the two pilot districts and in particular a description of the SPGEs with regards to their establishment, structure, achievements and challenges. Moreover, the report seeks to draw lessons from the pilot districts experiences, which can be relevant for paving the way forward and the project design for replication in other parts of Ghana.

The local public-private forums also called SPGEs are statutory Sub-Committees and therefore represent legal entities under the District Assemblies. The SPGEs count 15 members including District Assembly technical staff, Assembly Members and Small Business Association (SBAs).

Capacity building is a central plank of the GDWPP. Accordingly, the SPGE members have been trained in LESD, Decent Work and the informal economy as well as in generic skills such as strategic planning, resource mobilization and advocacy. In addition, they received training in more specific topics, such as making local procurement procedures accessible to small construction contractors. Since their official inauguration in early 2004, the SPGEs have gradually taken up their fundamental role to identify local economic development potentials and prioritize promising business sectors, draw up a strategy for realizing these potentials and their inclusion in the District Development Plans as well as mobilize both local and national resources in support of the plans. Encouraged and committed to the programme, the District Assemblies have allocated additional resources to the SPGE enabling them to undertake activities such as registration of small businesses, informing SBAs on tax collection and connecting groups of (disabled) entrepreneurs to business support programmes and credit funds.

It is important to note that the extensive amount of capacity building, skills development and technical support provided by the programme in addition to the financial commitment of the District Assembly contribute to the ownership and sustainability of the SPGEs in the two districts. In fact, the local structures bare the daily running costs of the activities such as office and salaries expenses without the intervention of the GDWPP.

Specific activities and interventions of the pilot programme include:

- Operational and technical support to SPGEs in terms of equipment, a handbook on rules and regulations, coordinating an facilitating assistance to small businesses and their associations

- Strengthening the democratic management, organisation and service delivery of SBAs
- Identifying, selecting and training local trainers in the two districts
- Upgrading work and production techniques with a special attention to safety and health issues, and increasing product quality and services in identified priority sub-sectors, such as grass cutter rearing, soap making, oil palm extraction, fish processing and textile and garment
- Developing SBA training manuals and subsequently reinforcing basic management skills of entrepreneurs through a SBA training programme
- Mapping institutions as well as existing development initiatives in the two pilot districts
- Creating business information centers

The pilot experience is still young and has set in motion a process for which assessment of ultimate impact in terms of poverty reduction and employment creation is not yet available. On the other hand, evidence (such as the case studies documented in the report) provides promising insights and suggests important achievements at the district level in terms of social dialogue, informal sector organisation, association building as well as voice and representation.

So far, some of the main lessons learnt from piloting of the Local Economic and Social Development approach indicate that:

- The SPGEs provide an important platform for organizing the informal economy operators, voice their interests, gain recognition for their contribution to the local economy and participate in shaping it further. For instance, representatives of the private sector (SBAs) were involved for the first time in the fee fixing (tax regulation) discussions of the districts, which not only enabled groups that were previously excluded from decision-making processes to be heard but also facilitated the collection of taxes at the district level.
- Embedding the SPGEs within the national legal framework favours local involvement and ownership of the development process and local employment issues. Moreover, this way of institutionalizing public-private partnership at the local level increases their potential for sustainability.
- As the focal person plays a key role in the running of the SPGE activities, he should be selected from the core management of the District Assembly in order to ensure access to resources, lobbying opportunities and collaboration with the District Assembly in general. Moreover, effective communication and collaboration between the key SPGE members (focal person and chairman) and the District Chief Executive is very important for the development and implementation of the LESD approach.
- The experiences of the two pilot districts demonstrate that not only the involvement but also the political and financial commitment of the District Assembly is a crucial element for the success of the programme. Clearly, if the LESD concept and Decent Work agenda are not taken onboard the districts plans, success of the programme will be hindered if not doomed to fail.
- It is essential to think in parallel processes: plan one long-term process with a vision and ultimate goal of poverty reduction through employment creation, while simultaneously starting small scale demonstration projects with immediate impact and high visibility in order to not lose stakeholders' interest and commitment.
- It will become increasingly important for SPGEs to be capable of producing concrete results. If the members do not see any advantage in being member of the SPGE or are not able to see how the SPGE can meet its objectives, they are likely to consider leaving (especially the SBAs who have to run their business simultaneously).

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Introduction | 7 |
| 1.1 Background of the GDWPP | 7 |
| 1.2 What is Local Economic and Social Development (LESD)? | 8 |
| 1.3 Objectives of the report | 8 |
| 1.4 Methodology | 8 |
| 1.5 Structure of the report | 9 |
| 2. Selection process of two partner districts | 9 |
| 3. Structure of the SPGE | 10 |
| 3.1 Establishment and mission | 10 |
| 3.2 The functions and objectives of the SPGEs | 10 |
| 3.3 The Sub-Committees' legal status | 11 |
| 3.4 The SPGE members and the tripartite constituent framework | 11 |
| 3.5 External support | 13 |
| 3.6 Funding and budgeting | 13 |
| 4. Training and Capacity-Building | 14 |
| 4.1 Workshop: Decent work awareness and the LESD approach | 16 |
| 4.2 Workshop: Capacity-building for SPGEs members | 17 |
| 4.3 Workshop: SWOT Analysis | 18 |
| 4.4 Workshop: Small Business Associations (SBAs) training | 19 |
| 4.6 Workshop: Labour-Based Technology - Contract management and monitoring | 21 |
| 4.7 Workshop: Training of trainers for small business associations | 22 |
| 4.8 Workshop: Small Business Association (SBAs) Training | 23 |
| 4.9 Special initiatives | 24 |
| 5. Progress, activities and achievements | 26 |
| 5.1 Activities and progresses of the SPGEs | 26 |
| 5.2 Successes and achievements | 30 |
| 5.3 Individual Case studies | 33 |
| 5.4 Sustainability and ownership | 37 |
| 6. Challenges and obstacles encountered | 38 |
| 7. Lessons learnt | 39 |
| 8. Conclusion | 40 |
| ANNEX I : Chronology of events GDWPP | 43 |
| ANNEX II: SPGE selection criteria for GDWPP pilot district fund | 49 |
| ANNEX III: National newspaper articles | 50 |

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|--|
| AEE | Ajumako-Enyam-Essiam |
| AES | Awutu-Efutu-Senya |
| BUSAC | Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund |
| CBRDP | Community Based Rural Development Programme |
| CRED | Center for Rural Enterprise Development (CRED) |
| DA | District Assembly |
| DANIDA | Danish International Development Agency |
| DCE | District Chief Executive |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| DSW | Department of Social Welfare |
| DWPP | Decent Work Pilot Programme |
| GoG | Government of Ghana |
| GDWPP | Ghana Decent Work Pilot Programme |
| GEA | Ghana Employers Associations |
| GFD | Ghana Federation of Disabled |
| GPRS | Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy |
| GTZ | German Technical Cooperation |
| ILGS | Institute of Local Government Studies |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IYB | Improve Your Business |
| JICA | Japanese International Cooperation Agency |
| KYB | Know Your Business |
| LESD | Local Economic and Social Development |
| MOFA | Ministry of Food and Agriculture |
| MMYE | Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment |
| MSEs | Micro and Small Enterprise |
| NBSSI | National Board for Small Scale Industries |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| NPP | Netherlands Partnership Programme |
| PWDs | Persons With Disabilities |
| SBA | Small Business Associations |
| SBEs | Small Business Enterprises |

| | |
|-------|---|
| SIF | Social Investment Fund |
| SME | Small and Medium Enterprises |
| SPGE | Sub-committee for Productive and Gainful Employment |
| STEP | Skills Training and Employment Placement |
| SYB | Start Your Business |
| TUC | Trade Union Congress |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the GDWPP

The Ghana Decent Work Pilot Programme (GDWPP), which is an initiative of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Government of Ghana (GoG) aims at contributing to the achievement of the national priority goal of poverty reduction through the promotion of decent work in the informal economy. The GDWPP started implementing early 2003 and has since March 2004 received support from the ILO Ghana Working out of Poverty project (GWooP), with funds of the Netherlands Partnership Programme (NPP)¹.

The concept of Decent Work implies the opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

The GDWPP has two separate but related components:

- **Component I** is policy-oriented and aims primarily at promoting the incorporation of Decent Work into the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS). It therefore seeks to build capacity of social partners to influence policy environment, so that decent work and poverty reduction are addressed through integrated social and economic policies at the national level.
- **Component II** is intended to develop and test an integrated approach to poverty reduction in the informal sector at the district level. To this end, the programme has identified two partners' districts in the Central region, namely Ajumako-Enyam-Essiam and Awutu-Efutu-Senya.

At local level (second component of the GDWPP), the aim is to build capacities of the key stakeholders in the local economy to design and implement a Local Economic and Social Development (LESD) strategy. LESD is a participatory development approach that encourages partnership arrangements between the main private and public stakeholders of a defined territory with the final objective of creating decent jobs and stimulating economic activity. The approach enables the joint design and implementation of a common development strategy by making use of the local resources and competitive advantage in a global context.

A central institution for the implementation of LESD approach is the 'Sub-committees for Productive and Gainful Employment' (SPGEs). The SPGEs consist of elected members of the assembly, technical staff of the assemblies and of private sector's representatives. They provide the main interface between the public and the private sector. The mission of the SPGEs is to ensure a broad based dialogue on locally owned, integrated and comprehensive strategies towards the creation of decent work in the informal economy within the local economic and social development framework. The strategy addresses aspects of decent work in the informal economy, including voice and representation; employment and fair remuneration, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) development, access to social security and working conditions, respect of fundamental rights and social dialogue. Reducing decent work deficits in these areas, including a reduction in poverty, is the ultimate goal.

A complete chronological overview of the events which have taken place in the context of the GDWPP component II can be found in Annex I.

¹The Netherlands Partnership Programme (March 2004 – March 2006) finances various projects in the field of employment creation, skills development and gender equality. It includes also a HQ based knowledge sharing facility that enables exchanges between these projects through meetings, a virtual forum and adaptation of approaches and tools.

1.2 What is Local Economic and Social Development (LESD)?

LESD is a participatory development approach that encourages partnership arrangements between the main private and public stakeholders of a defined territory with the final objective of creating decent jobs and stimulating economic activity. The process enables the joint design and implementation of a common development strategy, by making use of the local resources and competitive advantage in a global context. Although the fluidity of the LESD approach makes it impossible to describe a strict set of policies and actions, a typical LESD project is led by a certain number of basic elements, or principles:

Participatory decision-making and social dialogue: The involvement of local stakeholders in the process of developing their own territory is a prerequisite for sustainable growth. Bringing local stakeholders around one table through a Local Forum helps to build trust, encourages innovation and promotes the creation of social networks and activities. Most importantly perhaps, the involvement of stakeholders fosters social cohesion. In Ghana, the local forums which have been established at the district level are the Sub-Committees for Productive and Gainful Employment (*SPGEs*)

Private/public partnership: Cooperation between, and the coordination of different development activities deter actors from ineffective go-it-alone approaches while supporting the legitimacy and sustainability of the development process. LESD is a means to achieve the effective mobilization of local resources by encouraging investments with the highest rate of socio-economic return. The partnership between private, public and non-profit actors becomes crucial for a sustainable development process allowing the convergence in investment programming between the different local actors.

Territory: In contrast to traditional community development approaches, the LESD approach provides the means and structures to represent local opinion in national and international policy arenas. This is all the more important given the significance of territory to local economic development prospects in the current economic climate. Local actors not only possess a superior knowledge of their needs and resources, but their geographical and cultural proximity facilitates frequent social, economic and political interaction and creates the ideal conditions for growth, innovation and development, social cohesion and trust.

1.3 Objectives of the report

This report is a documentation of the LESD process that took place in two pilot districts of Ghana: Ajumako-Enyam-Essiam and Awutu-Efutu-Senya (hereafter AEE and AES). The document describes the Sub-Committees for Productive and Gainful Employments as ILO's main counterpart and its relation to the different stakeholders involved in the process. Moreover this report aims at providing a comprehensive overview of the LESD approach with regards to the SPGEs establishment, structure, capacity building initiatives, progresses and achievements made as well as the challenges encountered. Finally, this report seeks to draw lessons from the experiences at the district level, which can be used for paving the way forward and might be relevant for the eventual planning of the replication.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology used for this report was both interactive and consultative. It involved extensive consultations and discussions with SPGEs members, the GDWPP national and deputy coordinator, ILGS partners and a thorough review of all documents and reports available on the programme.

1.5 Structure of the report

The structure of this report is as follows. After the introductory section, section 2 describes the selection process of the two pilot districts, which was conducted by the ILGS in collaboration with ILO experts. In section 3, the structure of the SPGEs is explained with reference to their establishment, mission and functions as well as their objectives and legal status. Moreover, the membership rules as well as the role and responsibilities of the members are explained followed by the technical and financial support initiatives. Section 4 provides an overview and a brief description of the capacity building provided to different stakeholders of the districts. The progress and achievements of the two pilot districts are explored in section 5. Subsequently, the challenges encountered are considered and the lessons learnt are analysed. Finally, conclusions are highlighted in section 8.

2. Selection process of two partner districts

For the development and testing of tools and policy proposals at the local level, the GDWPP needed to select a pilot area. Given the GPRS planning and implementation responsibilities of district assemblies, the district level seemed most appropriate. The ILO consultative team on decent work, which visited Ghana in January 2003, identified a series of criteria for the selection of partner districts for the pilot programme, namely :

- Incidence of poverty,
- Strength of rural-urban linkages,
- Concentration of informal economy productive activities,
- Inter-relatedness of two districts, presence of associations,
- Government and social partners priority,
- Engagement of district assembly,
- Quality of economic development strategy in district plan, extent to which decent work concerns in the informal economy are reflected,
- Potential synergies with other development initiatives,
- Presence of potential presence of ILO projects and donor interest.

Based on the team's initial consultations and reflections, the Central Region of Ghana was identified as the focal region. The ILGS was assigned by the GDWPP to select 5 districts in the Central region and undertake a detailed assessment on all the criteria listed above.

The 5 district selected were:

- Awutu-Efutu-Senya
- Ajumako-Enyam-Essiam
- Agona
- Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese
- Cape Coast

In a workshop process, two groups of participants discussed extensively and finally selected the following 2 districts on basis of efficiency and equity criteria²:

Awutu-Efutu-Senya District and Ajumako-Enyam-Essiam District

² For a complete overview of the group discussion, the categorization of districts and selection process refer to the district selection workshop report (May 2003) prepared by the ILGS.

3. Structure of the SPGE

3.1 Establishment and mission

The key institution for the GDWPP and the local forum created in the LESD process is the District Assembly's special Sub-committee on Productive and Gainful Employment (SPGE), which is a public/private interface at the local level and serves as an institution for social dialogue.

The mission of the SPGE is to ensure a broad based dialogue on locally owned, integrated and comprehensive strategies towards the creation of decent work in the informal economy and within the framework local economic and social development.

