



International
Labour
Organization

Start And Improve Your Business

Development of trainers to support informal economy enterprizes

ILO Country Office for Zimbabwe

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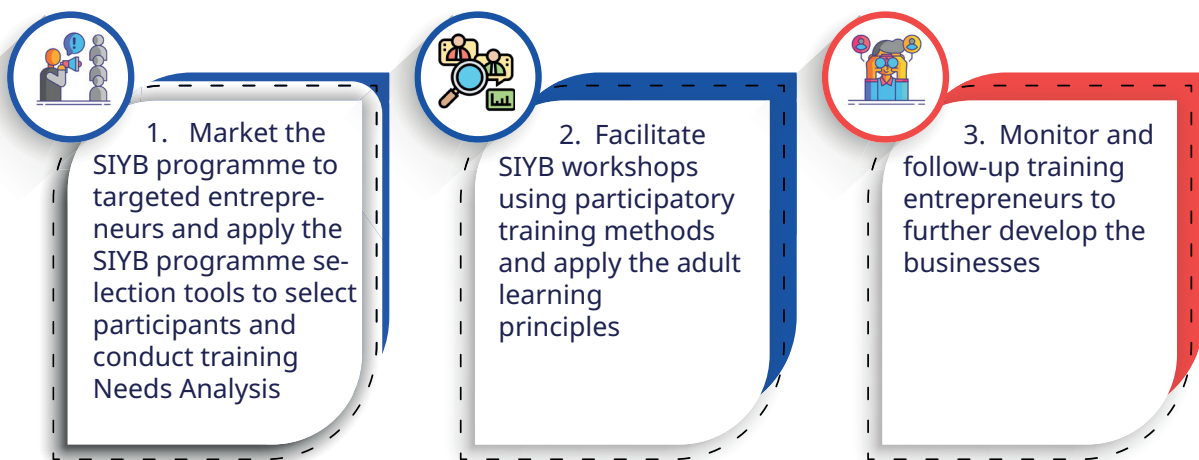
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1 Introduction

This report presents the outcomes and analysis of the International Labour Organization's Start and Improve Your Business Trainer Development process. The trainer development programme is implemented within the project outcome 2 of the Employment Promotion and Labour Market Governance Programme (2019 - 2020) seeks to facilitate transition to formality in Zimbabwe. To contribute to the achievement of these objectives, the ILO is supporting Business Development Service (BDS) providers in Bulawayo to effectively reach informal economy entrepreneurs. Participating BDS providers received trainer development support to access appropriate training packaging to support the transitioning from informality.

1.1 Trainers Development Objectives

The objectives of the trainer development process were to enable local trainers through their BDS organizations to effectively and independently implement business start-up and improvement training and related activities for potential and existing entrepreneurs in the informal sector. Specifically, the trainers should be able to:



It is expected that after the certification, trainers will conduct SIYB training activities for the benefit of entrepreneurs in the informal economy to facilitate the transition from the informal economy to the formal.

Participation

The SIYB trainer development process trained and mentored 14 SIYB trainers who had various competences to train informal economy entrepreneurs. After the initial training in March 2020 the newly trained SIYB trainers were supported to organize and conduct training of entrepreneurs in the informal economy. A total of 81 entrepreneurs were trained in the Improve Your Business package and assisted to develop action plans on how to improve their business management systems. The entrepreneurs indicated that the IYB training helped them to review their business operations and identify business systems for costing, marketing, inventory management, record keeping, managing employees and planning business operations and growth. It was also heartening to realize that more than 70% of the participants had never received business management training. This underscored the need for coordinated support

to the informal economy enterprises. As part of their capacity development, informal economy enterprises participating in the IYB programme had the opportunity of meeting the Registrar of companies, the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority and several finance institutions to learn of the available services and products and how they could participate in bid to formalize their economic units.

