



FINAL REPORT

Action Research on change processes and lessons learned of the implementation of the Skills Development Fund in Uganda (SDF)

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Glossary of Key Terms and Abbreviations

BDS	Business Development Services
BMO	Business Membership Organization
BTVET	Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training
CBO	Community-based Organization
Enabel	The Belgian development agency
EPRC	Economic Policy Research Centre
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoU	Government of Uganda
KII	Key Informant Interview
MCP	Master Crafts Person
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PWD	People with Disabilities

SDF	Skills Development Fund
SDP	Skills Development Platform
SSU	Support to Skilling Uganda
VTI	Vocational Training Institute
WBL	Work Based Learning

Agriculture field training: A type of training where trainers provide practical, hands-on demonstrations to trainees in the field.

Apprenticeship: Any system by which an employer undertakes by contract to employ a person and to train him/her or have him/her trained systematically in a trade, the duration of which is determined in advance and in the course of which the apprentice is bound to work in the employer's business.

Business and Technical Vocational Education and Training (BTJET): BTJET is a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education: the study of technologies and related sciences; as well as the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding, knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

Field staff: All Enabel staff that is located in the regions. Covering different positions such as Skills Development Fund Officer, Skills Development Field Manager, Field Coordinator, Instant training manager, M&E Staff.

Grantee: Organization (can be a training provider, BTJET provider, NGO or BMO) that is a recipient of a grant of the SDF. Grantees are responsible for coordinating the administration and financial management of the grant, as well as for the implementation of training programs in collaboration with partner organizations.

Instant Trainee: Beneficiary of an instant training programme in a specific training topic lasting between 10 and 100 hours.

Instant Training Livelihood Partner: NGOs implementing livelihood development programs in local, refugee and hosting communities. They are usually the organizations that apply to Enabel for receiving financial support to conduct instant trainings.

Instant Training Provider: Organization (NGOs, training center, consultancy firm) identified and selected by Enabel to work together with the livelihood partner providing the instant training program to cover the needs identified in the respective local community.

Instant trainings: Short skills training provided to cater for skills gaps identified by other actors working with the youth, women and girls.

Micro-enterprise training (enterprise-based only): Enterprise-based only training where no school attendance is needed. Comprehensive life skills and entrepreneurship are covered intensively in this type of training.

Non-formal apprenticeship with industrial attachment: non-formal apprenticeship with a period of on-the-job training to learn a skill through practical experience. The training is school-based and complemented by a short attachment in an enterprise.

Non-formal apprenticeship without industrial attachment: non-formal apprenticeship without practical experience on-the-job.

Non-formal Trainee: Beneficiary of formal or non-formal short- and medium-term quality vocational training programs.

Non-formal trainings: Training programs that combine basic education with practical life and work skills devised to provide graduates with some rudimentary literacy skills, vocational skills and a means of survival.

Non-formal vocational with industrial attachment: non-formal vocational training with a period of on-the-job training to learn a skill through practical experience. The training is school-based and complemented by a short attachment in an enterprise.

Non-formal vocational without industrial attachment: non-formal vocational training without practical experience on-the-job.

Partner: Selected organization to the grants (can be private sector, training provider or Business Development Services (BDS) providers) working together with the grantee either providing training programs, work-based learning/internships or developing curricula.

Skilling: The process of acquisition of skills without referring to the source of skills acquisition.

Vocational Skills Training: Practical and theoretical instruction to prepare an individual for a particular skilled labor; the extent of the preparation varies by service provider.

WBL Provider: Company or individual Master Crafts Person (MCP) that for a short period of time (usually one month) takes in trainees to provide them with practical, work-based learning (WBL) experience. WBL Providers can be partners (co-applicants) of the grant agreements, but do not necessarily have to be.

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Foreword

The **Skills Development Fund (SDF)** pilots **innovative approaches** in skills training in Uganda. In this report, we shed light on how the SDF is contributing to increasing the **relevance, quality, equity, and effectiveness of skills development** in Uganda. We also study how we manage the Skills Development Fund, and how the **internal efficiency** of skills financing can be improved.

The SDF is part of the Support to Skilling Uganda Strategy (SSU). With a total of € 5.8 million funding from Enabel, the European Union Trust Fund, and Irish Aid, the pilot fund is implemented over a five-year period (2016 to 2020), in close collaboration with the Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES). The SDF is an **earmarked pilot training fund**, that funds skills trainings through competitive calls in Albertine Rwenzori, Karamoja and Northern Uganda. This fund is unique in the Ugandan context, through its aim to **bridge the gap between the world of school and the world of work** through innovative training modalities.

A first goal of the SDF is to **make skills training in Uganda** more qualitative, and **relevant to labour market needs**. A second goal is to **increase training opportunities for vulnerable youth, and women**, and we also focus on including refugees (Northern Uganda) and Karamojong in skills development. Third, we finance trainings that should lead to **activation** and income generation. Finally, the SDF aims to be a **model for a future skills training fund** in Uganda. Therefore, we tested several innovative approaches in skills training and financing skills development. This Action Research report has as goal to capitalise on what approaches have been working well throughout the current implementation of the SDF.

As we are a pilot fund, we test different training modalities. A first important innovation in this sense are the **Public-Private-Partnerships** that underlie the trainings we organise. The SDF stimulates bottom-up initiatives and partnerships between the Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTNET) institutions and the labour market/private sector by supporting a series of joint ventures between training providers and the labour market. Because of this, most trainees were exposed to the labour market through apprenticeships and industrial attachments, were taught through updated curricula that were in line with local labour market needs, etc.