3.2 The functions and objectives of the SPGEs

The objectives of the SPGEs are to:

- a. Formulate a consensus based LESD strategy that responds in an integrated way to the jointly identified decent work deficits in the district's informal economy. Propose concrete interventions within the framework of the strategy, including a *district action plan for productive and gainful employment*.
- b. Ensure coordination between the stakeholders in local development in the district as well as creation of strategic partnerships between the public and private sector, contributing to a more efficient use of the scarce resources at the local level.
- c. Enhance the transparency of resource allocations and increase the accountability of local government structures.
- d. Establish linkages with national and international levels as the interventions at the local level should not be understood as isolated initiatives but fit into national policies and strategies. Economic and commercial linkages with other districts as well as with areas outside the country should be pursued or reinforced where possible. Linkages with national and international levels will also be realized through the attraction and/or re-allocation of public and private investment.

The functions of the SPGEs include:

- The formulation of a consensus based LESD strategy intended respond to the decent work deficits in the district's informal economy – these deficits would have been jointly identified as well as worked on in a integrated way
- The proposal of concrete interventions including the development of a district Action Plan for Productive and Gainful Employment
- The coordination of stakeholders in local development and the creation of strategic partnership between the public and private sector
- Promoting transparency in resource allocation and enhancing accountability of local government structures
- Establishing linkages with the national and international levels to promote integration into the national policies and strategies; and also reinforce economic and commercial linkages with other districts and possibly other countries.

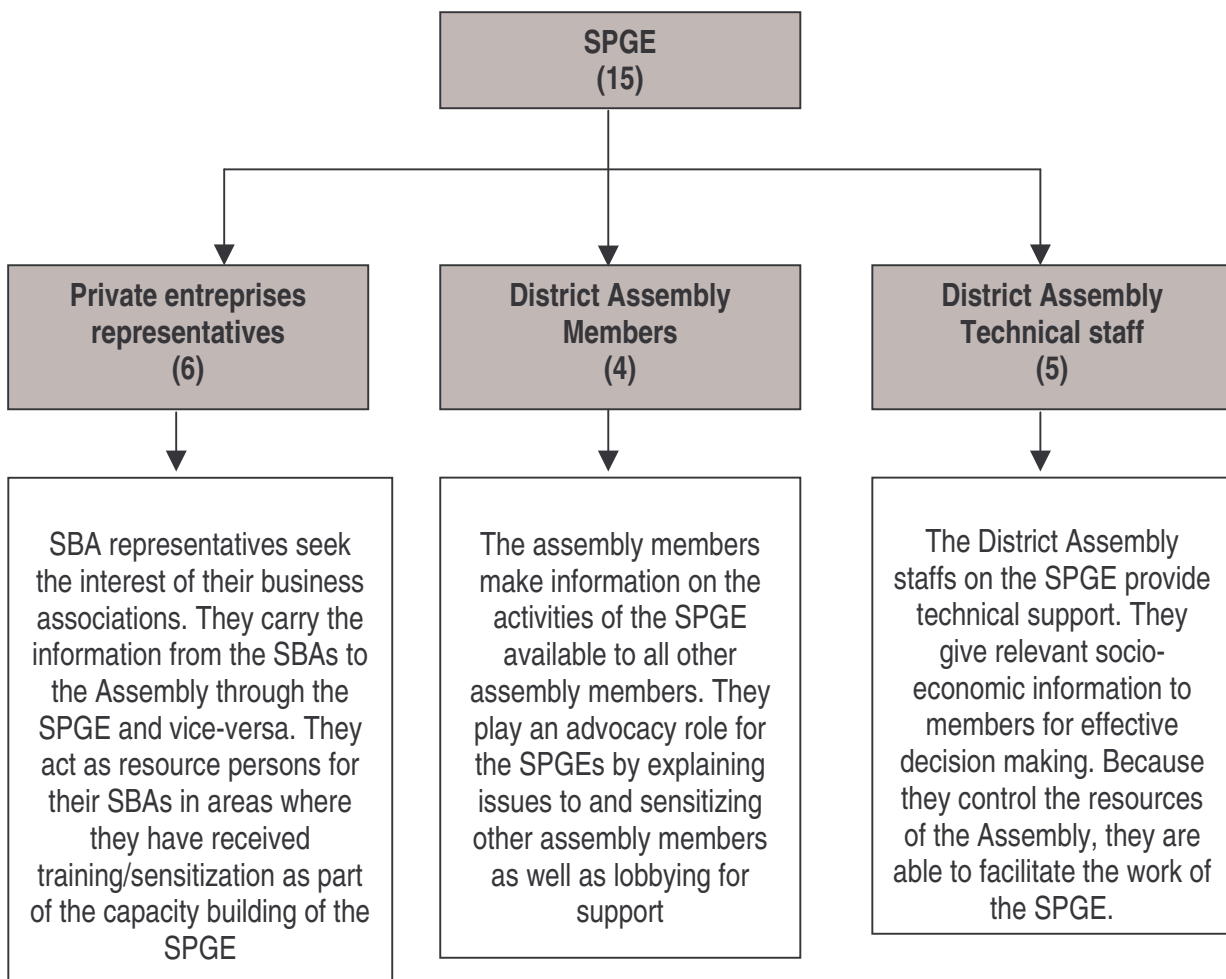
3.3 The Sub-Committees' legal status

The SPGE is a statutory Sub-Committee under the District Assembly which operates under Act 462 (Local Government Act, 1993) and the Standing Orders with technical assistance from the ILO to execute its functions. The name of the sub-committee originates from the GPRS' sub-theme on 'productive and gainful employment'.

3.4 The SPGE members and the tripartite constituent framework

The structure of the SPGEs

Each of the SPGEs has a membership of 15. The public sector includes selected key District Assembly officials and District Assembly technical staff. The technical staff is representing some key sub-committees of the District Assembly such as the sub-committee for agriculture, for works, for social services and for economics. The private sector is represented by members of Small Business Associations (SBAs). Currently each of the SPGEs is composed of 5 technical staff members of the District Assemblies, 4 District Assembly members and 6 representatives SBAs, as illustrated here below. The roles of the three different constituents are also explained below.



Members' election/selection

At the point of the SPGE creation, there was no existing strategy as to how to select or elect the members either coming from the district assembly staff or from the private sector. The ILGS however provided a list of criteria, which should be considered for the appointment of assembly members such as the name of relevant sub-committee to be represented (e.g. agriculture, social services, economic and works) in the SPGE. The district assembly members involved in the development of the project wrote a letter to active SBAs and asked them to appoint a representative with no further detail on the procedures to be followed. Some of the SBAs representatives were elected by their members while some others were simply selected.

Recently, a **handbook on rules and regulations** has been adopted by the SPGE³. One of the rules adopted is that a person qualifies to be elected or appointed as SPGE member if he:

- a. Can read and write English and/or the local language of the area
- b. Is trainable and can actively participate in decision-making and other activities of the committee

Furthermore, it was decided that all members of the SPGEs should be selected/elected based on their individual qualities and not necessarily because they are chairperson of SBAs or Sub-Committees of the District Assembly. The members of the SPGE hold office for a 4 year term and could be re-elected for one more term only (for a complete list of rules and regulations, refer to the handbook).

Roles and responsibilities

The four key positions within the SPGE are the chairman, the focal person, the secretary and the technical sub-Committee.

- **The chairman** is responsible for the general presiding the meetings (convene and sign notices of meetings, preserve order, following agenda, track of attendances, etc.). Although in the two pilot districts, the chairmen are representatives of the private sector, they can in principle be elected from all the SPGE members. According to the rules recently adopted, the chairman should be elected by a simple majority of all the members of the SPGE.
- **The focal person** is the key member who plans and organises the activities of the SPGE. He/she performs administrative functions of the SPGE, coordinates all the programmes and activities of the committee. The focal person is appointed by the District Chief Executive (DCE) and is the link between the DCE/Assembly, the SPGE, the ILO/GDWPP (as long as they are involved) and other stakeholders.
- **The secretary** takes down minutes of proceedings of both general and technical committees meetings. He/she deals with correspondence within and outside the committee (to a certain extend).
- **The technical committee** of the SPGE is made up of the chairman, the focal person, the secretary, the planning officer and budget officer. The smaller the committee meets to set the agenda of the SPGE. The committee also deals with the technical matters, which will otherwise be difficult for other members to handle. Members of the technical committee also act as resource persons/consultants on assignments.

³ The handbook was prepared as part of the consultancy work of Anthony Adu-Baffour and was adopted by the SPGEs during a workshop which took place in November 2005.

3.5 External support

Support for the SPGEs within the framework of the **GDWPP** includes:

- Functional support from the district assembly through the district focal person to coordinate SPGE meetings and maintain relations with the other components and actors in the GDWPP; and
- Capacity-building from such parties as the GDWPP, ILGS, the ILO and other partners (see section 4 for a list of capacity building initiatives)

The SPGEs also benefited from the financial and logistical support of the **District Assemblies**, which have provided an office space and funding (see section 3.6).

3.6 Funding and budgeting

- **District Assembly Special fund (budget line for SPGE activities)**
In 2004, the District Assembly of AEE released 50 millions Cedis and the District Assembly of AES 40 millions Cedis from the DA Common fund for the operational activities of the SPGEs. This amount is used to cover costs such as sitting allowances (agreed on 50 000 Cedis per day/person⁴ in AEE and 85 000 Cedis in AES) and TNT (travel allowances based on distance) for SPGE members as well as the renovation and the running of the SPGE offices. This fund is kept on a bank account which was opened for this purpose.
- **GDWPP pilot district Funds (co-financing facility)**
These funds have been set up with the objective to enable district assemblies to establish and maintain an enabling environment for reducing poverty and decent work deficits in micro and small enterprises in the informal economy. The GDWPP pilot district fund should be used for the implementation of District Action Plans of which the sector-based business development plans are integral part. The district funds amounting to \$15 000 per district enable access to other national or international funds through *cost-sharing arrangements*. In the disbursement of the fund, the SPGE will be guided by a list of *criteria, procedures and implementation arrangements* (see Annex II).
- **Consultancy work system**
The SPGE members and the technical sub-committee members in particular, have been contracted some consultancy work for the ILO/GDWPP. For instance, the SPGEs members in collaboration with professional consultants⁵ were commissioned to conduct business development plans for 4 selected promising sub-sectors. The resource fee earned for the assistance to the professional consultant (2000 \$) has been put on a bank account and used for entertainment and incentives of the SPGE members. Similarly, the SPGE members have recently been commissioned to develop an institutional mapping (more details in section 6.1) for their district. The total fee (4500 \$) is then divided between the consultant hired (1000\$) and the SPGE members (3500\$).

⁴ The exchange rate of Cedis - Euros is approximately 10 000 = 1 (December 2005).

⁵ The consultants commissioned for the BDS were CRED in AEE and Kwesi Esseku, a pending member of the Assembly for AES district.

- **Mobilization of external resources in support of local plans**

The SPGEs members have gradually taken up their role of mobilizing funds in support of their locally developed action plans and prioritization of sub-sectors. Concretely, the SPGE members of AEE in collaboration with a NGO called Community Rural Enterprise Development (CRED) have recently submitted a project proposal to the Support for Enterprise Empowerment and Development (SPEED). SPEED Ghana, which is a project funded by DANIDA and GTZ, aims at contributing to the sustainable development of Ghana's private sector and support socially and geographically balanced growth, income generation and employment creation. The project proposal submitted by CRED/SPGE aims at 'developing product quality clinics in oil palm processing' and is targeting at 300 processors in AEE district⁶. Fortunately, the project has been selected from more than 400 proposals and has recently been granted the 374 millions Cedis requested (approximately 37 400 Euros).

Moreover, the AEE district has recently applied to the BUSAC fund⁷, which is a project funded by international donors (USAID-DANIDA-DFID) and focuses on advocacy actions that will develop the private sector advocacy capacity. The project proposal aims at increasing the SBAs (and the private sector in general) involvement in public policy making, such as fee fixing and tax regulations.

4. Training and Capacity-Building

The SPGEs members including representatives from the district assemblies, public servants and from the private sector (SBAs) have been given several training courses in different fields. The capacity building was in most cases provided by the GDWPP in collaboration with partner organisations such as the ILGS, EMPRETEC or FIT Ghana. Here below is an overview of the training and capacity building received by the SPGE, SBA and DA members in the two districts. Every item is discussed in more details (objectives, participants, format of courses and evaluation by participants) in the subsequent sections.



SBA exposing their products at the stakeholders forum



⁶ The project involves activities such as animation and formalisation of selected SBAs, needs assessments and workplace evaluation, product analysis, technical and managerial training, association building, building of structures and equipment acquisition, product packaging and labelling, product certification and licensing, facilitation of market linkages and sub-contracting, information dissemination and sales promotion and finally evaluation and monitoring.

⁷ BUSAC Fund aims to broaden the engagement of the private sector in policy formulation and implementation, to assist in removing bottlenecks that prevent a better running of private sector and improve the image of the private sector within the general public; through advocacy actions that will develop the private sector advocacy capacity. The Fund is accessible through a competitive demand-driven mechanism and allows a transparent selection of the best advocacy actions proposed by associations within the private sector. BUSAC Fund finances, through grants, up to 90% of the cost of the advocacy actions that are selected. The actions are then implemented by the grantees themselves. For more information, refer to www.busac.org

| BOX I: Overview of training and capacity building interventions | |
|--|--|
| October 2003 | 1. Decent work awareness in the informal sectors and LESD workshop |
| <i>February 2004, Official inauguration of SPGEs in AES and AEE district</i> | |
| February 2004 | 2. Capacity-building workshop for SPGEs members in Accra |
| August 2004 | 3. SWOT Analysis workshop for SPGEs members in the two districts |
| October 2004 | 4. Small Business Association (SBAs) training in the two districts |
| April 2005 | 5. Validation workshop on SBAs training materials in Accra |
| May/June 2005 | 6. Contract management and monitoring workshop for selected District Assembly members in the two districts |
| June 2005 | 7. Training of trainers (ToT) in the two districts |
| Sept/Oct 2005 | 8. Small Business Association (SBAs) training in the two districts |
| 2005 and Ongoing | 9. Special Interventions |

4.1 Workshop: Decent work awareness and the LESD approach

Organisation:

An awareness raining-workshop for a wide group of stakeholders was conducted in the two districts by the ILGS in collaboration with the GDWPP in October 2003. The two-day workshop, was held first in Awutu and then in Ajumako. The facilitators and resource persons consisted of ILGS personnel, the National Coordinator for the GDWPP, a consultant from FIT Ghana and official from the DA.

Objectives:

The broad objectives of the workshop were to

- Familiarise the members of the district assembly on the content of the GDWPP in order to equip them with the necessary information and knowledge needed to effectively advocate the programme
- Formulate recommendations for small-scale capacity building activities and interventions necessary for the SPGEs and SBAs that can be carried out for the rest of 2003
- Explore areas for further research studies to provide knowledge/information needed to support the work of the SPGEs and strengthen the SBAs in the districts

Participants

Around 40 participants attended each course, including members of the SPGEs, representatives invited by SPGEs, assembly members and officials from the district assemblies

Methodology and format of course

Adult participatory techniques including presentations, plenary discussion and group work were adopted for the course. The content of workshop included:

- Decent work, the informal economy and Local Economic and Social Development,
- Challenges and shared interests of SBAs,
- SWOT analysis for the respective districts,
- Training Needs Assessments (TNA) for SPGEs, SBAs and District Assemblies members,
- Definition of mission and responsibilities of SPGEs
- Setting up of a work plan

Evaluation

| Positive | Negative |
|--|---|
| + Content encouraged participation | - Logistic aspects could have been better |
| + Presentations style, duration and organisation of workshop | - Materials/Handouts could be improved |
| + Objectives clear and fulfilled | |

Results and Conclusion

Overall, the workshop created awareness about the issues involved in fostering decent work and LESD at the local level for poverty reduction. Moreover, the roles and functions as well as membership of the relevant SPGE have been clarified and accepted.