The Generate Your Business (GYB) and Start Your Business (SYB) training for potential entrepreneurs were disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic and could not proceed as planned. In response the EPLMG programme developed a GYB On Air concept and programme structure. The GYB programme was designed to be aired on radio supported by trainers who would meet the registered entrepreneurs through the WhatsApp platform. This radio programme has since been implemented by another ILO programme: Green Business Innovation and Development in Zimbabwe where over 200 potential entrepreneurs participated. The EPLMG trainers were involved in the training of the potential entrepreneurs.

The Start Your Business training for the informal economy players was organized through the Junior Achievement in Zimbabwe where 55 potential entrepreneurs were trained in preparing a business plan for their business. This training enabled entrepreneurs to think through their business ideas and prepare a roadmap for its implementation. Additional support and follow-up to the trained entrepreneurs is currently in progress.

▶ 2 Design Of Training Of Trainers Programme



The SIYB trainer development programme was designed to fulfil the basic requirements for trainer certification and the needs of the targeted trainers. The trainer development programme was conducted over 10 days to allow for trainer support with training content, methodology and managing a facilitation process. At the start of the workshop, the trainers completed a knowledge pre-test which was used to identify the content and training facilitation gaps. A post-test of the same content was administered at the end of the two weeks to confirm content assimilation levels.

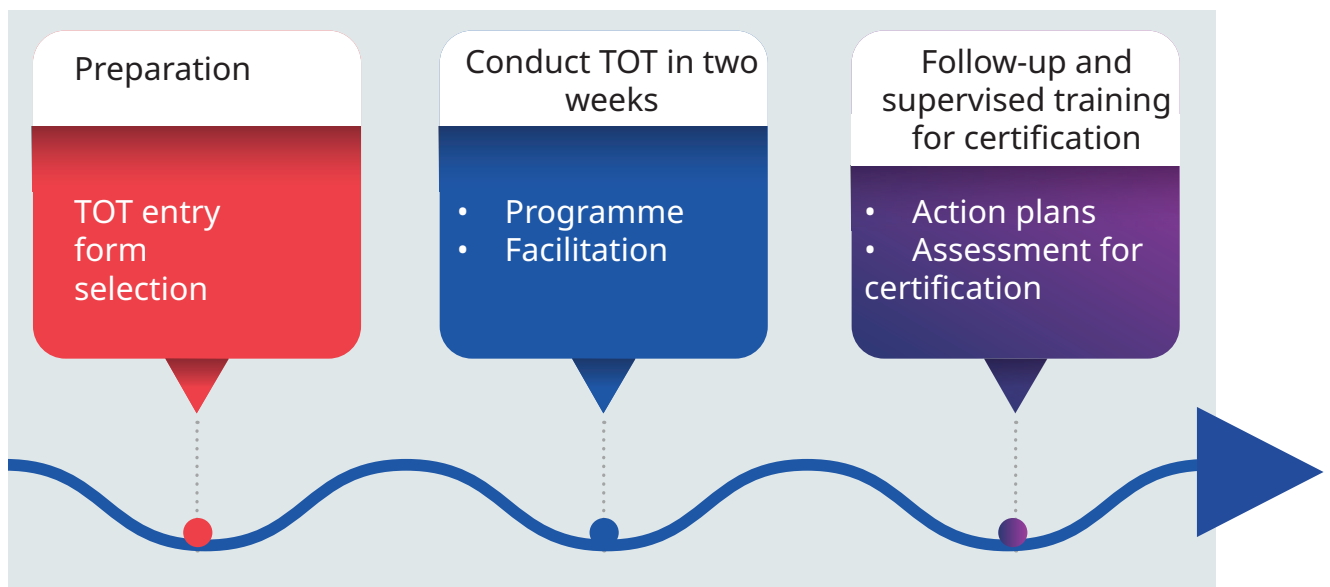
During the first week of training, trainers were introduced to the Generate Your Business workbook, Start Your Business Manual and Business plan and, the six Improve Your Business Manuals. Trainers were also introduced to adult learning principles, facilitation techniques and training methods. In addition trainers were introduced to the SIYB Entry form, Training Needs Assessment, monitoring and training evaluation tools, linkages and networking and SIYB follow up methods. Trainers were also required to prepare and present a micro-teaching session each that allowed them to demonstrate their ability to communicate business management content using the training methods they learnt.