A second innovation are the **non-formal trainings** we organise (i.e., trainings that range from 6 to 9 months) or instant trainings (1-2 weeks), to improve access to vulnerable youth. This stands in contrast to most BTNET education in Uganda, which is formal and therefore lasts longer (2-3 years) and is more expensive, which inhibits access to skills trainings for many young and vulnerable Ugandans. Third, our trainings had flexible training schedules, and gave various forms of **support to improve access to trainings** (e.g., free meals or transport allowances). We also tested various forms of **post-training support**, which ranged from providing free work materials after the training, to the provision of job consulting. We were of course also active in **different regions**, and tailored our funding to specific regional needs (e.g., a stronger focus on wage-employment in Albertine Rwenzori, where the private sector is more developed).

The Action Research suggests that we indeed are finding that an effective way to enhance the relevance of Uganda's skills education is to implement public-private partnerships that are focused on **practice-oriented skills**, based on **local market needs**. A good way to identify training topics that meet labour market needs, is our approach to conduct labour market scans and training-needs assessments within each region of operation.

To fully integrate vulnerable youth in the labour market, we are finding that a **holistic approach** to trainings seems to work best. We define a holistic training as a combination of technical and life

skills trainings, that include school and work-based learning with pre-and post-training support. Competence-based assessments and certifications further help to transition to the world of work. About 65-70% of all trainees are in this light able to find employment, or to improve their income generation, which we consider as highly successful, given the Ugandan labour market. Finally, trainings that provided additional support to trainees, were most successful in ensuring that also the most vulnerable could attend classes (e.g., child care services for mothers).

While implementing the fund, we realized the importance of having sufficient **human resources**, with central offices and a decentralized structure in the field. We invested a lot of resources in identifying relevant training trades, building the capacity of fund applicants, conditioning the delivery of trainings, etc. This also requires clear administrative regulations and processes to ensure transparency and avoid corruption. Over the years, we improved the internal efficiency of the SDF, which is demonstrated by the fact that over 90% of our partners say that the administrative and financial processes throughout training delivery were efficient.

In what follows, we will provide a more comprehensive overview of the major aspects of the Skills Development Fund and the context in which this Action Research took place. Afterwards, an in-depth overview of how the SDF is improving the relevance, quality, access, effectiveness and internal efficiency of skills training, and key results of the Action Research are provided. We end this report by documenting lessons learned and highlighting policy recommendations. First and foremost, however, we start with the executive summary.

1. Executive Summary

The Ugandan government is highly committed to strengthening Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTJET) as evidenced by the various laws, strategies and frameworks that have been endorsed over the past years, especially the Education Act and the BTJET Act of 2008, the Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework (UVQF), the BTJET Strategic Plan 2012-2021, or the TVET Policy approved in 2019. Despite these policies and initiatives enacted to improve the BTJET system, a number of flaws and bottlenecks persist in the institutional framework that governs the education system, and especially the BTJET system. Specifically, the lack of coherence and quality at the implementation level remains a challenge.

To respond to the existing challenges and shortcomings, the Government of Uganda (GoU) endorsed the BTJET Strategic Plan 2012-2021 ("Skilling Uganda") with the main purpose of creating employable skills and competencies relevant in the Ugandan labour market.

About the Skills Development Fund (SDF)

The SDF is part of the Support to Skilling Uganda Strategy (SSU). With a total of € 5.8 million funding from Enabel, the European Union Trust Fund, and Irish Aid the pilot fund has been implemented over a five-year period (2016 to 2020) in close collaboration with the Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) with the aim to create an environment that encourages training providers to supply the skills that society and the economy need, and to facilitate collaborative public-private partnerships between training institutions and the private sector that stimulate bottom-up initiatives to provide flexible, qualitative and demand driven, i.e. labour market relevant, training and inspire change in skills development. Through the supported initiatives, the fund aimed to facilitate the transition from the world of school to the world of work for Uganda's vulnerable youth.

The "Skilling Uganda" Strategic Plan included five strategic goals, namely, enhancing the relevance, quality, access, effectiveness, and efficiency of skills development in Uganda. Enabel set up the SDF with the aim to test which innovative practices in Uganda would work best to achieve these 5 strategic goals. The SDF took on a results-based management approach that established a series of regulations and conditions for financing innovative training initiatives with high quality standards.

The pilot SDF supported so called non-formal (6-9 months) and instant (5-14 days) trainings across three selected regions in the country: Albertine Rwenzori, Karamoja and Northern Uganda. Non-formal trainings included different modalities, ranging from school-based only to enterprise-based only, and a number of mixed approaches. They were implemented by grantees and partners in public-private partnerships that were selected through competitive calls for proposals. Instant trainings targeted specific skills needs of beneficiaries identified by

other agencies (livelihood partners) that were typically NGOs supporting livelihood and income generating activities at the community level. These trainings aimed to quickly improve the livelihoods of youths, women, and men. Instant trainings provided technical and life skills for more effective and efficient business management, the improvement of production processes and product quality.

Through the establishment of transparent phased selection processes for the recipients of financing, and the implementation of regular monitoring activities, the pilot SDF ensured compliance with regulations and conditions and kept track of results achieved.