4.2 Workshop: Capacity-building for SPGEs members

Organisation

During the awareness-raising workshop on Decent Work held for the two pilot districts in October 2003, a range of capacity building requirements were identified as prerequisites for the SPGE members. These capacity building requirements were intended to equip them undertake their functions more effectively. In particular, the following topics were considered:

- Strategic planning for the achievements of roles and functions of SPGEs
- Advocacy and partnership
- Dialogue and facilitation skills
- Resource mobilisation

In view of these skills priority areas, a 5-day programme was organised in February 2004 by the ILGS (in collaboration with consultants from EMPRETEC, Gharthey Ass. Ltd and Pentax consultancy) in Accra.

Objectives

The objective of the workshop was to *equip members of the SPGEs with critical skills* required for the promotion of decent work and LESD in their respective districts. The programme also provided the SPGEs with an opportunity to develop the following:

- Key outputs (framework/guideline) for the guidance of the action plans' implementation
- A common interpretation of the Terms of Reference of the SPGEs
- Agreements on the modes of functioning of the SPGEs
- An indication of the way forward for their work and programme implementation

Participants

The members of the SPGEs in both districts attended the workshop, which sums up to 30.

Methodology, course content and training materials

The training methods included facilitator presentations, plenary discussions, group works and role plays. A significant number of **clear and illustrative handouts** regarding the different modules discussed were also provided to the participants.

- **Day 1:** Introduction to ground rules and expectations + Reflection on ToR of SPGEs + Strategic planning for the achievements of the functions of the SPGEs.
- **Day 2:** Continued strategic planning + 1st draft action plan for the promotion of decent work in the district informal economy
- **Day 3:** Advocacy and partnerships
- **Day 4:** Dialogue and facilitation Skills
- **Day 5:** Resource mobilisation and modes of operations of SPGEs + closing session

Evaluation

The programme was reviewed on a daily basis by participants. Most of the participants (86,3%) said that their expectations were fully met by the training programme and that they were equipped with tools to enhance their work at local level. A sizeable number of participants identified the strong point of the workshop as the adoption of simple English inter mixed with the local language (Fanti) as well as the use of participatory techniques. It was recommended that a future programme must include training on 'proposal and report writing'.

Results and Conclusion

The two SPGEs developed **Draft Action Plans** that will guide them in their efforts to implement strategic visions of promoting wealth creation.

4.3 Workshop: SWOT Analysis

Organisation

In order to enhance the implementation of the GDWPP in the two pilot districts the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis workshop was organised for the SPGEs. The 2-day training was organised separately in the two districts by the ILGS in collaboration with selected partners in August 2004.

Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were

- To identify the existing and potential small-scale industries in the district
- To identify the leading economic growth sectors within the district for investments to ensure accelerated growth
- To facilitate working partnership between SPGEs, NGOs, and development projects
- To define resources mobilisation strategies for the implementation of the action plans

Participants

The 15 SPGE members of both districts attended the SWOT analysis workshop.

Methodology and course content

The workshop was mainly organised through group works and discussions followed by plenary sessions. Presentations were also given on the SWOT analysis components.

Day 1: Split into two groups, the participants identified sectors within their district in which the decent work concept could be applied and then presented their results in a plenary session.

Day 2: Group work continuation of the previous day activities, i.e. prioritisation of areas for investment in the district with regards to Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), cost effectiveness, chances of success, time duration, sustainability, availability of raw materials, benefits to the community, gender sensitivity, etc. After the plenary session, the participants were split in groups again and taken through various aspects of the SWOT analysis for the specific sectors identified.

Evaluation

Participants expressed their better understanding of the SWOT analysis and contentment with the identification of priority sectors. Time management was however problematic during the workshop.

Results and Conclusion

The workshop resulted in the identification of priority areas for each district (outline below) and a detailed SWOT analysis for every sector.

| Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam | Afutu-Effutu-Senya |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Agriculture (grasscutter, poultry, aquaculture and vegetable production) | 1. Fishing |
| 2. Food processing (cassava processing, alcoholic beverages, oil palm and palm kernel processing) | 2. Grasscutter |
| 3. Craft (carving) | 3. Poultry |
| 4. Services (beauticians, hairdressers, batik tie and dye, tailors and dressmakers, etc) | 4. Gari processing |
| | 5. Fish processing |

4.4 Workshop: Small Business Associations (SBAs) training

Organisation

The 5-day SBA training workshop was organised by EMPRETEC, FIT and GDWPP in the two pilot districts in October 2004.

Objectives

The main objectives of the workshop were to

- Test the content of the SBA training manuals on the end-users as well as trainers and consultants who developed them.
- Elicit feedbacks from different stakeholders (SPGEs members, potential trainers, SBA executives and members) and give them the opportunity to make inputs
- Identify potential trainers
- Serve as a mock SBA training workshop to provide lessons to guide the actual training
- Enhance the management, leadership and service delivery capacities of selected SBAs whose leaders participates in the workshops.

Participants

In total , 50 participants consisting of SPGE members, SBA executives and potential trainers took part in the workshops.

Methodology, course content and training materials

Teaching techniques included presentations, plenary sessions, discussions and role plays. The use of local language was encouraged. The workshop was based on a comprehensive training package on association building and management for SBAs developed for this purpose. **A training manual and a facilitator's handbook** were developed by different consultants and were based on an initial Training Needs Assessments of SBAs in the two pilot districts and adaptation of a generic ILO global guide to Managing Social Business Associations and a similar SBA training material developed for Tanzania.

The modules handled during the workshop were among others, the following

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ▪ Association building and management | ▪ Lobbying and advocacy |
| ▪ Rights and obligations | ▪ Health support services |
| ▪ Leadership | ▪ Business counselling and consultancy |
| ▪ Communication | ▪ Child and PWD rights |
| ▪ Negotiation and bargaining | ▪ Project proposal preparation |
| ▪ Dispute resolution and management | ▪ Gender perspective for SBAs |
| ▪ Networking | ▪ Action Planning |

Evaluation and Results

- There was a substantial interest by the participants in the training and they have considerably increased their skills levels in a number of fields.
- The key objective of the training workshop was to test the content of the manual on the end-users, trainers and consultants who developed the manual. To this end, comments and suggestions for improvements have been received. These should serve as a good basis for the revision of the training manuals.
- The training materials have further been assessed by Carlien van Empel (consultant for IFP/SEED) in November 2004 and finalized by FIT Ghana in February 2005.

4.5 Validation workshop: on SBA training materials

Organisation

After the development of a set of materials i.e. resource guide and a facilitators guide, which are used to strengthen the capacity of SBAs executives and members as well as to enable them deliver services that support the growth of small business enterprises (SBEs) a validation workshop was organised at the ILGS in April 2005. The validation workshop was organised to provide an opportunity for experts to discuss and fine-tune the materials and help to make them more relevant to the context of the target groups.

Objectives

The objective of the validation workshop was to subject the various topics, contents and structure of the Training Manual and Facilitators Guide to the rigorous review of a team of experts, specialists, beneficiaries and stakeholders with the view to:

- Bring the materials to an acceptable standard in terms of suitability and relevance to the target beneficiaries
- Ensure that any gender biases in the materials are identified and addressed
- Ensure that consultants involved in the development of the materials receive direct feedback from key stakeholders including potential trainers and other users as well as target beneficiaries that will help them review and finalize the materials for publication.

Content

Each of the modules from the Resource Guide and Facilitators guide was discussed and reviewed for possible improvements. The outcome of the discussion can be found in the complete report of the validation workshop.

Participants:

Participants of the workshop included gender specialists, specialists on Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), SME development specialists, master trainers, health and safety specialists, representatives from the two pilot districts, namely, members of the SPGEs, social partners, SBAs representatives, representatives from the ILO GDWPP office and the team of experts involved in developing the training manual and the facilitators guide.

Outcome

Following the outcome and issues from the validation workshop, the following suggestions/proposals were recommended for consideration and action:

- A review of the resource guide and facilitators guide by the team of consultants in line with issues raised at the validation workshop
- The recommended changes to the resource guide should have corresponding amendments in the facilitators guide to make them uniform
- Expedient printing and application of the materials in the pilot districts for the benefit of SBAs and SBEs.

The final versions of the resource and facilitators guide were printed in Accra in September 2005.

4.6 Workshop: Labour-Based Technology - Contract management and monitoring

Organisation

The employment and income generation potential of infrastructure is not fully utilized due to tendering and contracting procedure that de facto exclude many labour-based firms. In response to this challenge the DWPP in collaboration with the ILGS organised a four-day workshop for selected district assembly functionaries and contractors in the two districts. The workshops were held 23-27th May 2005 in AEE and 31st May-3rd June in AES

Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were to

- Introduce participants to concepts, tools and techniques in the management and monitoring of contracts
- Enable participants to identify and address challenges in the construction industry
- Create a platform for participants to generate and discuss issues relating to contract management within the framework of the public procurement act
- To enable participants appreciate the importance of using labour based approaches to construction

Participants

In Ajumako, 31 persons reported for the workshop while in Winneba 18 persons attended. Note that there was no female participant.

Methodology and course content and

The workshop adopted various learning methods to equip participants with appropriate skills and knowledge, which included presentations, questions/answers, practical exercises, group assignments, case studies and problem solving approaches. The reading materials were divided into eight modules (see below for content) and bound together to form the course material. The course **hand-outs were provided** to the participants on the first day of the workshop. The course modules were designed to assist learning and understanding of the theory and techniques underpinning contract management and monitoring. The areas covered include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Overview of construction industry | 5. The monitoring of time |
| 2. The procurement of services | 6. The measurement and valuation of work |
| 3. The procurement of works | 7. The vetting of payment certificates |
| 4. The conditions of contract | 8. Case study |

Evaluation and Results

- The workshop was successful in light of participants' overall assessments. The course provided participants the opportunity to build networks for furthering relationships as well as providing new insights into the construction industry in terms of tools, technology and process towards a more efficient contract management and monitoring.
- The workshop resulted in the selection of two feeder roads in each District to be reconstructed using the LBT methods, i.e. creating employment in the communities along the roads.

4.7 Workshop: Training of trainers for small business associations

Organisation

Following the finalization of the SBA training materials, a one-week training of trainers' (ToT) workshop was held in Winneba in June 2005. The resource persons for the workshop were from EMPRETEC (general manager), GEA (head of training), FIT Ghana (coordinator) and TUC (head informal sector).

Objectives

The main objective of the ToT workshop was to

- Enhance the effectiveness of participants as potential trainers of SBAs by equipping them with the techniques and tools required for the implementation of the SBS training programme in the future.

Participants

Twenty prospective trainers (10 per district), who were rigorously selected by the SPGE of their respective districts, participated in the ToT.

Methodology, course content and training materials

Participatory adult techniques were used for the training such as discussions, individual and group assignments, syndicate sessions, role plays and case studies.

Each participant was given a set of training materials consisting of a **'SBA resource guide'** and a **'Facilitators guide to the SBA resource guide'** at the beginning of the programme

The course was divided in 2 parts. The first one, which aimed at equipping participants with the techniques for implementing the SBA training programme, focused on the recommended techniques and skills delivery of the training programme. Topics covered included:

- Training Needs Assessments
- Course design and selection of participants
- Training techniques and methods

The second part dealt with the various modules contained in the SBA training package, i.e. the resource guide and the facilitators guide. The focus was on introducing the modules and explaining the rationale for their inclusion in the training programme.

Evaluation

Mechanisms were put in place by resource persons to assess on daily basis, the extent to which the objectives of the programme were achieved including questionnaires and daily reviews.

Results and Conclusion

- The resource persons concluded that the selection of participants was well done as it was apparent that they all possessed the basic qualities for facilitating adult learning. Participants demonstrated high levels of interest and commitment, punctuality and made useful contributions, which resulted in a successful workshop.
- The master trainers together with the GDWPP recommended 6 participants from each district to be certified as trainers immediately. The rest of them should receive additional training or attachment with Master Trainers before certification.

4.8 Workshop: Small Business Association (SBAs) Training

Organisation

The SBA training was organised by the GDWPP in several towns of the two pilot districts in September/October 2005. In total 400 SBAs members attended the training programme. The training programme was divided into 20 training sessions made up of 20 trainees each and taking place in 3 consecutive days.

Objectives

The main objective of the training was to equip SBAs executives with skills, which would allow for an improvement of their business and eventually, increase their welfare. Moreover, the training aimed at reinforcing the SBA organisation and management in order to increase their bargaining power and negotiations skills. The expectation is that SBA executive will further share knowledge with their association members so as to reach out a greater amount of micro-entrepreneurs.

Participants

Resulting from the action plans and business development plans conducted in the two districts, a number of sectors were identified as particularly promising. The SBA representatives of these particular sub-sectors were given the priority for the participation to the training. In AES for example priority was given to SBAs of two particular sectors, namely garment and textiles and fish processors.

Methodology, course content and training materials

As adult learners, some of whom have no formal education, a variety of methods were employed to deliver the modules such as role-plays and dramatization. Moreover, stories woven around the modules and the use of folk songs were used to emphasize the messages to the participants. The medium of communication at the workshop was the local language, Fante.

The **SBA training manuals** as well as the **facilitators guide** developed for this purpose were the main reference materials used at the workshop and every participant was given a copy. In addition, other techniques were used to make the learning process very practical, real and interesting in every-day-life situation, such as the mounting of exhibitions during the module on "Trade Fairs and Exhibitions".

The programme of the training looked as follows:

| Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ground rules and expectations - Association organisation and management - Planning and resource mobilisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation Group Work - Communication - Savings and credits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation Group Work - Negotiation and trade fairs - Evaluation and Closing |

Evaluation and Results

Every participants received a certificate of attendance and completion. At the day of certificate submission in Winneba, some participants expressed their gratitude and their belief that the training has improved their businesses. Below are some of the benefits their shared:

- Better role definition/functions within the SBA (secretary, chairman, treasurer...)
- Increase of the frequency and quality of meetings
- Developed a constitution (chart) and elected executives with good leadership qualities
- Improvement of business activities as a result of proper accountability and book keeping
- Increase contact with rural banks for financial support
- Generation of internal funds (SBAs) for payments of dues but also SUSU (sort of common savings).

4.9 Special initiatives

Next the workshop described above, a series of special intervention have been undertaken in the two pilot districts. Some of these special interventions are briefly described below.