The trained SIYB trainers organized and conducted 8 workshops that supported 136 informal economy entrepreneurs with business planning and business management skills. In addition, through their BDS institutions trainers have conducted training

activities directly to the informal enterprises. The multiplier effect of the SIYB programme is beginning to be felt as training services are reaching the informal economy through local service providers. It is expected that by introducing the SIYB programme to the local BDS providers the ILO through the EPLMG programme has built capacity that contributes to the ecosystem that supports the formalization of the informal economy. One of the key impediments to formalization is lack of information. Having trained trainers equipped with packaged training materials is a good starting point to reaching out to the informal economy actors with BDS services.

The entrepreneurs trained in the Improve Your Business package were from the local association for SME; the Bulawayo chamber of Small and Medium Enterprises (BCSME). IYB training demonstrated the importance of business training as a key service offering. It is expected that the collaboration between the SIYB trainers and the business chambers will continue beyond the life of the project.

The trainer development process entails the following steps:



▶ 3 Trainer Selection Criteria

The **minimum requirement** for trainer selection is a combination of at **least two** of the four elements below:

- 1
Tertiary Level Education
- 2
Business Development Service provision experience
- 3
Experience with adult education and facilitation
- 4
Own business experience



The trainer development process exposed participants to the content of business management and formalization, training process and applying training methods that contribute to effective transfer of learning. These skills were applied in training entrepreneurs.

Participants Expectation

At the start of the s trainer development process participants had a number of expectations and questions they needed answered:

- SIYB Programme and Training**
- Is there a formula to start and grow a business?
 - How to develop trust and confidence on the trainees
 - How to help business to generate ideas-tools?
 - How much contact time is needed for SIYB training?
 - Learn how to assist start-ups & SMEs to be investor ready
 - How to come up with a Bankable business idea?
 - Get business Dev. tools tailor made to meet needs of SMEs at different levels
- ILO Project specifics**
- What is the past traction on the SIYB
- programme in Zimbabwe - any measurements for success?
 - Will ILO do follow-up and assist in training SMEs
 - How many entrepreneurs will we reach out to?
 - Cross pollination from other participants
- Zimbabwean Business Environment**
- Is the training going to address problems facing SMEs in Zimbabwe?
 - Businesses are failing because of economic challenges



Participants were asked to share their fears and excitements at the start of the workshop. Their fears related to the possibility of failing the post-training assessment and the bulkiness of the materials handed out to them. On excitement, participants considered it a privilege to be introduced to practical tools to train entrepreneurs in the informal economy.