By the end of 2019, the pilot SDF reached around 5,500 beneficiaries who received non-formal trainings. Refugees participated with a share of about 66% in Northern Uganda. Female beneficiaries accounted overall for around 52% in non-formal trainings, and their presence has been particularly emphasized among refugees. The share of Karamojong trainees accounted for up to 92% of the total participants in Karamoja. With regards to instant trainings, by the end of 2019 a total of 156 instant trainings were completed. A total of 3.000 beneficiaries received skilling

through instant trainings. Female participation has been high, with a representation of around 65% overall. In Karamoja, 88% of trained beneficiaries were Karamojong, and the participation rate of refugees was 56% in Northern Uganda.

Key findings and conclusions

The implementation of the pilot SDF has contributed positively to the relevance, quality, access, effectiveness, and efficiency of skills development in Uganda. The following key findings and conclusions can be drawn as per non-formal trainings and instant trainings facilitated through the pilot SDF:

On non-formal trainings

The SDF has driven the creation of public-private partnerships for the provision of non-formal practice-oriented skills development trainings, through making it mandatory in its design that applicants need to build partnerships between public or private non-profit organizations with private sector partners. The relevance of these partnerships is widely acknowledged among the different stakeholders involved in the SDF implementation. In addition, a considerable number of grantees and partners indicate they aim to maintain the partnerships in the future, which reveals the sustainability and uptake of this model. Some limitations with regards to private sector involvement can nevertheless still be noted. Private sector organizations are mostly engaged as work-based learning (WBL) providers, and therefore become involved rather late. They could be more engaged during the trainings, by for instance playing a stronger role in upgrading curricula. Second, low institutional capacities and a lack of experience of BTNET institutions with managing these types of partnerships proved to be a challenge. Third, especially in Northern Uganda and Karamoja, a rather weak and mostly informal private sector limited the possibilities for public-private partnerships. Due attention was thus given to capacity building of grantees and selected partners. A final limitation lies in Enabel's regulations that do not allow for allocating grants directly to private for-profit entities.

The relevance of the trainings to the local private sector has been increased by the definition of training topics, i.e., trades based on labour market scans commissioned by Enabel. Such labour market scans were conducted for the three regions where the pilot SDF operated and compensated for the generally scarce data on labour markets and private sector skills demands in Uganda. This information-based definition of training topics increased the relevance of the trainings to the local private sector. However, as training topics have been defined for several years based on the same labour market scans, the possibility exists that local markets become saturated with skilled youth and more diversification is needed.

Best approaches that have contributed to quality trainings are the combination of technical and life skills training, including topics such as entrepreneurship skills, conflict management, reproductive health, environmental topics, among others. These approaches can be classified as innovative in the Ugandan context. **The integration of WBL approaches in the form of internships or apprenticeships also highly contributed to the quality of trainings,** as well as the **introduction of post-training support** in the form of start-up kits, coaching/counselling, career guidance or linking graduates with potential employers. DIT certification of most trainings, as well as international certification which was introduced for trainings in welding and metal fabrication, are further proof of the quality of trainings. Non-formal trainings were overall implemented with good quality in terms of classroom materials, trainers, venues, and workshops/equipment. Training duration was the most controversial aspect regarding the quality of trainings, as many trainees and some grantees and partners perceived the training period to be too short to acquire/convey all necessary skills.

Providing trainings free of cost has contributed to broaden the access to skills trainings of vulnerable groups including youth, women and girls, refugees, and Karamojong. To organize support according to vulnerable participants' needs, the SDF piloted an eligible costs approach.

Eligible costs included transport refunds, free meals and/or accommodation (in the case of boarding arrangements). In several cases, additional support, such as childcare for single mothers or healthcare services, was provided too. A factor that hindered the access to skills training for vulnerable groups are training schedules, as day-long trainings can make it difficult for participants to combine their participation in trainings with household responsibilities and the need to provide for their families.

Graduates felt better prepared for work, and successfully transitioned to the world of work, precisely because training trades were relevant to the local labour markets' needs and trainings were of high quality. About 65-68% of graduates from non-formal trainings supported by the SDF have thus far been successfully integrated into the labour market, exceeding the set targets. However, the Ugandan labour market structure with its large informal economy, low productivity and deteriorating job opportunities for vulnerable youth and women, highly conditions the possibilities of training graduates to find wage employment, driving a majority of graduates to opt for self-employment.

Non-formal vocational training center-based and practical skills-oriented trainings with integrated post-training support yield the best results for labour market integration. Trainings usually put a stronger focus on post-training support that promotes entrepreneurship activities, especially through the provision of start-up kits and counselling services. This might limit the possibilities of graduates to find wage employment, given the lack of labour market information or other support that they could turn to in this regard. Next to this, attention needs to be given to the quality and quantity of start-up kits provided to ensure their proper use. Both the quality of wage employment and the success of self-employment need further attention. Skills development initiatives should be part of concerted efforts to improve economic productivity as well as to create a more favourable entrepreneurial ecosystem for sustained results.

The pilot SDF has been cost-efficient and has created high value for money, exceeding all its set targets while no important budget adjustments were made over the years of implementation. In the absence of existing benchmarking data, no final conclusion can be made on the adequacy of training costs. However, interviewed stakeholders mostly perceived them to be reasonable. A certain trade-off might exist between cost-efficiency and targeting mostly vulnerable groups, for which higher investments are necessary. This includes providing trainings free of charges, working with smaller organizations that are closer to the communities, investing in capacity building for them to be able to comply with quality standards and administrative regulations. In this regard, the creation of different funding windows with higher and smaller grant amounts has balanced this situation.