Special Business Assistance to People With Disabilities (PWDs) - Ongoing

In the beginning of 2004, a project on the integration of PWDs was incorporated in the GDWPP. The project objectives is 1) to build capacity of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and representatives of the Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPO) of the two pilot districts and DAs to integrate disability issues into their plans and programmes and 2) support employable skills training and business development among PWDs in the informal economy through the GDWPP.

Within the framework of the project, the activities organised so far are the following:

- ***A workshop on community awareness raising and sensitization on the GDWPP for PWDs*** took place in the two districts in February 2005
- ***A disability awareness seminar*** was organised for SPGE members and PWDs by the Ghana Federation of Disabled (GFD) in collaboration with DSW and GDWPP in March 2005
- ***Capacity building:*** The District Social Welfare and Community Development Officers in the two districts attended a day's meeting on integration of needs of PWDs in development plans. Similar trainers of trainees orientation was provided for the Central Regional personnel of the DSW on supporting persons with disabilities into small businesses. The ILO Manual on *How to Start Small Businesses – for Community Workers* was used to facilitate the session. The manual and a guide for supporting skills training and job placement for PWDs in the communities were reproduced to support training of SPGE members and SBAs in the integration of PWDs in the productive sectors of the two districts.
- ***Micro-credit scheme:*** The DSW in collaboration with the GFD negotiated with the National Micro Finance Committee for a One Billion Cedis micro credit scheme to support PWDs. The micro-credit schemes, which are managed and loaned through rural banks, are sought to support PWDs in some areas of production such as crops, fish mongering, trade and commerce, poultry and animal rearing, food processing, textiles and vocational enterprises. The two pilot districts were each allocated 40 millions Cedis (approx. US\$ 4400), for supporting the SPGEs activities to mobilize and assist PWDs to venture into small businesses. Consequently, a process of mobilisation, screening and selection of beneficiaries was conducted in the two districts. Out of a total of 198 persons with disabilities mobilized and candidates for the micro-credit, 75 have benefited form a total disbursement of 60 millions Cedis (approx US\$ 6,600) made through the respective rural banks of the districts.

Emphasis on gender mainstreaming and gender equality (Ongoing)

- The GDWPP insures that women and men benefit equitably from its interventions and that gender imbalances are addressed at the policy, programme and implementation level.
- Several initiatives have been undertaken at the district level in order to increase awareness and address gender needs specifically:

1. Training on gender mainstreaming:

- The SPGE members of the 2 pilot districts have attended a ½ day module on gender equality and gender mainstreaming given by an expert in the field in November 2005.
- The SBA training as well as the training manuals developed for this purpose devote a module to gender mainstreaming issues. The module includes topics such as constraints of women entrepreneurs and the role of SBAs, importance of factoring gender in SBAs, areas for gender mainstreaming in SBAs (constitution of an association, rights and obligations, association structure, leadership, communication, etc.) The SBA executives as well as their members have therefore been exposed to gender equality and gender mainstreaming

2. Women entrepreneurs represent more than 50% of the SBAs and SBEs who benefited from the training and business assistance of the GDWPP. That is explained by the large presence of typically female dominated business sectors such as palm oil and palm kernel oil, hairdressers and beauticians, batik tie and dye as well as tailors and dressmakers.

Special Grasscutter Project – Training Package (November 2005)

- As a result of the business development plans conducted in the two districts, grasscutter farming proved to be a relatively simple and viable business for rural informal business operators.. Consequently it was selected as a priority sub-sector in the two pilot districts and a training package on grass-cutter rearing was organized by the GDWPP in collaboration with the SPGEs.
- In total 20 people were selected for the special grasscutter training. The criteria for selection were to be in possession of a piece of a land and sufficient funding to buy feeding and cages (or alternatively have an outside person to sponsor the business)
- The training package involved
 - The acquisition of 5 parent stocks per person (4 females and 1 male imported from Benin)
 - The acquisition of a new cage
 - Technical and business training
- The technical training was provided by experts in the field from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) and included training in feeding, animal husbandry, etc.
- After the training, the participants went home with cages and parent stocks to start immediately their businesses

District Business Information Centers (November 2005)

- Business Information Centers have been created in the two districts and computers were supplied for the centers' use by the GDWPP. While the GDWPP provided the necessary equipment such as furniture, computer and telephone/internet facilities, the DA provided the office space and will bare the running costs of the office (electricity, phone bills, etc).
- Business information and different materials are currently being gathered. Moreover, an institutional mapping of resources/partners and institutions present in the districts is currently being developed by the SPGEs members and will help entrepreneurs in their business plans.
- The targeted audience includes operators of micro and small enterprises, SBAs, researches and students, practitioners of LED and enterprise development and the local public.
- The SPGE have asked for a national servant to be appointed for 1 year and be responsible for the running of the center. The person is expected to be available by the beginning of 2006

5. Progress, activities and achievements

5.1 Activities and progresses of the SPGEs

The different steps undertaken within the GDWPP and the achievements reached so far by the SPGEs include:

1. Constitution of Sub-Committees for Productive and Gainful Employment

The key institution of the LESD process in Ghana is the District Assemblies Sub-Committees for Productive and Gainful Employment (SPGEs). As explained above, the SPGE constitute a public-private partnership at the local level and serves as an institution of social dialogue (for more details refer to section 3).

2. Establishment of SPGE offices

Both districts assemblies have provided space for the establishment of SPGE offices.

3. Baseline study for future impact assessment

A household survey using an impact methodology was carried out in 2003 by the Centre for Development Studies of Cape Coast. The survey was conducted in the two pilot districts and one control district.

4. Sensitisation and awareness raising of local government

An awareness raining-workshop for a wide group of stakeholders was conducted in the two districts by the ILGS in collaboration with the GDWPP in October 2003 (for more details refer to section 4.1).

5. Capacity building of SPGE members

A range of capacity building requirements were identified as prerequisites for the SPGE members in order to perform their functions more effectively. In this light, a 5-day programme was held in Accra and organised by the ILGS in February 2004. The objective of the workshop was to *equip members of the SPGEs with essential skills* required for the promotion of decent work and LESD in their respective districts, such as strategic planning, negotiation, advocacy and resource mobilisation (for more details refer to section 4.2).

6. Creation of databases on small enterprises and the informal economy

The SPGEs have completed surveys to assess the potential for micro and small enterprises development in the two districts. The SPGEs in the two districts have registered over 150 Small Business Associations and about 4,000 Small Business Enterprises.

7. SWOT analysis for sub-sectors of each districts

A SWOT analysis 2-day training workshop was organised for the SPGEs members in the two districts. The workshop resulted in the identification of priority areas for each district and a detailed SWOT analysis for every sector (see section 4.3)

8. Strategic planning and sector-based business development plans

i. Action plans

As a result of the capacity building workshop organized by the ILGS, the SPGEs members of the two districts drafted Actions Plans. Through a consultative planning process as part of the LESD approach, the SPGE's have prioritized promising sub-sectors. The Actions Plans include the identification of clear objectives (ex. create inventory of SBAs, organize and disseminate information on mutual health

insurance or strengthen 10 existing SBAs) as well as a tentative schedule and the strategies that will be used to reach the expected outcomes.

ii. Business Development Plans

Based on the SPGEs action plans, local consultants⁸ in collaboration with the SPGEs were commissioned to conduct business development plans for 4 selected promising sub-sectors. The promising sub-sectors selected by the two districts were the following:

| <u>Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam</u> | <u>Afutu-Effutu-Senya</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Grasscutter rearing | 1. Cassava |
| 2. Textiles and garments | 2. Textiles and Garments |
| 3. Soap making | 3. Poultry |
| 4. Oil Palm processing | 4. Fish and Fish processing |

The business development plans resulted in a series of recommendations with regards to issues such as management and organization, production, marketing, credits, PWDs and health and safety for each respective sector.

iii. External validation of the business development plans

After the completion of the eight business development plans, FIT Ghana was requested to review them all. The review of the reports involved the verification of economic figures used in the reports and checking the validity of the recommendations made in business plans. In addition, recommendations were made for the improvement and enrichment of the business development plans.

iv. Selection of two priority areas

After the completion of the business development plans and the external validation, the SPGEs selected 2 priority sectors (out of the 4 originally considered) with high prospects of success for implementation. A series of criteria were followed for the selection of the 2 sectors⁹. The sectors chosen were:

| <u>Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam</u> | <u>Awutu-Effutu-Senya</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Soap making | 1. Textiles and Garments |
| 2. Oil Palm processing | 2. Fish and Fish processing |

The sub-sectors selected will be the main focus for the SPGEs implementation plans, starting with the training of selected SBAs members (200 in each district) representing these two areas.

9. Development of Training manuals – Training of Trainers (ToT) and SBAs training

An initiative of adapting the ILO training Manuals for SBAs to the Ghanaian context was introduced in April 2004 and was supported by experienced national providers of business development services such as EMPRETEC and FIT Ghana as well as the social partners (TUC and GEA.) After the validation of a draft in June 2004, the manual was tested in October 2004 (section 4.4) and finalized in early 2005 (section 4.5). **The training manuals** were supplemented by a **facilitators' guidebook**. Finally the training package was produced and printed in Accra and resulted in a simple, accessible and user-friendly type of manuals. A **Training of Trainers** (10 for each district) took place in Winneba in June 2005 (See section 4.7) and thereafter the **SBA training** for 400 executives was held in the two districts in September 2005 (See section 4.8).

⁸ The consultants commissioned for the business development plans were CRED in AEE and Kwesi Esseku in AES district.

⁹ The criteria were among others: cost of starting business, number of beneficiaries, capacity to reduce poverty, beneficiaries (women, children, PWDs), chances of success, adaptability, sustainability, production and marketing.

10. Strengthening of SPGEs

In order to strengthen the capacity of the SPGEs in the two pilot districts, a local consultant¹⁰ reviewed and adapted the rules and regulations (see 'Handbook on rules and Regulations for the SPGEs) to specific nature of the sub-committees (in particular reference to membership procedures, roles and responsibilities). The recommended approaches were presented by the consultant to the SPGEs members during a workshop held in both districts in November 2005.

11. Organization of a stakeholders forum

A one-day stakeholder's forum was organized by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE) in collaboration with the GDWPP in October 2005. The forum aimed at linking up the SPGEs with new and potential collaborators such as international donors, government agencies, NGOs and private sector operators as well as seeking new partnerships for the next phase of the project. In the end of the forum, the different stakeholders filled in a form where they indicated areas for potential collaboration and/or partnerships.

12. Institutional Mapping

The SPGE members have been commissioned to work on an institutional mapping. The objective of this assignment is to map existing and planned development initiatives and stakeholders (local, regional, national, international) present in the Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam and Awutu-Effutu-Senya districts. The institutional mapping include 1) the creation a comprehensive list of institutions/organizations and other initiatives present in the districts, 2) the identification of gender specific initiatives in the district, 3) personal interviews and consultations with each of the institutions/organizations/responsible for the initiatives and 4) the setting up of a physical space with the established list and documentation. In both districts, the interviews have been conducted by the SPGEs and a first draft was recently submitted to the GDWPP office.

13. Creation of business information centers

Business Information Centers have been created in the two districts and a series of documents and different materials are currently being gathered. The targeted audience includes operators of micro and small enterprises, SBAs, researchers and students, practitioners of LESD and enterprise development as well as the local public. The SPGEs have requested for a national service personnel to be appointed for one year and be responsible for the running of the center. The person is expected to be available by the beginning of January 2006. Currently, the Business Information Center in Ajumako is not operational due to an electricity problem. In Winneba, the SPGE have recently sent a budget proposal to the GDWPP for an improvement of the infrastructure, i.e. installation of a telephone line, internet connection and an air-conditioning system. Note that Winneba is using the SPGE office for both purposes.

14. Appointment of national service personnel to run SPGE office on daily basis

The SPGE members of the two pilot districts have requested the appointment of a national service personnel to run the office on a daily basis. The national service personnel will be appointed for one year and will be responsible for gathering information concerning the SPGE activities and making it available to anyone interested. If everything goes well, the national service personnel is expected to start his work by the beginning of January 2006.

15. Grasscutter rearing – special training programme

Following the special training package (see section 4.9) offered to 20 participants, each of them went home with their cages as well as the parents stocks (5 of them each coming from Benin) and have immediately started their businesses.

¹⁰ The local consultant responsible of the assignment is Mr. Anthony Adu-Baffour. The assignment was completed in October 2005 and the workshop was held in November 2005.

Coming up shortly...

16. Training of Small Business Enterprises

EMPRETEC has been commissioned to provide:

Technical assistance to train and improve the product quality and quantity of the SBEs in 4 selected business sectors in the two districts¹¹. The objective of the assignment is to address the decent work deficits identified previously in the field of quality and quantity of products of the SBAs and the SBEs, improve the quality and quantity of their output, and obtain certification for standards to legalize the products in the market. Based on the Training Needs Assessments conducted and confirmed by the SPGEs, three major training programmes are needed:

- a) **Technical Skill Training** (Quality and quantity improvements of products; technology improvements and introduction of basic machines to remove laborious production process; products analysis and certification of product to be legally accepted into the market and packaging)
- b) **Business Development Training** (Credit control, product pricing, distribution, sub-contracting, networking, book keeping, alternative investment, sourcing of funds, hygiene at work, etc)
- c) **Association Building** (leadership, team building, organizing meetings, etc)

Business management skills based on the Improve Your Business package (IYB) to 300 SBEs in AES and 200 SBEs in AEE. The assignment is employing IYB Package and adapts it locally to address business management training needs of SBEs in about 20 workshops of 25 participants in each session. This assignment also includes training of about 6 trainers in each district in order to use them in the training programmes.

Evaluation and follow up of the training by writing up a report and conduct monitoring visits to the SBEs who have benefited from the technical training.

17. Development of the cultural and festival enterprise

Some of the SBEs registered in the 2 districts are engaged in wood carving, special custom designs for the various cultural festivals observed in the two districts. A preliminary study conducted in June 2005 by an expert in creating enterprises out of these cultural festivals and artifacts, revealed that if the project assist the enterprises engaged in cultural activities to develop and link them to the other businesses, we can expand the cultural festivals and add enterprise into them to create more businesses. The aim of this assignment is to help build capacity of the local artists and the stakeholders in the 'cultural entrepreneurship' in fashion, textiles and wood carving sectors identified to enable them play a key business development role in these cultural festivals and possibly expand their businesses. In view of the Masquerading Festivals on 1st January 2006, the following actions will be undertaken in the period of December- January 2006:

- Preparatory work with the different stakeholders for 4 days.
- 5-day TOT workshop for 10 selected trainers
- 5-day training of the stakeholders and preparation to pilot the knowledge with the Masquerading Festival in January 2006 for 30 people.

Note: This activity has not taken place as described above due to time constraints.

¹¹ The sub-sectors selected by AEE district are palm oil and Palm Kernel oil production, Alata soap production, and grasscutter rearing while for EES they are fishing and fish processing; textile, garment and beautifying; and grasscutter rearing.