4 Workshop Methodology And Proceedings

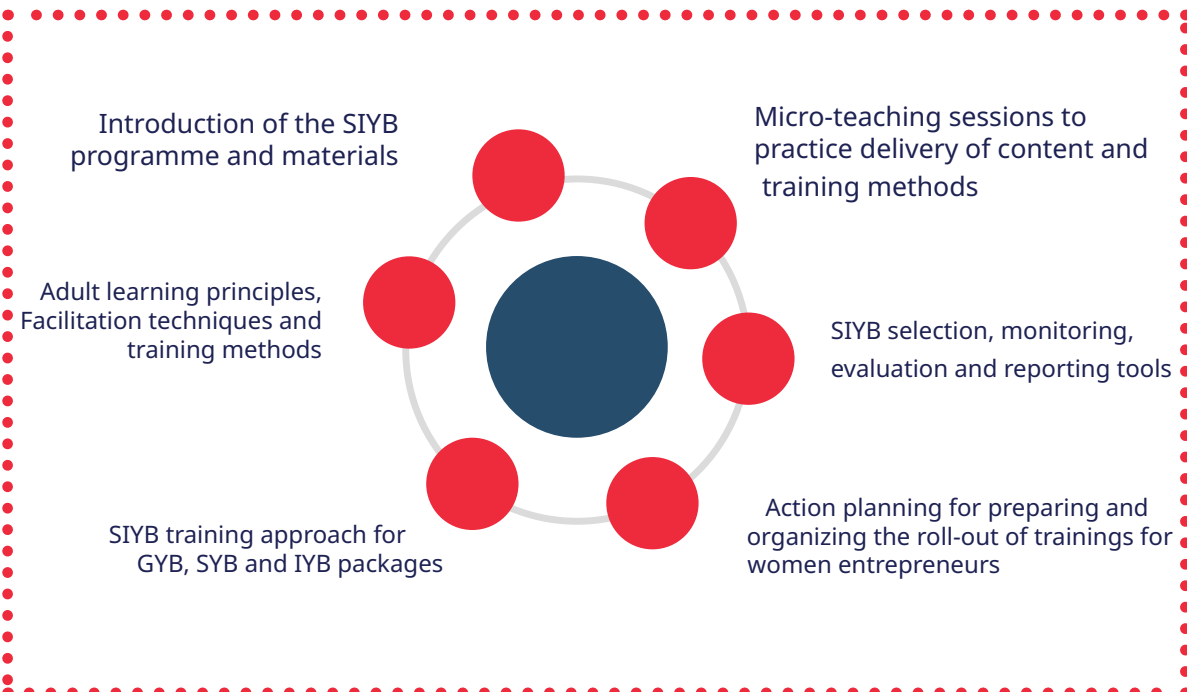


It was clear from the pre-test that trainers had limited knowledge of business management content, adult education principles and facilitation techniques. In recognition of this reality, the training introduced basic business management content, training methods and facilitation skills to enable the trainers to employ methodologies and processes that make effective training.



Participatory training methods and practice sessions were incorporated to allow trainers to practice the process of training women entrepreneurs. This enabled participants to participate actively in the learning process.

The sessions covered over the two-week period were divided into five categories:



The SIYB programme and materials were introduced covering the structure of the materials, the features and how to use SIYB materials in training entrepreneurs. Trainers were also introduced to the Employment Promotion and Labour Market Governance Programme (EPLMGP) objectives and outcomes. Gender equality in entrepreneurship training was covered to clarify the role of the trainer in ensuring that they uphold key principles to ensure effective women participation in the training interventions. The major outcome from these sessions was a clear understanding of the whole programme by participants.

Status Of Informal Economy In Zimbabwe

The Word Café method was used to explore the status and needs of enterprises in the informal economy in Zimbabwe. Participants defined an informal business as a business run outside the confines of the law, unregistered with the Registrar of companies, National Social Security Authority, local authorities and the Ministry of Small Enterprise and Community Development. In answering the question on critical soft skills needed by the informal economy players, trainers highlighted behavioural skills, internal and external people management skills, business etiquette and grooming, ethics, communication, leadership skills, team work/collaboration, negotiation skills, mindset change and customer care. The training discussed the importance of having a holistic view of the needs of the target group so that the SIYB is complemented with other tools for building the required skills.

Impressions Of Candidate SIYB Trainers On Informal Economy Included:

- Assisting entrepreneurs to register the business with relevant authorities,
- Compliance with local requirements for licensing

However, to encourage formalization it was considered important to make information on formalization accessible. For example, decentralizing the registrar of companies will make the facility accessible to entrepreneurs in the rural economies and small cities. Other strategies include, sharing benefits of formalization with SMEs, provision of incentives, provision of information packs on business registration, depoliticizing the formalization process, creation of one-stop shops and demystifying the informal sector.

Trainers also highlighted some of the challenges their institutions face in providing entrepreneurship development training for the informal sector and these included:



- Resource constraints
- Target group is highly mobile
- Over generalization of the sector
- Lack of understanding of the informal sector
- Highly politicized
- Mistrust client vs institution
- High expectations from institutions
- Fragmentation of representation

- Infighting among associations
- Lack of strong government coordination
- Access to finance
- Cutting corners in doing business

To solve the problems, there is need to need to form strong informal sector associations to invest in building trust, engage the informal sector to map out their expectations and their needs, strong government interventions in coordinating the informal sector and awareness campaigns on the informal sector.