Ensuring transparent selection, financial, administrative, management and monitoring processes led to an efficient implementation of the pilot SDF and avoided misuse of funds. A learning process that has taken place over the years of implementation has allowed for efficiency gains. In order for this to happen, heavy investments in human resources allocation at both the Kampala and the field level was needed. Assessments of institutional strengths and weaknesses and capacity building of grantees and partners, especially regarding financial reporting, have paid off. Nevertheless, not in all cases could delays of training implementation be avoided due to challenges of grantees to comply with financial reporting. Approaches and instruments for monitoring non-formal trainings supported by the pilot SDF have been improved over time and are deemed adequate. Communication of results and best practices, both to external and internal audiences are important for an efficient knowledge management.

On instant trainings

Labour market scans and needs assessments conducted by Enabel and additional needs assessments done by some of the livelihood partners have contributed to the relevance of instant trainings. Due to this information-based approach, instant trainings have been relevant and complemented well the livelihood partners' missions related to improving the economic situation, social, health and environmental challenges of their beneficiary communities. Factors that partly hindered the relevance of the instant trainings, are the limited data available on specific value chains at the local level and the limited coordination among different donors or NGOs working in the same communities.

Installing a procurement system for training providers with clear assessment criteria has ensured the quality of the trainers, which highly contributed to the overall good quality of instant trainings. However, there has been a lack of follow-up and monitoring by Enabel on the quality of trainings due to limited resources at the field level. According to beneficiaries, in some cases, the limited quality of the training venues has led to interruptions of trainings under bad weather conditions.

The identification of instant training beneficiaries through local livelihood partners that already work with the vulnerable communities has greatly helped to give the intended target groups access to these trainings. As with the non-formal trainings, for instant trainings the pilot SDF allowed for including eligible costs in training budgets to support vulnerable participants. Most trainings provided meals and transport refunds, which has further facilitated participation of vulnerable groups. Adjusting the training schedule to beneficiaries' needs has been another factor; where this has not happened, participants partly missed out on trainings although overall, dropout rates have been low.

The provision of post-training support in the form of start-up kits and/or counselling, or a combination of both, has contributed to the effectiveness of instant trainings in terms of an increase or diversification of income as well as overall an improvement of beneficiaries' livelihoods. Additionally, livelihood actors that ran complementary activities such as the organization of savings groups, have achieved positive effects on the beneficiaries' abilities to save money and make investments that can further improve their livelihoods. However, post-training support has not been provided in a coherent way and with sufficient quality. The strongest increases in income and diversifications of livelihoods happened for beneficiaries in Northern Uganda, followed by those in Karamoja. In Albertine Rwenzori, the lowest increase in income was registered. Possibly, the assumption behind the instant trainings that the local markets do not demand qualified craftsmen across all types of trades, and that the demand for high-quality goods and services is low due to low purchasing power of the population, holds more true for the northern and eastern regions of the country than for the comparatively more developed economy of the central and western regions.

The onboarding of a dedicated instant training manager and the elaboration of manuals and guidelines for the application and implementation processes have contributed to an efficient management of these trainings. However, capacities to properly monitor and follow-up on all instant trainings have been low due to the necessity to allocate more resources to the monitoring of non-formal trainings, which has resulted in less sound data on their quality and results achieved. Guidelines for processes have also been developed late in time, and the existing manual lacks some detail, especially regarding the clearer description of the expected nature and scope of post-training support and the respective responsibilities of the livelihood actors.

Recommendations regarding a future national Skills Development Fund

The above insights lead to the following recommendations for the design and set-up of a future national Skills Development Fund:

Labour market information should be regularly updated, seeking input from private sector actors at the local (regional) level.

- Given the high share of the informal sector in Uganda, informal businesses or business associations should be included in the assessments.
- A more granular quantitative and qualitative analysis of skills demands per trades is needed in order to match trainings with private sector needs.
- A multi-sector approach should be taken to create synergies and joint learning among different government and development actors that undertake labor market research.
- For instant trainings, more detailed guidelines for needs assessments with beneficiaries should be developed that consider the market potential of specific value chains in the communities, also considering activities of other livelihood actors, to create coherence.

Public-private partnerships can still be strengthened by including a stronger focus on joint training development between the partner organizations and by investing in building capacities of private sector actors in the design of the fund.

- For trainings that have a school-based component, private sector stakeholders such as industry trainers or Master Craft Persons could also be involved in teaching, which is a good practice that some VTIs are already implementing.
- Organizational assessments and capacity building on partnerships and fund management should be provided for to enhance the creation of meaningful and functioning public-private partnerships.
- The possibility to give grants to private for-profit organizations should be included so that businesses can also take the lead.
- Considering the weaknesses of the private sector, especially in the northern and eastern regions of the country, region-specific approaches for strengthening private sector actors should be included. This, for instance, through enhancing capacities of private sector associations and selected businesses, including especially those of the informal sector, as well as the upskilling of Master Crafts Persons

The optimal length of trainings should be more carefully assessed, depending on the trade and the level of skills that are required

- The assessment of needed skills levels, e.g., semi qualified, qualified, highly qualified, instant skills, etc., should be part of regional labour market scans done per trade.
- It could be beneficial to increase the length of non-formal trainings from 6-9 to 9-12 months.
- While clear guidelines and regulations are necessary for training implementation, including school based and WBL, future programs should provide for some flexibility to adjust trainings to emerging needs during implementation.

Clear quality criteria for trainings should be established and regular monitoring and quality control through field visits should be included in the skills development fund design, with participation of experts in BTJET, pedagogy and related fields.