18. Cultivating the enterprise Culture into the Youth

Following a critical study of SBEs and SBAs indicating that most people do not possess entrepreneurial abilities linked to lack of enterprise culture, it was accepted by the district assemblies and their SPGEs in a stakeholders' forum to cultivate the enterprise culture in the people, especially the young women and men still in school between 13 – 30 years. This project aims at introducing students from age 13 – 17 into business using the Know About your Business (KAB) Package and also apply Start Your Business (SYB) on the adult students between ages 18 – 30. The assignment is to engage an expert and a Master Trainer in KAB and SYB to use about 4 Local Master Trainers to train 20 teachers from Senior Secondary, Vocational and Technical Schools and the Universities in the Districts to form nucleus trainers to pilot the formation of Enterprise Clubs in 20 schools.

5.2 Successes and achievements

The pilot experience is still young and has set in motion a process, for which evidence of ultimate impact (e.g. in terms of poverty reduction, employment creation) is not yet available. On the other hand, a number of achievements and changes in terms of LESD process can however be observed at the local level. These experiences provide useful and promising insights, which can feed back into ongoing and new decentralized interventions for productive and gainful employment. Some of the achievements are elaborated here below.

+ Decent work as a central issue in the District Assembly's policy agenda

The District Assemblies in the two pilot districts seem to have accepted their role of creating an enabling environment for SME development. For instance, the employment and decent work agenda is given more importance in the District Assembly's agenda as is reflected in the budget for 2005¹². Furthermore, the medium term plan III, which is currently being prepared will focus on employment creation as a central and cross-cutting issue¹³. Finally, the usage of the Poverty Alleviation Fund of the DA has been streamlined to group or individual entrepreneurs that have been trained within the framework of the GDWPP. Concretely, the SPGE of AEE provides a list of promising SBAs and/or SBEs to the DA, who then selects particular projects for the disbursement of the fund.

+ Enhancement of the informal sector operators' awareness

The consciousness among SBAs and SBEs that an enabling environment is an essential element for the development of their businesses has made them pro-active and more likely to search for business development services at all levels. Furthermore, the private sector operators have increased their demands and expectations of the public sector and the District Assembly in particular to play an enabling role in the development of their businesses and the local economy.

+ Strengthening of the democratic management, organisation and service delivery of SBAs

As a result of the different capacity building and skills development exercises conducted in the pilot districts, the concept of 'Small Business Association' has taken shape: the SBA members are better organized, they have defined roles and responsibilities within the association and some of them have developed charts. In all cases, dialogue and communication has increased among the SBA members involved in the project in one way or another. Moreover, SBA executives are strengthened in terms of their capacity to represent micro and small enterprises in the informal economy, to provide advocacy as well as services which enhance basic skills and knowledge within their association.

¹² As the DA did not terminate implementing the medium term plan II for 2000-2004 in due time, some of the activities were shifted to 2005 and for that year 'Decent Work' was allocated 85 millions Cedis, 'Productivity improvement' 170 millions Cedis, 'Physically disabled' 56 millions and SIF counterpart funding 80 millions.

¹³ Interview with Emmanuel Baisie, focal person of the SPGE in Ajumako-Enyam-Essiam.

+ Social dialogue and private/public partnerships at the local level

The public-private partnership established in the districts has largely been successful in creating a common agenda for LESD and a recognition that different stakeholders can contribute to this agenda. The most eloquent example is the project proposal developed by joined efforts of the District Assembly, SBAs and a NGO, which was selected by the SPEED Ghana project in AEE district (see below). In addition, for the first time in 2005, the private sector operators (SBAs) have been involved in the fee fixing (tax regulation) discussions of the districts, which not only enabled groups that were previously excluded from decision-making processes to be heard but also facilitated the collection of taxes at the local level.

+ Facilitation of the taxes collection

Following the discussions on fee fixing, some of the SBAs proposed to collect taxes from their members in exchange for some money from the District Assembly. It was agreed that the SBAs would receive 20% of the total amount of taxes collected¹⁴. Partly as a result of the SBA involvement in the tax collection, the Internally Generated Fund (IGF) increased from 35 millions Cedis in 2000 to 240 millions Cedis in 2005 in the AEE district.

+ Increase interest from outside

Many NGOs and other development partners have expressed their interest in the districts experiences and in potential future collaborations especially after the stakeholders' forum. The donors and other development partners in touch with the GDWPP include CBRDP, SPEED Ghana, JICA, SIF, DANIDA, GTZ and UNIDO.

+ Attention of the media and press coverage

The GDWPP and the pilot district experiences have managed to attract the attention of the media and to receive significant press coverage. Some of the articles, which have been published in the biggest national newspapers 'Daily Graphic' are attached in the Appendix III. The three articles document issues of 1) Decent work and the ILO's vision 2) Need to integrate the decent work culture into the GPRS and 3) Lessons from the two pilot districts. Next to the newspapers coverage, the local radio 'PEACE', which is based in Winneba has broadcasted several events live in the central region, such as the stakeholders forum. An awareness raising campaign was also organised by the GDWPP in collaboration with Radio Peace on decent work and safety issues at the work place.

+ Gender mainstreaming and emphasis on women

Women and gender needs have been a central focus of the GDWPP in the districts from the beginning of the initiative. In addition to the several training and gender mainstreaming workshops organised for the SBAs and for the SPGE members, gender needs are addressed at the business level as well. One of the two business sectors selected by each of the two districts are largely female dominated (Oil palm processing for AEE and textiles and garments for AES). Generally more than 50% of the micro-entrepreneurs involved in the project and training are women.

+ Mobilisation of external resources without GDWPP intervention

As a result of their own efforts and research, the members of SPGE in Ajumako with the assistance of CRED have applied to SPEED-Ghana, a project funded by DANIDA and GTZ, which aims at contributing to the sustainable development of Ghana's private sector and support socially and geographically balanced growth, income generation and employment creation. The project proposal submitted by CRED/SPGE focuses on '*developing product quality clinics in oil palm processing*' and is

¹⁴ The taxes collected, also called operating and artisans fees amount to 40 000 Cedis per annum.

targeting around 300 processors in AEE district¹⁵. Fortunately, the project was selected from more than 400 proposals and was recently granted the 374 millions Cedis (approx 37,400 Euros) requested. Recently, the Food and Drugs board as well as the GRATIS foundation came from Accra to conduct a needs assessment and a workshop evaluation in AEE district. Whereas the Food and Drug board collected samples of the palm oil processed by the women's groups in light of improving the quality, Gratis foundation assessed the machinery and technology at their disposal. A report from both institutions will be handed shortly to the AEE district and will serve as a basis for the project development. Given that the SPEED-project approval was obtained by the district without the help of the GDWPP, it is undoubtedly an encouraging sign of potential and of sustainability. Moreover, the AEE district motivated by their previous success have recently applied to the BUSAC fund¹⁶, which is also a project funded by international donors (USAID-DANIDA-DFID) as part of their support to Ghana and as agreed with the Government of Ghana. The focus of this proposal lies on advocacy and social dialogue by increasing the SBAs (and the private sector in general) involvement in public policy making, such as fee fixing and tax regulations. Clearly, the AEE district seem to have understood the mechanisms to tap project/donor funds available in Ghana for private sector development, which is a very encouraging achievement.

+ Formalization of the small business enterprises

As part of an effort to formalize the small business enterprises operating in their district, the AEE has introduced a system of registration. Each SBE should pay 50 000 cedis and fill in a form to be officially recognised by the district and thereby in the rest of the country. The registration entitles the SBEs to a certificate, which can then be used for loans at the bank and for taxes collection. So far, around 300 entrepreneurs have registered their businesses ay the district (mainly from the oil palm processing sector, which was one of the requirements from the SPEED-Ghana project), the overall objective being to reach all the others business sectors.

¹⁵ The project involves activities such as animation and formalisation of selected SBAs, needs assessments and workplace evaluation, product analysis, technical and managerial training, association building, building of structures and equipment acquisition, product packaging and labelling, product certification and licensing, facilitation of market linkages and sub-contracting, information dissemination and sales promotion and finally evaluation and monitoring.

¹⁶ BUSAC Fund aims to broaden the engagement of the private sector in policy formulation and implementation, to assist in removing bottlenecks that prevent a better running of private sector and improve the image of the private sector within the general public; through advocacy actions that will develop the private sector advocacy capacity. The Fund is accessible through a competitive demand-driven mechanism. BUSAC Fund finances, through grants, up to 90% of the cost of the advocacy actions that are selected. The actions are then implemented by the grantees themselves. (www.busac.org)

Text box II: Participants' evaluation of the SBA training

The day of the certificate submission to the SBA representatives in Winneba, we asked them how they perceived their experience with the training and how they applied their knowledge to their work.

Some of their comments were:

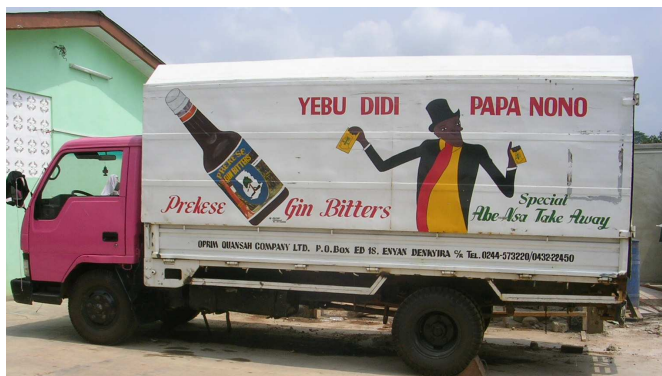
- Better role and functions definition within the SBA (secretary, chairman, treasurer...)
- Increase of the frequency and quality of meetings (improvement of the communication and attention to give everybody the work)
- Developed a constitution (chart) and elected executives with good leadership qualities
- Performing more democratically
- Improvement of business activities as a result of proper accountability and book keeping
- Increase contact with rural banks for financial support
- Generation of internal funds (SBAs) for payments of dues but also SUSU

5.3 Individual Case studies

Although impacts in terms of poverty reduction and employment creation have not yet been assessed at the household and district level, individual stories illustrate how the LESD approach has affected the informal sector and SME development. Evidence suggests that the project has benefited the small-business enterprises and associations mainly through business management and association skills development. A few qualitative interviews were conducted in the pilot districts in order to explore and investigate how the micro-entrepreneurs have experienced any sort of changes in their business environment. Some of the case studies are described here below.

A. Local Distiller, PREKESE – Oprim Quansah

In 2001, Mr. Quansah started a small-scale distiller business on his own and produces a local gin called 'PREKESE', which is made out of local palm wine. He started his production in sealed plastic container and soon realised there was a ready market for his product. Three years later, when he became a



member of the SPGE in Ajumako, one of his SPGE colleagues suggested him to contact the Food and Drug board in Accra in order to get official certification for his product. The SPGE wrote a letter to the board and some representatives shortly came to the business site, they took samples, analysed them and issued a license a few weeks later. Experts from the Food and Drug board advised Mr Quansah on marketing issues for his business such as labelling and standardizing the bottles.

As Oprim was a SPGE member himself, he attended several capacity building and training workshops, which got him further inspired to expand his business. As a result, he contacted a rural bank, submitted a business plan, which was developed with the help of the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) and shortly after he obtained a credit. The acquisition of the loan as well as the business development plan facilitated the expansion of his business and his reputation both in the district and outside. In 2005, Mr Quansah participated to an INDOTECH trade fair in Accra, where he exposed his

'prekese' products. Since the beginning of 2005, the company created a board of directors and became a limited liability company. Mr. Quansah is now employing more than 100 employees in Ajumako, for whom he pays social security. In addition he is buying products from local producers, thereby creating further employment. The company is now well know in the whole country of Ghana. The business of Mr Quansah has the advantage of covering the entire production chain, from the production at the local level, to the packaging, marketing and distribution. In the meantime, Mr Quansah has also become chairman of the distiller association in the district. Recently his equipment was updated by the acquisition of a cocking machine, which cleans, fills and cock the bottles, but his aspirations for further expansion will not stop there. Mr. Quansah's company is undoubtedly seen as 'the success story' of Ajumako by the local population.

B. Palm oil and palm kernel oil association : Victoria Edith Mensah

From the 15 women members of the palm oil and palm kernel oil association, 10 of them participated in the SBA training, which took place in October 2005. The members interviewed expressed with enthusiasm the skills they acquired from the training such as how to manage the workload, how and why to open a bank account as well as how to organise an SBA, develop a constitution and structure their meetings. Furthermore, the women stated that after the training, they increased the cooperation and knowledge sharing within the group, which they feel has improved their businesses. One of the women stated that “*before we used to keep knowledge for ourselves but after the training, we help each other out and we have increased the quantity of palm nuts processed*” .

A few obstacles are however making their work particularly strenuous, such as the fact that access to water is difficult and they have no storage facilities. Many of the women also reported that oil extraction machines would facilitate their work and enable substantial increase in production. As a matter of fact, these women will most likely benefit from the SPEED-Ghana project's approval to support the palm oil sector in the AEE district by providing 'product quality clinics in oil palm processing'. Moreover, as palm oil has been selected as a priority sub-sector in the district, the women will benefit from the SBES technical and business development training, which will be given by EMPRETEC in the beginning of 2006. Quality certification, packaging and labeling of their products are some of the results, which are expected from the technical training and which should considerably increase the women's business opportunities.

C. The Kokoben wood carvers association

Around 35 master crafts and their 60 employees form the Kokoben wood carvers association. Ten of them participated to the first SBA training organised in the district in October 2004 and the secretary of the association attended the second SBA training in October 2005.

Partnerships and collaborations. Around 3 years ago, a local NGO called Artisans Aid Ghana (ATTAG) helped the Kokoben association to put up a structure, where the woodcarvers currently do their work. ATTAG also provided them a dryer machine and they linked them up with major suppliers such as the 'contract handicraft exporters'.

Improvement of the SBA organisation. According to them, the training was very helpful in getting better organised as an association and to structure their meetings. Moreover, although the association existed long before the training, they did not have a proper constitution neither well defined roles and responsibilities in the group. After realising the importance of having a chairman with good leadership qualities, they also defined action plans and hanged it on the wall of their building. As a result, the members of the association expressed their feeling of being much better organised as a group and much better equipped to collaborate and improve their businesses.

According to the secretary, another benefit of the training was their willingness to start keeping records of their business activities. He stated that all the master crafts now keep track of all the salary payments to their employees in a timely fashion.



Sustainable development and ownership. As part of a forestation project of the District Assembly, the Kokoben association received supplies of seedlings and have started planting their own trees. Although

they do not own a piece of land collectively, individuals have put their land at the disposal of the group, which represents close to 10 acres. The association is expecting to be using these trees in around 5 years time.

District Assembly involvement. Resulting from the better organisation of the association and their promising business activities, the DA decided to use the common poverty alleviation fund to put up an exhibition hall on the road side so as to enable them to expose their finished products.

Quality improvement of the products. The members of the Kokoben association stated that as a result of their participation in several training programme as well as their acquisition of the a dryer machine and exhibition hall, the quality of the finishing for their products increased significantly. One of the challenges the association is facing now, is to sell their finished products to their exporter company, which rather wants to buy unfinished cheaper products. The last value added activity of the finishing represents an important step for the wood carvers.