Adult learning principles and implication for conducting training

The ten adult learning principles were explored and participants identified key responses that a trainer needs to make in the design and delivery of their training interventions.

SIYB BUSINESS GAME

Trainer candidates were introduced to the SIYB Game which is a simulation of a business situation. In the game, three businesses learn how to compete or cooperate in the production and the sale of simple standard and upmarket hats. The entrepreneurs will either be drawn into fierce competition or aim at a win-win situation. Besides applying basic business management principles, elements of planning, negotiation and trust-building based on records come out strongly. To achieve the best result, the trainer facilitates a discussion at the end of each module of the game. Participants compare their results (planned and achieved) and analyse what happened, what went well and what went wrong.

FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

Facilitation techniques and the role of a facilitator were presented over a number of sessions including adult learning principles, participatory training methods, effective training techniques, visual aids, using energizers and ice breakers. These sessions enabled the participants to learn factors that affect adult learners and the different facilitation techniques. The outcome from these sessions was the knowledge gained by participants on how to apply and combine different techniques in order to facilitate effective learning by entrepreneurs.

The tools for conducting Training Needs Analysis (TNA) were introduced and participants practiced using the tools to identify, select and analyse training needs. The participants are expected to use the SIYB Client Entry Form to conduct TNA in the field for the entrepreneurs to train during certification. Outcomes from these sessions were the improvements in understanding the content by the participants.



▶ 5 Trainer Assessment And Preparation For Entrepreneur Workshops

Trainer assessment was conducted throughout the trainer development process training of trainers session focusing on participant's attitude, knowledge of content, facilitation skills and commitment. Different methods were used to assess the potential trainers. These methods focused on knowledge test, observations during sessions to assess each participant's attitude to the programme and peers, participation in sessions and commitment. Each participant made a 20-minute presentation on SYB and IYB allocated topics to demonstrate their facilitation skills and knowledge of business management content during the initial Training of Trainers workshop. Each presentation was assessed using a pre-designed assessment form by the facilitators and the other trainer participants. Each participant was given verbal feedback after they made their lesson presentation. The feedback covered information on each participant's strengths, weaknesses and their potential for future SIYB activities. In addition, trainers received a one-on-one feedback session with the Master Trainers on key issues they needed to address in preparation for training entrepreneurs.



6 Conclusion

The trainer development process achieved its core objective of enabling the trainers to prepare, organize and conduct training of entrepreneurs workshops in the SIYB Programme. As reflected in the assessment section, trainers still need to work on their content and practice presentation skills in order to prepare for their certification workshops. The 16 trainers will need to work in groups to prepare for and conduct training of entrepreneurs workshops for certification.

6.1 Enhance BDS provision for the informal Economy

The strategy to build the capacity of the local BDS providers to be equipped with simple tools for training and supporting the informal economy has yielded positive results. 14 trainers from five BDS providers and the Bulawayo City Council have been trained in the SIYB programme. This intervention has influenced programming for supporting the informal economy players. The service providers are expected to continue offering these vital services within the mandate of their existence.

6.2 Linkages and coordinating service provision for the benefit of the informal economy

The ILO/EPLMG programme enhanced the visibility of different stakeholders with a role to play in the formalization of the informal economy. These players were all coordinated to meet the entrepreneurs and establish a working relationship. By inviting institutions like the Registrar of Companies, the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority, financing institutions among others entrepreneurs were able to understand what it would take to formalize their businesses.

6.3 Access to Business Development Services for the Informal Economy players

Trained entrepreneurs expressed willingness to access more training and mentorship services including access to markets, equipment and networks among others. It is important to continue encouraging BDS providers to package training and information services for the informal economy in a sustainable manner.

6.4 Trainer review meetings

It is recommended that trainer review meetings be organized to discuss progress with training entrepreneurs. Such meetings could be used to clarify content and also to deal with teething issues. For a start, meetings could be held monthly and then reduced to quarterly intervals after the initial four months of training.