- Quality control should include the quality of teaching materials, the teachers, training venues and equipment.
- Quality control should also include visits to the WBL premises during internships/apprenticeships. Any quality control field visits should be done without prior announcement to the grantees or partners.

- For start-up kits, a set of minimum criteria for their quantity and quality should be developed and monitored.

The inclusion of life skills, in combination with the technical trainings, should be built into the fund design, as these are especially important to prepare youth with low education levels for the world of work.

- The type of life skills training needs to be catered to the target groups and can include a variety of topics, e.g., entrepreneurship skills, literacy and numeracy skills, conflict management, reproductive health, etc.

Quality criteria should also ensure that post-training support is mandatory for both non-formal and instant trainings and that in the ideal case, it includes a combination of start-up kits with counselling services.

- For non-formal trainings, while still providing post-training support for future self-employment, an equally strong focus should be put on support for job search, for which labour market information systems should be put in place.
- For supporting self-employment, more linkages should be created with Business Development Services providers and especially access to finance providers.

The recognition of skills acquired in non-formal and instant trainings should be ensured in order to enhance trainees' possibilities for finding employment.

- It is beneficial for the future of participants to include certification processes and skills assessment modalities into non-formal trainings as well as instant trainings; even though a more immediate objective of the latter lies on self-employment.
- For non-formal trainings, this should be done through collaboration with DIT and other officially recognized certification institutions, as applicable to specific trades.

In order to include vulnerable groups, keep training fees to a necessary minimum and/or include support schemes (e.g., scholarships) based on a set of defined vulnerability criteria.

- The vulnerability criteria developed by the pilot SDF could be taken up by a future fund.
- As implemented through the pilot SDF, during trainings the basic needs of participants should be covered, at least transport to and from the training venue and meals, or through boarding arrangements.
- For the especially vulnerable, e.g., single mothers, additional support such as childcare and healthcare should be offered.
- To further facilitate conditions for regular participation of vulnerable groups, training schedules should consider the responsibilities of participants, e.g., to provide for their families. That is, the schedules should provide for some free time so that participants can take care of personal matters.

A future skills development fund should be accompanied by other policies and initiatives to enhance economic productivity for the creation of higher quality employment opportunities, and the strengthening of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

- Close collaboration with the Ugandan government, the private sector, and other donors' initiatives on skills development, job creation and entrepreneurship in Uganda, should be ensured, in order to guarantee a coordinated and comprehensive approach to skills development in the country.

Human resources allocation needs to be carefully planned for and enough financial resources need to be allocated to ensure smooth implementation.

- A similar structure as was created for the pilot SDF, with central offices and a decentralized structure in the field, is recommended.

- Special attention should be given to the allocation of field staff in order to ensure a close and timely monitoring of the implementation of activities.

Clear administrative regulations and processes need to be put in place to ensure transparency and avoid misuse of funds.

- For non-formal trainings, a *phased* selection process with participation of public and private sector representatives should be established that includes administrative and technical appraisals of proposals and assessments of organizational capacities.
- For instant trainings, transparent procurement processes for quality training providers need to be ensured.
- A financing system that balances input-based and output-based funds disbursement as has been introduced by the pilot SDF is recommendable.
- Regular external audits should be implemented.
- Roles and responsibilities of each party involved in the implementation of the fund activities need to be well defined and clearly stated in written guidelines, through memoranda of understanding among the partners and internally, with clear job descriptions.

2. Introduction

This report presents the final results of the action research on change processes and lessons learned of the implementation of the Skills Development Fund (SDF) in Uganda that has been commissioned by Enabel and was implemented from the end of October 2018 until the end of June 2020 by a consortium of two organizations: the international consulting firm [GlobalCAD](#) and the Ugandan research institute [Economic Policy Research Centre Uganda](#) (EPRC).

2.1 Background and Context

Labour Market in Uganda

Uganda has one of the fastest growing populations in Africa, with nearly three-quarters of the overall estimated 40 million Ugandans below the age of 30 years.¹ In fact, the median Ugandan is just under 16 years old, making Uganda's population the second youngest in the world, resulting in an accelerating number of entrants into the labour force.² According to World Bank estimations, between 2030 and 2040 the number of new entrants will be more than one million per year, meaning that the labour force is expanding faster than the labour demand. Given the lack of wage employment opportunities, self-employment is high, comprising about 75% of the overall labour force.³ One of the reasons why economic growth in Uganda over the past years has not resulted in significant growth in jobs is due to economic growth being mostly caused by sectors that are capital intensive but not labour intensive, such as public infrastructure, real estate as well as the mining and oil and gas sectors.

The unemployment rate in Uganda is overall low with 9.4% as at 2018⁴, but labour underutilisation is high, estimated at 35% according to the 2016/17 national labour force survey, pointing at a high share of low productivity jobs. In addition, most workforce is absorbed in Uganda's large informal

¹ Uganda Labour Market Profile 2019, Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA), p.9

² Merotto, Dino, Uganda: Jobs Strategy for Inclusive Growth, World Bank 2019, p.10-11

³ Uganda Labour Market Profile 2019, Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA), p.9

⁴ Uganda Bureau of Statistics

economy characterized by mostly micro and small businesses, and in subsistence agriculture. The agriculture sector provides for the highest share of employment with about 70%, followed by the services sector (22%) and industry (7%).

Although the share of youth in school and that have completed at least primary education has increased, employability of young people is reportedly low⁵, and 80% of working young people are under-educated for their occupations while only 2.8% are over-educated.⁶ The apparent gap between the education system and the labour market's demands, that suffers from low-skilled workers that usually are unproductive and/or work few hours, points at the need for more and better quality skills development that equip youth with skills that are labour-market relevant for both wage employment in the informal and formal sectors, as well as for productive self-employment.