Challenge – Access to credits. One of the main challenges the association is currently facing is access to credits. When the ‘contract handicraft exporters’ make orders of up to 20 000 pieces, the group cannot take up the offer for the only reason of not having access to credits to buy the necessary amount of wood (the suppliers require direct payments). After a refusal for lending from the bank, the association is currently applying for credits at the Community-Based Rural Development Programme (CBRDP). Although the members recognise the importance and the benefits of the training they have received, they believe that access to credits is crucial for the expansion of their business and business opportunities.

D. Tailors and dressmakers association: Abdul Rahman

As a tailor, Abdul Rahman started his business in 1996 and he is now part of the tailors and dressmakers association which counts 100 members at the district level and 30 at the local level. While the association at the district level meets quarterly, the local level gets together every two weeks. Currently, Mr Rahram is assisted by 2 employees (who are paid per piece of clothes finished) and 2 apprentices (who are not remunerated during their first 3 years of training). He participated in the SBA training organised in the districts and said he benefited especially from business management modules taught. After the training, he adopted new simple strategies, which have improved the quality of his products and the management of his business. For example

- He has bought a new type of elastic band for the male trousers, which is more patronized by his customers and for which he can charge more money.
- He has learnt how and decided to employ two employees last year in order to expand his business.
- He has adopted a simple selling trick, which has prevented him from losing large amounts of money. Previously, some customers would bring materials for sawing and never return to pick them for financial reasons. This situation lead to an accumulation of unpaid clothing in Abdul’s shops, which could of course not be sold for fear that the customers would eventually return. He now decided that anybody bringing materials has to make a direct pre-payment corresponding to half the price of sawing work. He stated that this simple strategy has saved him considerable amounts of money.

Mr Rahman is now envisaging to expand his business further and has recently apply to the CBRDP for a credit. He is also thinking of applying to the ILO pilot district fund for investments in new sawing machines.

5.4 Sustainability and ownership

In the establishment of the SPGEs, the GDWPP put in place a few structures to ensure sustainability beyond the involvement of the ILO and the ownership by the national and local stakeholders.

- The selection of the ILGS as main counterpart for training and capacity building of the local institutions ensures that the programmes developed are internalized within the Local Government structures. In addition, the ILGS has already used some of the training programme developed within the GDWPP for his own purposes and for a different audience. Finally, the ILGS will play an essential role in the eventual up-scaling of the LESD approach in other districts/regions of Ghana
- Embedding the SPGE as a statutory and legal entity under the District Assembly (under Act.462 of the Local Government Act) ensures sustainability and ownership of the programme. The Sub-Committees is under the same rights and obligations as all other Sub-Committees of the District Assembly.
- The selection and training of local trainers in the two districts (6 in each districts) further contributes to the sustainability of the training programmes and materials developed in the future. Moreover, as capacity has been reinforced at the local level, the master trainers should be used to train new potential trainers for further up-scaling of the training programme. The local trainers already expressed their willingness and enthusiasm for their participation in the eventual process of replication for the LESD approach in other districts of the central region.
- The project has been working closely with the social partners (in particular GEA and TUC) as well as several ministries and in particular the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE). The latter has been very supportive to the project and the Minister himself is enthusiastic about replicating the local forum initiative in other districts all over Ghana.
- The resource mobilization and selection of the project submitted by the SPGE in Ajumako to SPEED Ghana is an encouraging sign of ownership and sustainability of the programme. Clearly if the SPGE take onboard the initiative to mobilize funds from existing development project in their districts, the chance of impact at the local level and sustainability will be enhanced.



6. Challenges and obstacles encountered

Through the different phases of the LESD approach, a number of challenges has been encountered in the two pilot districts. Some of them are listed and shortly described here below.

- **Pilot experience.** As the LESD approach was a pilot project starting from scratch in Ghana, a substantive amount of activities and steps were designed and implemented as the need arose along the process. In the future, a clearer chronological outline of activities will undoubtedly facilitate and speed up the implementation process.
- **Risk of losing SBA's commitment and interest.** As the project is demand-driven, its success requires a lot of committed members, both from the public and the private sector. From the AEE's focal person point's of view, the commitment and interest of some SBAs/SBEs is slowly decreasing. His explanation is that after capacity building and different training have been provided (and have been recognised as very beneficial by the SBAs), the business entrepreneurs need financial support and better access to credits. While capacity building and training allowed entrepreneurs to *improve* their business, access to credits should allow them to *expand* if there is potential to do so. He said that after promises were made at the beginning of the programme regarding credit funds available from institutions such as the National Micro-Finance Centre at the office of the President or Social Investment Fund, very few tangible results have been experienced by the SBAs¹⁷. Fortunately, the SPEED-Ghana project supporting the palm-oil sector is encouraging and reviving hopes of the business entrepreneurs in the district. Similar financial (loan) support or collaboration between the GDWPP and financial institutions will be essential in the future in order to keep the private sector's involvement and interest in the project.
- **The initial beliefs.** Initially, all SBAs and SBEs held the belief that money is the only thing needed to expand enterprises. Through a lot of training and efforts, they have however realized that a series of other initiatives can be taken in order to improve their businesses such as bookkeeping, better negotiations and bargaining, increasing the quality of their products, etc.
- **Lengthy/bureaucratic process.** The initial setting up of structures required an unexpectedly long time, which partly explains why it took almost two years to reach the actual SBA/SBE training. To a certain extend, top-down, supply driven and bureaucratic attitudes (at all levels of the project) were also responsible for the slow pace of decision making and implementation at the district level. In some cases, this had a negative impact on stakeholders pro-activeness and commitment to the project. For instance, the disbursement of the DEDF was not yet effectuated (while promised for months by the GDWPP office).
- **Meeting and allowances for the private sector.** SBA representatives have expressed their financial difficulty in joining all the SPGE meetings and workshop organized. In fact, the SPGE meet as much as 3 times a month while other Sub-Committees of the DA meet on average 3 times a year. Leaving their micro-businesses for on average 1 day a week can be problematic for some of them. In the future, it might be necessary to find a way to organize and plan the SPGE meetings and workshops in a way that is convenient for the private sector (e.g. meeting after work, informal week-ends activities used for meetings, etc). A possibility to compensate the SBA representatives from his absence to work might be to generate funds internally: each member of the SBA would

¹⁷ Recently, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the GDWPP and the SIF. The disbursement of micro-credit loans in the two districts should be operational shortly.

contribute a small amount on a monthly or yearly basis which would represent a sitting allowance but also a reward for the work of their representative.

Moreover, the focal persons in the two districts have mentioned their difficulty in meeting some of time-consuming demands of the GDWPP. They feel that their high commitment and involvement in the programme is not always rewarded to the right value. There is a considerable risk that the focal persons will loose interest and incentive in being actively involved in the project if they are not rewarded (financially) for their commitment in one way or another.

- **Unclear objectives of the business development plans.** Although the business development plans provided a useful and detailed review of the sub-sectors selected by the two districts, they lacked a feasibility component and clear recommendations on the viability of these sectors. This might partly be the result of an unclear definition of the purpose they should serve, as outlined in the TOR issued¹⁸. As a result of this situation, some confusion arose in the two districts and the way forward was not clearly paved. The GDWPP project decided then to conduct feasibility studies in order to deepen the information obtained by the business development plans and to explore the viability of the sub-sectors selected.

7. Lessons learnt

The LESD approach piloted in the two districts indicates a few key points, which are explored here below.

- **Enhancement of social dialogue through the SPGE.** The SPGEs provide an important platform for organizing the informal economy operators, voice their interests, gain recognition for their contribution to the local economy and participate in shaping it further. Communication between the public and the private sector operators has significantly increased as a result of the SPGE establishment and activities in both districts.
- **Key role of and collaboration between the focal person, chairman and District Chief Executive (DCE).** As the focal person plays a key role in the running of the SPGE activities, he should be selected from the core management of the District Assembly in order to ensure access to resources, lobbying opportunities and collaboration with the District Assembly in general. Moreover, communication and collaboration between the key SPGE members (focal person and chairman) and the DCE is very important for the development and success of the programme.
- **Need to think in parallel processes.** Another lesson learnt from the pilot districts is that we should think of parallel processes: plan one long-term process while simultaneously starting small scale demonstration projects with immediate impact and high visibility in order to not loose stakeholders' interest and commitment.
- **Crucial selection of partner district.** The experiences of the two pilot districts demonstrate that not only the involvement but also the political and financial commitment of the District Assembly is a crucial element for the success of the programme. Clearly, if the LESD concept and Decent Work agenda are not taken onboard the districts plans, success of the programme will be hindered if not

¹⁸ As it was stated in the TOR for developing Business Development Studies, the objective of the assignment was to "develop BDS for 4 sectors prioritized by the SPGEs. The proposed sectors are to be confirmed in consultation with the SPGEs. An assessment of the required support to address financial, managerial, technical and gender needs should be included in the BDS."

doomed to fail. It is therefore very important to scrutinize the potential of the districts carefully in the selection for replication.

- **Incentives and consensus-building within the SPGEs.** It will become increasingly essential for SPGEs to be capable of producing concrete results. If the members do not see any advantage in being member of the SPGE or are not able to see how the SPGE can meet its objectives, they are likely to consider leaving (especially the SBAs who have to run their business simultaneously).
- **Sustainability and ownership.** Embedding the SPGE within the national legal framework favours local involvement and ownership of the development process and local employment issues. This way of institutionalizing public-private partnership dialogue at the local level increases their potential for sustainability. Moreover, others structures are in place to ensure sustainability beyond the involvement of the ILO and the ownership of the project at the district level. For instance the choice of the ILGS as main counterpart, the selection and training of local trainers in the two districts as well as close collaboration with Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE) and the social partners (GEA and TUC).

8. Conclusion

The LESD encourages a bottom-up and participatory approach to development in the districts and emphasizes accountability and ownership. Piloting the LESD approach in the two districts with the aim of improving the working and living conditions of people in the informal economy required considerable investment in terms of time, expertise, product development and capacity building.

It is important to note that even though the SPGEs are still relatively new institutions in Ghana, they have generally received a warm reception at all levels, from the national government to the District Assemblies, and from the private sectors to the NGOs and development projects active in the areas. It is recognised by all, that the SPGEs provide an important platform for organizing the formal and informal economy operators, voice their interests, gain recognition for their contribution to the local economy and participate in shaping it further.

Although ultimate impacts in terms of poverty reduction and number of jobs created cannot be established at this point, a number of evidence hints at the significant improvement of social dialogue through the public-partner forums created in the two districts. Indeed, the private and the public sector's operators have realised the need to collaborate and identify together strategies to develop the local economic activities of their districts. Furthermore, the SBAs and SBEs, whether in the formal or informal sector, seem to have adopted a more active role and entrepreneurial attitude for the improvements of their businesses. The understanding among small entrepreneurs that access to credit is not the only way to expand and improve their business is also a remarkable achievement in itself. Moreover, the concept of SBA has taken shape in the two districts: the associations are better organised, the members' roles and functions are better defined and collaboration among them is enhanced. Generally, a sense of responsibility and initiative-taking attitude seem to have emerged in the two districts for the development of their local economies.

In order to sustain and work up the positive changes experienced in the two districts, building local capacity, which is one of the fundamental aspects of the LESD approach, will have to be given continuous attention. The training of the LESD-related institutions' staff, be it public or private (SPGEs, district assemblies, SBAs, etc) should be a continuous process and sufficient means should be reserved

to make this possible. On the other hand, having a basic technical capacity in place contributes to the independence of the SPGE from outside support.

Moreover, it will be essential for the SPGEs to be able to show concrete tangible results of their work and be very present in the district's activities in order to keep its members and other stakeholders' interest and commitment to the initiative.

The GDWPP/LESD initiative and the pilot experiences of the two districts have gained the interest of a broad range of public institutions and development actors. This offers great opportunities for a cautionary replication process and new partnerships in the next phase of the project. It will however be important not to simply duplicate the experience in other districts but to adapt the initiative to the local and cultural setting at stake.

List of works consulted

- Government of Ghana, ILO, UNDP, An employment framework for poverty reduction in Ghana, Accra, 2004.
- ILO (2003), Local Economic Development in Post-Crisis situation, Operational Guide
- ILO, Strategies for Local Economic Development, Hand-outs training Turin June-July 2004, International Training Centre, Turin.
- ILO, Ghana Working out of Poverty. Project document, March 2004
- ILO, Working out of poverty in Ghana. The Ghana Decent Work Pilot Programme, Geneva, 2004
www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dwpp/download/ghana/ghbooklet.pdf
- ILO (Peter Morten), Job quality in micro and small enterprises in Ghana. Field research results, Geneva 2004.
- ILO (Chris Seely), Social marketing for better job quality in micro and small enterprises in Ghana, Geneva, 2004,
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/empent/empent.Portal?p_prog=S&p_subprog=&p_category=PUB
- Rodriguez-Pose, Andres (2003). The role of the ILO in implementing local economic development strategies in a globalized world, ILO, Geneva
- Van Boekel, Geert and Logtestijn Majon (2002). Applying the comprehensive LED approach, the case of Mozambique, Cooperative branch, ILO.