Uganda's TVET system and its challenges

The Ugandan government is highly committed to strengthening Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTJET) as evidenced by the various laws, strategies and frameworks that have been endorsed over the past years (especially the Education Act and the BTJET Act of 2008, as well as the establishment of the Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework (UVQF), the BTJET Strategic Plan 2012-2021) and the TVET Policy approved in 2019. Despite these policies and initiatives enacted to improve the BTJET system, a number of flaws and bottlenecks persist in the institutional framework that governs the education system (and especially the BTJET system). Specifically, the lack of coherence and quality at the implementation level remains a challenge.

The TVET system in Uganda refers to the education and training sector aiming at developing the required knowledge and skills of individuals for a specific work. The Ugandan Business, technical and vocational education and training sub-sector is comprised of both recognised (formal) training and non-recognised (non-formal) training. In the case of Uganda alongside TVET, Business Education and Training as captured in the BTJET Act 2008 is given equal prominence in the provision of skills training and development. In this sense, TVET in Uganda is used simultaneously with BTJET. The TVET/BTJET system is implemented by both public providers (community polytechnics, vocational training centres and institutes, technical colleges, and specialized training institutions) and private providers (non-public providers, non-formal providers, and formal enterprise-based trainings). The role of both providers is to offer trainings (with a diploma) on foundational, technical, business-related, technology and work-specific, and professional skills.⁷ The formal TVET/BTJET system includes three main levels: 1) Craftsman level training offered by technical schools and institutes; 2) Technician level training offered by technical colleges⁸; and 3) Graduate Engineer level training offered by universities. As per the non-formal system, there are no education requirements for admission. A P.7 level and those who dropped out of school before completing Ordinary Level can enrol and obtain skills through non-formal trainings.

Until 2019, there was no specific policy on TVET/BTJET delivery to ensure skills development for all; interventions were guided by the BTJET Act 2008 but without a clear operationalization plan. Some of the main weaknesses of the system are related to an insufficient involvement and engagement of private sector/industry representatives in curriculum development and training implementation, which leads to a lack of alignment between the training offered and the private sector demands for a skilled workforce; an incoherent and inefficient distribution of roles and

⁵ Merotto, Dino, Uganda: Jobs Strategy for Inclusive Growth, World Bank 2019, p.14

⁶ Uganda Labour Market Profile 2019, Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA), p.10

⁷ Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training Act, 2008

⁸ These include, among others, Technical and Community Polytechnics, Colleges of Commerce (UCCs), and Health Training Institutions

responsibilities among different government institutions that oversee parts of the BTVET system, as well as a high fragmentation and lack of quality assurance among the institutions that offer BTVET (both in the formal and the non-formal sector). Furthermore, BTVET typically receives insufficient funding to effectively achieve its goals. These shortcomings also contribute to the fact that only a small percentage of Ugandans actually follow education paths that include BTVET, resulting in a large gap between the private sector demand for skilled workers and the skills available in the labour market. This in turn has negative implications for private sector productivity and consequently, the economic development of the country. In this sense, the Ugandan labour market is characterized by a low skills equilibrium with low skills of the labour force and mostly low productivity jobs available.

To respond to the aforementioned challenges and shortcomings, the Government of Uganda (GoU) endorsed the BTVET Strategic Plan 2012-2021 (“Skilling Uganda”), based on the BTVET Act of 2008 as well as Uganda’s Vision 2025 and National Development Plan (NDP) 2010/11 – 2014/15. It proposed a paradigm shift in Uganda’s BTVET system to:



Make BTVET **relevant** to productivity development and economic growth



Increase the **quality** of skills provisions



Increase equitable **access** to skills development



Improve **effectiveness** in BTVET management and organization



Increase internal **efficiency** and resources available for BTVET

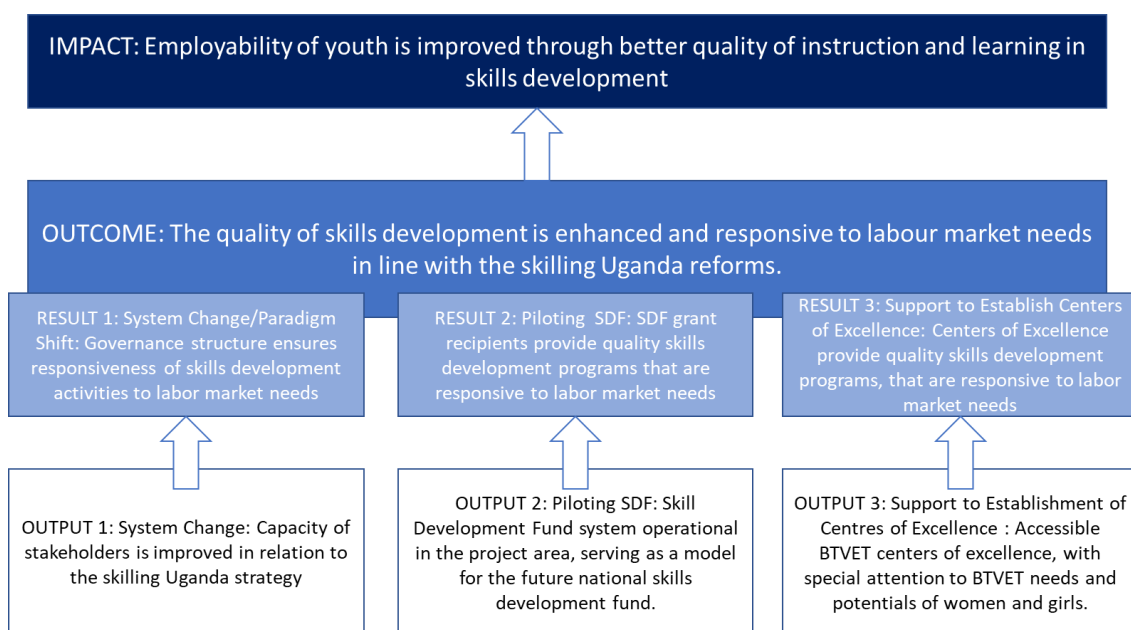
Furthermore, in 2018 the GoU, in consultation with a variety of stakeholders, including Enabel, developed a new TVET policy that was approved in 2019. The overall objective of the policy is to provide a framework for the development of TVET which will enable provision of qualified and competitive workers. The stakeholders involved in the implementation are the private sector, the government and training institutions which will be represented by a TVET council that will act as a regulatory body representing the demand side of the employer-led TVET system, with two thirds (2/3) of the council members being employers from the industry.⁹ The policy aims at covering formal, informal and non-formal systems.