ANNEX I : Chronology of events GDWPP (District-level / Component II)

| | |
|----------------|---|
| 2-3 Oct 2002 | <p>WORKSHOP: ‘Poverty Eradication and Decent Work: the Ghana Poverty Reduction strategy’ Held at the La Palm Beach Hotel in Accra, Ghana</p> |
| 8-11 Oct 2002 | <p>WORKSHOP: ‘Developing an integrated approach to the informal economy and poverty eradication’ Held at the Coconut Grove Conference Centre in Elmina, Ghana</p> |
| 21 May 2003 | <p>WORKSHOP: ‘Productivity and the GPRS: A Framework for Growth and Development in Ghana’ Held at the GEA Office in Accra, Ghana</p> |
| 23 May 2003 | <p>WORKSHOP: ‘Wages, Incomes and Employment for Poverty Alleviation in Ghana’ Held at the TUC Office in Tema, Ghana</p> |
| 26-28 May 2003 | <p>WORKSHOP: ‘Decent Work and Poverty Reduction in Ghana-MMYE’s Role in the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS)’ Held at the La Palm Beach Hotel Accra, Ghana</p> |
| 9 June 2003 | <p>WORKSHOP: Selection of partner districts Held at the ILGS, Accra. Attended among others by senior specialists of the ILO, member from GEA, TUC, ILGS, ministries agencies. The purpose of the workshop was to launch the district level activities by firstly selecting two partner districts for the Decent Work Pilot Programme. The workshop also included discussion on Decent Work, the informal economy and Local Economic and Social Development (LESD).</p> |
| 25 August 2003 | <p>MEETING: ILGS and District Assemblies Held in Winneba, Ghana. The purpose of the meeting was to provide advice and facilitate the setting up of the Sub-Committees for Productive and Gainful employment in Awutu-Efutu-Senya and Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam District. Moreover, the meeting resulted in a series of agreed actions to be undertaken by the district assemblies</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>6-7 Oct 2003 (Awutu) 9-10 Oct 2003 (Ajumako)</p> | <p>WORKSHOP: Decent work in the informal economy and the LESD approach, awareness raising workshop Held in Awutu and Ajumako, Ghana. The workshop was attended by SPGE members, SBA representatives and DA members. The broad objectives of the work shop were to 1) Familiarise the members of the DA members on the contents of the GDWPP in order to equip them with the necessary information and knowledge needed to effectively advocate the programme, 2) Formulate recommendations for small-scale capacity building activities and interventions necessary on the SPGEs and SBAs that can be carried out for the rest of 2003, 3) Explore areas for further research studies to provide knowledge/information needed to support the work of the SPGEs and strengthen SBAs in the districts</p> |
| <p>15-17 Dec 2003</p> | <p>MEETING: Tripartite Plus Seminar/Review between ILGS and District Assemblies Held at the Greenland Hotel, Swedru, Ghana The meeting was meant to summarize and <i>review the progress and development of the GDWPP</i>. Attention was directed towards the selection of the 2 partner districts, the work plans for the establishment of SPGEs, the emerging issues from the awareness raising workshop organised and future work plans/studies.</p> |
| <p>5-6 Feb 2004</p> | <p>Official inauguration of SPGEs as statutory Sub-Committee under the District Assembly of AEE and EES Held in Ajumako and Winneba respectively The permission of the regional coordinating council and the District Assemblies Executive Committees was sought and formal approval was obtained to set the SPGEs under the district assemblies</p> |
| <p>23-27 Feb 2004</p> | <p>WORKSHOP: Capacity-building workshop for SPGE members Held at the ILGS campus, Accra, Ghana The workshop targeting all the members of the two SPGEs was organised in Accra by ILGS and with the assistance of trainers from EMPRETEC, ILO national coordinators and other partners. The objective of the workshop was to <i>equip members of the SPGEs with critical skills</i> required for the promotion of decent work including: strategic planning, advocacy and partnerships, dialogue and facilitation skills and resource mobilisation. The workshop was an opportunity for SPGE members to interact, share ideas, promote synergies within the programme, develop a common understanding of the TOR as well as formulate concrete products and guidelines for action in the future. Among other things, the workshop resulted in the formation of concrete Action Plans which guide the SPGEs achieve their objectives of promoting decent work in their respective districts.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| 21 June - 2 July 2004 | <p>SEMINAR: Training Seminar ‘Strategies for Local Economic Development (LED)’ Held in the International Training Center, ILO, Turin, Italy The ILO nominated 4 participants who work on the DWPP to attend the 2-weeks seminar organised by the International Training Centre of ILO Turin. The course gave the opportunity for participants to 1) analyse social and economic benefits and cost associated to different development strategies, 2) appraise new development strategies and the necessary development techniques and 3) evaluate the advantages and risks of adoption of LED strategies in a changing context.</p> |
| 16-17 Aug 2004 (Ajumako) 18-19 Aug 2004 (Winneba) | <p>WORKSHOP: SWOT Analysis Held in Ajumako and Winneba, Ghana The workshop objectives were 1) to identify the potential and small-scale industries in the District, 2) to identify the leading economic growth sectors within the district for investments to ensure accelerated growth and 3) to facilitate working partnership between SPGEs, NGOs and other government programmes.</p> |
| 24-25 August 2004 | <p>SEMINAR: LED restitution Seminar Held at the ILGS campus in Accra. The LED restitution seminar was conducted to brief the GDWPP stakeholders on the basis of the ‘strategies for Local Economic Development’ course attended by four focal persons in June 2004. The key stakeholders of the GDWPP and two speakers from projects involving the principles and practice of LED attended the workshop. These are the Elmina Cultural Heritage and the Social Investment Fund Programme. The groups present at the seminar made recommendation on how the LED programme can be adapted for local conditions in Ghana, how the ILGS can collaborate with the International Training Centre in Turin to run the programme for various target groups.</p> |
| 4-8 October 2004 (Ajumako) 12-22 October 2004 (Winneba) | <p>WORKSHOP: Training of SBAs The training workshop was organised by EMPRETEC, FIT and GDWPP in the two pilot districts The main objective of the workshop was to test the SBA training manuals developed. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance the management, leadership and service delivery capacities of selected SBAs whose leaders participated in the workshops. The course content includes modules on association building and management, rights and obligations, leadership, exhibitions and fairs, networking, lobbying and advocacy, negotiations and bargaining, project proposal preparation, etc. The participants comprised of SPGE members and SBA representatives (some of which were selected as potential trainers). About 25 persons joined each workshop.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| 11-12 February 2005 | <p>WORKSHOP: Community-awareness raising on the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) Organised by the Ghana Federation of Disabled (GFD) in the two districts A two-day community awareness-raising and sensitization workshop targeting persons with disabilities was in the two districts. The objective of the workshop was to sensitize and stimulate PWDs to understand and actively participate in the GDWPP initiative and in income generating activities in general. During the workshop, PWDs were strongly encouraged to engage in advocacy in order to ensure mainstreaming of their needs in the service provision activities of the DA.</p> |
| 1 March 2005 | <p>POLICY DIALOGUE: Poverty reduction and wealth creation in the informal economy Organised by MMYE and ILO, held in Cresta Royale, Accra The objective of the event was to 1) initiate a national dialogue on the informal economy; 2) identify elements for an informal strategy to be included in the GPRS and other relevant policy frameworks based on experiences and 3) explore opportunities for cooperation. The policy dialogue brought together institutions that are active in the field of SME and LED (77 participants).</p> |
| 23-24 March | <p>SEMINAR: Sensitization on PWDs for SPGEs members Organised by the GFD in collaboration with DSW and GDWPP in the 2 districts The community members and the SPGE in particular were targeted by means of a two-day sensitization seminar (75 participants) During the seminar, different topics related to disability such as the challenges involved, the impact on the family and community, women and disabilities as well as the employment needs of PWDs.</p> |
| 7-8 April 2005 | <p>VALIDATION WORKSHOP: on SBA training materials Held at the ILGS, Accra The purpose of the workshops was to validate the final version of the SBA training materials developed (resource guide and facilitator's guide) together with a group of master trainers</p> |
| 24-27 May 2005 (Ajumako) 31 May -1 June 2005 (Winneba) | <p>WORKSHOP: Contract management and monitoring Organised by the GDWPP and ILGS, held in Ajumako and Winneba The workshop was attended by selected district assembly functionaries and contractors (about 30 participants for each workshop) The objectives of the workshop were to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce participants to concepts, tool and techniques in the management and monitoring of contracts - Enable participants to identify and address challenges in the construction industry - Create a platform for participants to generate and discuss issues relating to contract management in the framework of public procurement act. |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 20 – 24 June 2005 | <p>WORKSHOP: Training of trainers for small business associations Held in Winneba and organised by ILO in collaboration with EMPRETEC, FIT Ghana, GEA and TUC The main objective of the ToT workshop was to enhance the effectiveness of participants as potential trainers of SBAs by equipping them with the techniques and tools required for the implementation of the SBS training programme in the future. All in all 20 prospective trainers participated in the ToT.</p> | | |
| <p>March –Sept. 2005</p> <p>April 2005</p> <p>September 2005</p> <p>Sept/Oct 2005</p> | <p>STRATEGIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION</p> <p>1. Development of Business Development Plans (4 for each districts)</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <u>Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam</u> 1. Grasscutter rearing 2. Textiles and garments 3. Soap making 4. Oil Palm processing </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <u>Afutu-Efutu-Senya</u> 1. Cassava 2. Textiles and Garments 3. Poultry 4. Fish and Fish processing </td> </tr> </table> <p>2. External Validation of the Business development plans Conducted by FIT Ghana</p> <p>3. Selection of 2 priority sub-sectors in each district (Ajumako: Soap making + Oil Palm Processing) (Winneba: Textiles and Garments + Fish processing)</p> | <u>Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam</u> 1. Grasscutter rearing 2. Textiles and garments 3. Soap making 4. Oil Palm processing | <u>Afutu-Efutu-Senya</u> 1. Cassava 2. Textiles and Garments 3. Poultry 4. Fish and Fish processing |
| <u>Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam</u> 1. Grasscutter rearing 2. Textiles and garments 3. Soap making 4. Oil Palm processing | <u>Afutu-Efutu-Senya</u> 1. Cassava 2. Textiles and Garments 3. Poultry 4. Fish and Fish processing | | |
| September 2005 | <p>Small Business Association (SBA) TRAINING In total 400 SBAs leaders have attended training workshops organised in several towns of the 2 pilot districts. The programme was divided into 20 training sessions made up of 20 trainees each and taking place in 3 consecutive days. The SBAs were trained by locally recruited trainers, who were using the training materials (SBA training manuals and facilitators guides) developed specifically for that purpose. Several modules were considered including gender mainstreaming, negotiation and bargaining, association organisation and management, leadership, communications, savings and credit, planning and resource mobilization, exhibitions and trade fairs</p> | | |
| 16 October 2005 | <p>FORUM: Stakeholders forum on the informal economy Organised by the ILO in collaboration with the MMYE, in Ajumako The objective of the forum were threefold: 1) Appraising the work of the SPGEs so far, 2) Linking them up with new and potential collaborators such as international donors, government agencies, NGOs and private sector operators, 3) Seeking new partnerships for the next phase of the programme, which is up-scaling in 40 other districts. The opening session was attended by about 250 people including community members, SBAs/SBEs members and officials, while the more technical session was attended by 110 people (representing donors, government institutions, districts officials and the SPGE members)</p> | | |

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| November 2005 | <p>Creation of Business Information Centres</p> <p>Business Information Centers have been created in the two districts. A series of documents and different materials are currently being gathered. The targeted audience includes operators of micro and small enterprises, SBAs, researchers and students, practitioners of LED and enterprise development and the local public. The SPGE have asked for a national servant to be appointed for 1 year and be responsible for the running of the center. The person is expected to be available by the beginning of 2006. The institutional mapping of resources/partners and institutions is currently being developed by the SPGEs members and will, among other purposes, help entrepreneurs develop their business plans.</p> |
| 14 – 20 November 2005 | <p>Special Grasscutter Training package</p> <p>A special grasscutter training package was provided to 20 participants. The training package involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The acquisition of 5 parent stocks per person (4 females and 1 male) ▪ The acquisition of a new cage ▪ Technical and business training <p>The technical training was provided by professional from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) and included training in feeding, animal husbandry, etc. After the training, the participants go home with cages and parent stocks to start immediately their businesses</p> |
| 15 - 18 November 2005 | <p>WORKSHOP: Strengthening of SPGEs</p> <p>In order to strengthen the capacity of the SPGE in each of the two pilot districts, a local consultant developed a 'Handbook on rules and Regulations for the SPGEs' adapted to specific nature of the sub-committees (in particular reference to membership procedures, roles and responsibilities). The consultant presented his finding and recommendations during a workshop held in both districts. Moreover the consultant identified two areas which needed further capacity building and which were included in the workshop proceedings:</p> <p>Gender mainstreaming: ½ day awareness raising and capacity building on gender mainstreaming for the SPGE members conducted by an expert in the field from Accra.</p> <p>Core labour standards: ½ day training on what the core labour standards are and mean practically conducted by an employer of the MMYE.</p> |

ANNEX II:

SPGE selection criteria for projects to be financed by the GDWPP pilot district fund

I. Criteria

- a. Projects should be in line with the **SPGE Actions Plan**. The projects should fall within the priority economic sub-sectors
- b. The projects should be **commercially viable** (demonstrated on the basis of a business plan or feasibility study) and have a strong **income generating** and **employment creation** potential
- c. **Special groups**. The portfolio of projects should in particular benefit women, youth, and persons living with disability
- d. The district fund will support **productive investment** mainly through **capacity building** activities such as training and enabling access for informal economy operators to credit and/or business development services. Provided that all other criteria are respected, the fund may contribute to the improvement of the workplace and work conditions.
- e. **Matching principles**. The fund will only support projects that have mobilized other financial resources, coming from the business, their associations, the DA, private investors, national funds, (inter) national NGOs, etc. Matching should be understood in the broad sense of the term and not necessarily on a fifty-fifty basis.
- f. **Economies of scale**. Where possible the district fund will enhance economies of scale and address individual business needs collectively through sub-sectors support, support to SBAs and other type of members-based organisations and/or leverage existing (credit) funds
- g. **Geographical distribution**. The portfolio of projects should cover various DA sub-area council.

II. Procedures

Approval: The SPGE will check the submitted proposals against the present criteria within a reasonable period after the submission, inform the ILO/GDWPP office and explain the outcomes to the persons and organisations concerned

Disbursement. Funds will be disbursed from the SPGE/GDWPP project bank account by the signature of the SPGE focal person (eventually substituted by SPGE member) and of the District Finance Officer or the District Directing Coordinator

III. Implementation arrangements

Implementation. The project should indicate the service providers for the project implementation (training institutes, micro-finance institutions, NGOs, business consultants and/or SBAs). The SPGE will rely on these providers and has a coordination and monitoring role- if necessary- with support of the GDWPP. The SPGE should ensure that progress and/or evaluation reports are submitted to them and the ILO/GDWPP office.

ANNEX III : National newspaper articles

1. ***“THE DECENT WORK AGENDA, ILO’s VISION”.*** ***Daily Graphic, September 7th, 2005.***

Perspective

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is the world body that sets the core international labour standards for governments, employers and workers’ organisations around the world. Its ultimate aim is to create a platform for the tripartite (Government, Employers, and Organised Labour) to coexist in peace and tranquillity for the creation of a sound environment for industrial peace and sustainable development. Contrary to perceptions, it is not within the mandate of the ILO to set the minimum wage of any country or even make direct pronouncements on wage levels. Ratification, adoption and implementation of ILO Conventions is the sole preserve and choice of member nations. Once a country ratifies a convention, it becomes a standard with which to judge its performance on the world of work. Nonetheless, the ILO has been among the most successful multinational agencies, fulfilling its mandate as a workers’ organisation since its inception in 1919. It grew out of labour and social movements which culminated in widespread demands for social justice and higher living standards for working people. The humanitarian, political and economic motives in the 19th Century Europe and North America, created conditions for the consideration of the health and socio-economic advancement of workers and their families.

Focus

With a current membership of 177 states, the ILO presents a unique forum for the free and open discussion of experiences and comparison of national policies. Its tripartite structure makes it stand tall among world organisations, in that employers and workers organisations have equal voice with their governments in shaping policies and programmes. The traditional cornerstone of the activities of the ILO has however changed over the past two decades in response to the transformation in the world’s economic and social order. Policies of economic liberalisation have altered the relationships among the government, labour and employer communities. Economic outcomes are now influenced more by market forces than by mediation through social actors, legal norms or state intervention. In much the same way, changes in employment patterns, labour markets and labour relations have had a profound impact on the ILO’s constituents, particularly in the area of trade union activities and employers’ organisations. Even at the national level, the growing sense of insecurity and unemployment are on top of the political agenda of most countries. The new social dimension of globalisation and the rapid change and demand on the world of work, have become issues of grave public concern, giving new relevance to facilities provided by the ILO for the international community.

Today, the ILO has shifted its strategic focus to the promotion and realisation of standards and fundamental principles and rights of workers, creation of greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income, enhancement of the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all, as well as strengthening of tripartism and social dialogue. These principles are intertwined with issues of basic human rights such as freedom of association, collective bargaining power, the abolition of forced labour, elimination of discrimination in employment, and the promotion of full employment. Besides the ILO provides assistance in the form of technical co-operation to assist developing nations in the development of human resource, social institutions, employment planning and employment promotion.