⁹ The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy

2.2 The Skills Development Fund (SDF)

To support the GoU in reaching the five key objectives of the BTVET Strategic Plan 2012-2021, the Support to Skilling Uganda Strategy (SSU) intervention was launched in 2015. The five-year intervention (2015-2020) is being implemented jointly by the Belgium Development Agency Enabel, and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) with financial support from the Belgian government, European Union Trust Fund, Irish Aid and since 2019, also the German Cooperation Agency GIZ. More specifically, the SSU has the following objectives:

Figure 1: SSU Results Framework



Source: own elaboration based on desk review

As part of the Skilling Uganda Strategy, under result area 2, a pilot Skills Development Fund (SDF) with a total of € 5.8 million funding from the above mentioned donors has been established and implemented over a five-year period (2016 to 2020). The decision to set the SDF up as a donor-funded instrument was made at the time together with MoES and the Ministry of Finance (MoF), given that the public and private sector in Uganda was not yet ready to launch such a fund or finance it through training levies. The idea was thus to pilot the SDF with donor support and through its implementation to collect evidence on its effectiveness in contributing to the five key objectives of the BTVET Strategic Plan 2012-2021. Through this process, trust in the instrument and among the key stakeholders from the public and private sector was to be built so that after the pilot phase, a nationally owned and funded SDF could be established.

In 2016, the pilot SDF started in Albertine/Rwenzori region with financing from Enabel, with the aim to scale the fund up to a multi-donor initiative in the medium once a sound governance framework had been established and first good results could be shown. This was actually achieved with the buy-in of the European Union Trust Fund that financed trainings in Northern Uganda, and Irish Aid that supported the initiative in Karamoja, both since 2017. In 2019, GIZ made an additional contribution.

The overall objective of the pilot SDF was to create an environment that encourages training providers to supply the skills that society and the economy need, and to facilitate collaborative public-private partnerships between training institutions and the private sector that stimulate bottom-up initiatives to provide flexible, qualitative and demand driven, i.e. labour market relevant,

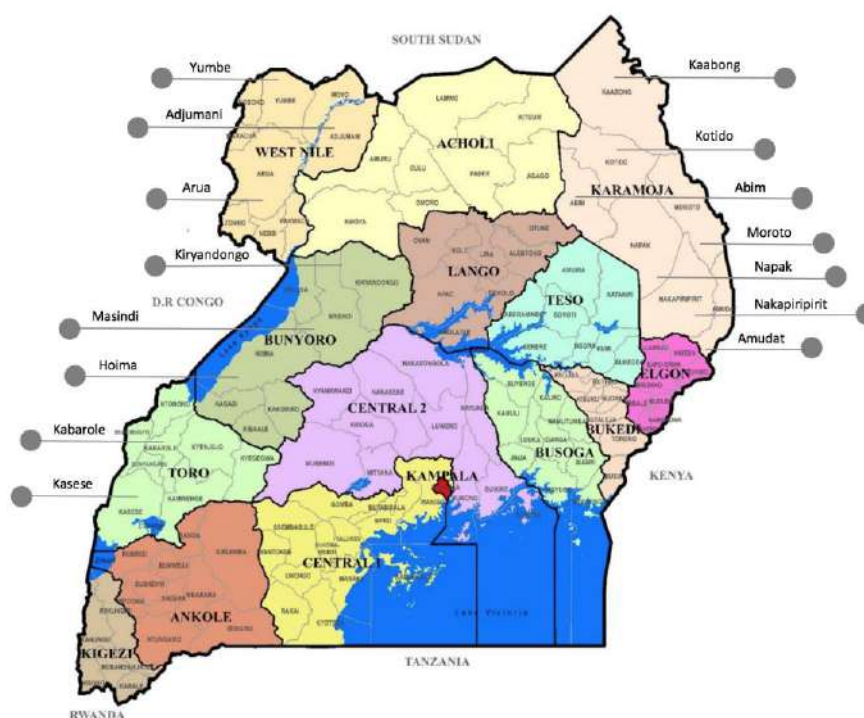
training and inspire change in skills development. Through the supported initiatives, the fund aimed to facilitate the transition from the world of school to the world of work.