Challenges

In the wake of the unprecedented economic opportunities created by globalisation, the world is faced with deepening social inequalities and personal insecurities. We still live in a world where 1 billion workers are unemployed and underemployed; where over 1.2 million people die annually of work-related accidents and diseases; and where one-third of the population of the developing world exists in a state of abject poverty. Inequalities in wages and incomes have increased almost everywhere, and employment creation lags behind economic growth. With changing work organisation and global competition, insecurity has increased at all levels of the workforce. As a result, the “informal sector” has expanded to become the “informal economy”.

The existing conditions attest to the fact that the many benefits and opportunities created by open economies, open societies and new information, are not reaching enough people, and too many have little access to the

opportunities of the global economy. People throughout the world face deficits, gaps and exclusions in the form of unemployment and underemployment, poor quality and unproductive jobs, unsafe work and insecure income, rights which are denied, gender inequality, migrant workers who are exploited, lack of representation and voice, and inadequate protection and solidarity in the face of disease, disability and old age. There is therefore a global challenge on governments, businesses, leaders in labour and civil societies, and most especially international organisations to make markets work for everybody.

Decent Work Agenda

The ILO has found a solution to the challenges in decent work: work which will provide for the health and education of the family; which will ensure their basic security in old age and adversity; and which respects their human rights at work. Decent work is not defined in terms of any fixed standard or monetary level. It varies from country to country. But everybody, everywhere, has a sense of what decent work means in terms of their own lives, and in relation to their own society. The concept of Decent Work was proposed by the Director-General of the ILO, Juan Somavia, after he spoke to ordinary people in many different parts of the world. He says, "everywhere in very varied cultural and economic settings, I heard the same clear and simple message...the strong desire of the common woman and man to obtain decent work".

The Decent Work agenda was endorsed by the General Assembly of the UN in the Review Session of the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 and adopted by the ILO in 2002. And so for the next decade and beyond therefore, the Organisation has the overriding goal in its growth and development agenda to promote opportunities for people to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Thus irrespective of gender, physical abilities or challenges, where they come from and or where they work, workers should be able to perform productive work in an environment that generates adequate income, in which rights are respected, that is safe and healthy, with adequate social protection, and above all, where human dignity is respected and preserved.

Standards

How can the goal of promoting decent work be achieved? The goal is seen as the synthesis of four strategic objectives:

- achieving universal respect for fundamental principles and rights at work – a precondition for the construction of a socially legitimate labour market;
- the creation of greater employment and income opportunities for women and men – the essential instrument for raising living standards and widening access to incomes ;
- extending social protection as the means to provide security of income and of the working environment; and
- promoting social dialogue – the means by which workers, employers and their representatives, communities and civil societies engage in debate and exchange on the means to achieve decent work.

It is worthy of note that gender equality and development are themes that cut across all the above objectives.

Although the four pillars of ILO's work are mutually reinforcing in addressing poverty reduction in the world, the organisation is not reneging but continues to develop ways of promoting a more coherent approach to addressing poverty reduction as a means for achieving decent work for all.

Pilots

In the compilation of statements by Juan Somavia titled 'Perspectives on Decent Work', the ILO Director-General observes, "the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour, is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries".

The ILO believes once the concept becomes the heart of global, national and local strategies, achieving equitable, inclusive and sustainable social and economic development will no longer be an illusion. For this reason eight developing countries including Ghana have been adopted by the ILO to implement the decent work agenda on pilot basis. The others are Bahrain, Bangladesh, Denmark, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Panama and the Philippines. Lessons therefrom will be used to introduce Decent Work Country Programmes in most ILO member states in the coming years.

Today, the Ghana Decent Work Pilot Programme (GDWPP) which took off in 2003 is on-going and receiving prominence in policy formulation alongside the Millennium Development Goals and the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy which also have a growth and development agenda. But within the next decade, it is the vision of the ILO to make decent work central to efforts at reducing poverty in the world.

2. “NEED TO INTEGRATE DECENT WORK CULTURE INTO POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PROGRAMMES”. *Daily Graphic, September 14th, 2005.*

Ghana, like many developing economies is faced with a myriad of development challenges. Prominent among these are the absence of social protection, social dialogue, and non-adherence to labour standards, all of which affect decent work. As happens in a typical vicious cycle, they result in more poverty and thereby draw back the development progress.

The Ghana Living Standards Survey (1998/1999) classified more than seven of the then 18 million Ghanaians as poor, creating no doubt as to whether or not poverty reduction is a national development priority. Subsequent statistics indicate that four of every ten Ghanaians still live in poverty. Many of them work in agriculture, mostly as food crop farmers. Others are engaged in micro and small scale enterprises, or are finding a survival income as daily casual labourers. With two-thirds of the working population outside agriculture active in the informal economy, and many, particularly women, persistently poor, there is the growing recognition that the informal sector holds the key to employment, increased incomes of labour, poverty reduction and ultimately rapid socio-economic development. The need to provide an enabling environment at both the local and national levels for their functioning is therefore not far fetched.

Given this situation, the Ghana Decent Work Pilot Programme (GDWPP), a Government of Ghana and ILO initiative with two separate but related components, was initiated in 2003 to among others, support efforts at poverty reduction in the informal economy. The Programme advocates rights at work, employment, social protection and social dialogue in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity for all men and women. Component One of the GDWPP seeks to strengthen the capacity of the social partners – Organised Labour, Ghana Employers’ Association (GEA) and the Government (represented by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE) – to influence policy. This is to ensure that decent work and poverty reduction are addressed through integrated social and economic policies at the national level. Component Two seeks to develop and test an integrated approach to poverty reduction in the informal sector at the district level.

GPRS

Generally, the ILO strongly supports the key principles of enhanced national ownership of strategies to reduce poverty, based on broad civil society participation in the process of their preparation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. However in many cases the social partners have expressed concern and frustration that their views and potential support appear undervalued. In Ghana therefore, as in many developing countries, the ILO, through the GDWPP has encouraged the MMYE, TUC and GEA to participate fully in all spheres of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) process whilst it facilitates the creation or adaptation of social dialogue mechanisms as well as tracks progress. The GDWPP also provides technical support to the formulation and implementation of the GPRS with the purpose of reducing decent work deficits, strengthening national capacity to integrate decent work into policy agendas, developing methods for designing effective country programmes and policies, demonstrating utility of integrated approach to decent work and disseminating lessons therefrom. In this regard, the Jobs for Africa project of the ILO for example, participated in the Economic Dialogue process and assisted in the drafting of a section of the GPRS on employment generation.

GDWPP

In the words of Kwesi Adu Amankwah, Secretary-General, TUC as captured in the ILO’s booklet ‘Working out of poverty in Ghana’, “the concept of decent work captures the challenges faced by Ghana. For the trade unions raising productivity and incomes, particularly in the informal economy, are central goals. The GPRS does not address these concerns, except in very general terms”. The GPRS attempts to address most of the development

challenges of the country as are advocated in the Millennium Development Goals; among them macroeconomic stability, industrial and rural development, human resources development, vulnerable groups, governance etc.

A closer examination of the Strategy nonetheless reveals a number of major gaps, which significantly limit the prospects for achieving its goal. These gaps relate to employment, labour, income distribution and security, representation and voice as well as the respect of human rights. Under component One of the GDWPP therefore, The ILO is assisting to develop the capacities of the national partners to strengthen the potential of the GPRS to generate more and better jobs in pursuit of the decent work agenda. Five areas have been identified by the Programme for policy development by the stakeholders:

- More and better jobs in micro- and small enterprises – a strategy to address the problems of the informal sector
- Skills development for gainful employment
- Maximizing the employment benefits of infrastructure development
- Integration of persons with disabilities into society, and
- Increasing productivity and fair distribution through a wages and incomes policy.

It is in furtherance of the above that the government embarked on the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) programme which is aimed at providing employable skills for the youth. It is on record that upon assumption of office, the NPP government declared the intention to provide the youth with vocational and technical skills to make them employable. Subsequently a national registration exercise of unemployed youth was started culminating in the institution of a number of support programmes under the STEP. With technical support from the ILO, more than 25,000 men and women have been trained in areas such as construction, batik, tie and dye and garment production, food processing and other artisanal trades. Additionally, about 15,000 others have been trained in vocational agriculture for skills in the farming of mushrooms, snails, honey, and grass cutter among others.

Thus the GDWPP is already creating a positive impact as it strengthens the employment creation and income generation link on which the GPRS hinges. It incorporates into the Strategy relevant components of the decent work approach and contributes to the design of the GPRS. Not only that, it also assists in the development and testing of the policy tools and procedures and helps to establish and strengthen the institutions needed for effective delivery.

Says Mr. Kwamina Amoasi-Andoh, National Coordinator of the GDWPP, “the enhanced technical and institutional capacity is being used to develop and test approaches and policy tools in a partnership between national institutions and two pilot districts in the Central Region, and that the experience gained will provide the basis for the formulation of an advocacy for effective policy proposals”. Mr. Amoasi-Andoh says, with the review of the first phase of the GPRS under way, the ILO and the GDWPP is leaving no stone unturned in ensuring that its goals and aspirations are captured in the second phase of the GPRS for the benefit and betterment not only of labour but of all its constituents.

Commitment

The impact and sustainability of the GDWPP will ultimately hinge on the commitment and ability of the actors in national and local government, the GEA, TUC and in the informal economy, to pursue a decent work approach to poverty reduction. They need to be willing and able to analyse, monitor, propose and contribute to its implementation.

3. “DECENT WORK CULTURE AT DISTRICT LEVELS, LESSONS FROM THE WINNEBA/AJUMAKO DISTRICTS”. **Daily Graphic, September 22nd, 2005.**

This is the third and final part of an informative feature by the International Labour Organisation on its Decent Work Agenda and efforts at incorporating it into the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy programme.

Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) paper sets the national developmental framework for policies and interventions to combat poverty. To contribute to this process, the Ghana Decent Work Pilot Programme (GDWPP) is embarking on a number of activities aimed at building the capacities of the Social Partners with a view to influencing and promoting the incorporation of Decent Work into the GPRS at the national level. Not only that, under the Component Two, the GDWPP is developing an integrated approach to improve productivity and incomes in the informal economy at the district level in two pilot districts in the Central of Ghana.

Of the two objectives above, the district level component is the subject for this paper.

It is generally accepted that taking decisions and engaging resources close to and with the participation of expected beneficiaries, improve both governance and the effectiveness of the programmes. The district-level component of the GDWPP is the implementation face designed to develop and test (pilot) an integrated approach to address decent work deficits in the informal economy in two selected districts, namely Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam and Ewutu-Efutu-Senya Districts, both in the Central Region.

Pilot

The Central Region is known to have an incidence of poverty that is higher than the national average and which has been worsening over the last decade. While Awutu-Effutu-Senya is coastal and predominantly urban with a large and diverse informal economy, Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam is land-locked and mostly rural with an informal economy focusing on agro-processing and services. The selection of the pilot districts was facilitated by a research process coordinated by the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) with the extensive support of the Central Regional Co-ordinating Council. The GDWPP at the district level aims at reducing poverty through the provision of technical and financial assistance from the Programme and its social partners such as the pilot district authorities, the ILGS and the ILO, to the districts for capacity building activities.

Through consultations with the District Chief Executives the Regional Co-ordinating Council and other stakeholders, a District Assembly Sub-Committee for Productive and Gainful Employment (SPGE) has been established in each of the districts to promote dialogue and operationalise local activities using the Local Economic and Social Development approach of the ILO. It is a statutory subcommittee under the District Assembly operating under Act 462 and the Standing Orders with technical assistance from the ILO to execute its functions.

Functions

The SPGEs are public-private-partnership charged to create wealth and employment to reduce poverty; advocate for women, men, people with disabilities and the vulnerable in the District in the world of work; create a bridge of dialogue between Small Business Associations (SBAs) set up within the framework of the GDWPP and the District Assembly; and ensure the application of standards.

With 15 members 5 are from the public sector (District Assembly and other district offices, Civil Service, NBSSI, Rural Banks, NGOs, and the Universities) 6 are from the private sector (SBEs), and 4 are from the elected District Assembly members. The SPGEs also propose concrete interventions eg. development of district action plans for productive and gainful employment, ensure transparency in resource allocations, enhance accountability of local government and establish business linkages at the national and international levels .

The GDWPP undertakes Capacity Building of SPGEs and SBAs and has conducted baseline surveys of the district and studied some of the business sectors engaged in by the Small Business Enterprises(SBEs) and

made recommendations which are being implemented now to improve employable skills and reduce decent work deficits in micro and small enterprises in the informal economy. The positive results being recorded will be documented which serve as a model for decentralized interventions under the GPRS.

The GDWPP works closely with the ILGS, the District Assembly/SPGE, the Regional Planning Coordinating Unit (REPCU), Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment and recently, the Ministry of Private Sector Development & President's Special Initiative, from where focal persons have been identified to help sustain and replicate the positive result.

Interventions

Some of the special interventions in the two districts include the introduction of Labour Based Technology (LBT) i.e. training of District Tender Boards and Contract Managers on contract awards, procurement procedures and monitoring and the development of a manual on 'Contract Management and Monitoring' for the districts. In addition, two feeder roads in each district have been selected for reconstruction using the LBT methods to create employment in the communities along the roads.

The GDWPP also provide Special Business Assistance to people with disabilities under which beneficiaries are trained and helped technically and financially in economic activities.

Other interventions are the establishment of Special Grasscutter Projects, District Business Information Centres and the District Enterprise Development Fund (DEDF) from which SBAs are assisted. The amount involved here is however inadequate. For example it is estimated that Winneba requires about c3,000,000,000 (three billion cedis) and Ajumako c2,000,000,000 (Two billion cedis) in the DEDF, but so far only c300,000,000 (three hundred million cedis) is available per district. There is therefore a suggestion for the Regional Co-coordinating Council to advocate special funds for the two districts for the implementation of the project. The National Micro-Finance Centre at the office of the President has also been contacted to make funds available to the two districts to support the project.

Other ILO Projects namely, the Time Bound Project and the HIV/AIDS Project have come in to enrich the social protection aspect of the programme. Their interventions are directed towards the elimination of the worse forms of child labour, prevention of HIV/AIDS infection, occupational safety and health and environment, and health insurance.

Funding

The ILO provides funding to match the DEDF, with support from the Netherlands Partnership Programme and Ghana Government. Other development partners namely SIF, GTZ, CBRDP, FAO, SPEED- Ghana, DFID, UNDP, UNIDO are happy about the pilot project and have been invited to be associated with it.

Impact

Structures have been put in place to ensure that the districts own the project and take the initiative to improve and sustain the good results so that they can be replicated in other districts. Meanwhile, there is constant monitoring and evaluation against the baseline survey results. Indications are that the pilot programme will produce very good results in employment generation, wealth creation, revenue generation and poverty reduction and will be replicated in other districts as planned. Other districts are eagerly waiting for their turn.