In order to deliberately contribute to the five goals of enhancing relevance, quality, access, effectiveness and efficiency of skills development, the pilot SDF was set up with a results-based management approach that established a series of regulations and conditions for financing of training initiatives. These include:

- Definition of clear eligibility criteria for grantees and partners, as well as instant training livelihood partners and training providers
- Definition of vulnerability criteria for selection of training beneficiaries
- Definition of clear criteria for cost eligible and ineligible actions for training delivery
- Mix of input-based and output-based release of funds, upon submission of standardized reports and supporting documents that provide evidence for compliance with regulations

Through the establishment transparent selection processes for the recipients of financing and the implementation of regular monitoring activities the pilot SDF ensured compliance with regulations and conditions and kept track of results achieved. It operates in three different regions of the country, covering a total of 15 districts where it finances specific initiatives introduced by training providers and their partners from the private sector through calls for proposals.

Figure 2. Map of Uganda with selected districts



Source: Government of Uganda

In each region, several funding windows exist that finance different types of training and skills development approaches. Funding sources are listed in the table below. The German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) also contributed with funding to the SDF in 2019. However, sampling had already been completed and therefore, GIZ's funding windows are not covered by the action research.

Through these initiatives, the SDF planned to reach a total of 8,400 final beneficiaries who would receive improved and relevant non-formal skills and entrepreneurship trainings.

Table 1: Overview of SDF funding priorities per region

Funding baskets (region/districts)	Priorities	Funding source	Overall budget	Funding windows
Albertine Rwenzori (Hoima, Kabarole, Kasese and Masindi districts)	Directly benefiting at least 80% youth, 30% women and girls. Priority sectors for skills development are civil engineering, mechanical and electric engineering, and the hospitality industry.	Belgian Government	€ 2,000,000	Window 1: Innovative and relevant training for the formal labour market with focus on pre-employment training, work-based learning, in-company training, career guidance, entrepreneurial and life skills. Window 2: Training and entrepreneurship development in the informal sector with focus on developing skills among the self-employed, workers and apprentices in the informal sector, master craftsperson, micro and small enterprises and certification of skills and competencies acquired through informal and non-formal training. Window 3: Increased provision of instant, qualitative, tailor made, innovative and gender sensitive skills development responding to identified skills gaps in value chains for the green economy, livelihood and market development. Window 4: Increased absorption of vulnerable youth, women and girls in existing skills development training programs through provision of scholarships, followed by life skills, entrepreneurial skills, coaching and startup kits.
Northern Uganda¹⁰ (Arua, Adjumani and Yumbe districts) and Kiryandongo district	Enhancing livelihoods and labour market relevant skills for youth, women and girls of the refugees and host communities through vocational training and entrepreneurship support. The fund targets 70% refugees and 30% host communities ¹¹ ; benefiting at least 80% youth (age between 15-35), 35 % women and girls.	European Union Trust Fund	€ 2,600,000	Window 1: Increased access to relevant, qualitative skills development (including short- and medium-term training, life skills, entrepreneurial skills, coaching and start-up kits) for refugees and host communities (with a specific focus on youth, women and girls). Window 2: Increased absorption of vulnerable youth, women and girls in existing skills development training programs (formal or non-formal) through provision of scholarships, followed by life skills, entrepreneurial skills, coaching and startup kits. Window 3: Increased provision of instant, qualitative, tailor made, innovative and gender sensitive skills development responding to identified skills gaps in value chains for the green economy, livelihood and market development.
Karamoja (Kaabong, Abim, Kotido, Moroto, Amudat, Napak, and Nakapiripirit districts)	Enhancing the quality of skills development to make it responsive to livelihood market needs. It targets to support 70% Karamojong and 30% non-Karamojong of whom at least 80% youth aged 15-35; and thirty 30% women and girls. Priority sectors are construction, transport, water, energy, agriculture, livestock and tourism.	Irish Aid	€ 1,200,000	Window 1: Increased access to relevant qualitative skills development (including short- and medium-term training, entrepreneurial skills' coaching and start-up kits) for Karamojong (with a specific focus on youth, women and girls). Window 2: Increased absorption of vulnerable youth, women and girls in existing skills development training programs through provision of scholarships, followed by entrepreneurial skills coaching and start-up kits. Window 3: Increased provision of instant, qualitative, tailor made, innovative and gender sensitive skills development responding to identified skills gaps in value chains for the green economy, livelihood and market development.

Source: SDF Manual 2nd version, SSU annual report 2019

¹⁰ For this project, Kiryandongo district is clustered under Northern Uganda although geographically it is not part of that region. Also, the districts covered under Northern Uganda politically belong to the West Nile region that is geographically located in the north of the country.

¹¹ This target has been changed to 50/50 in 2019

Through the different funding windows, the SDF supported two main categories of trainings:

- **Non-formal trainings**

Non-formal trainings usually have a duration of 6 to 9 months (in some cases, also shorter). The pilot SDF primarily financed the improvement of the quality and relevance of existing skills development systems and, if relevant, the expansion of these, as well as the introduction of new demand driven skills development initiatives. In addition, the fund gave priority to innovative approaches and good practices in skills development and employment creation in both the formal and the informal sectors, targeting vulnerable youth, women and girls as well as other vulnerable groups, e.g. refugee communities on Northern Uganda and Karamojong in Karamoja, people with disabilities (PWD) or living with HIV. An important aspect was the integration of work-based learning (WBL) into skills development. This was done through different types of training approaches:

- Non-formal vocational with industrial attachment
- Non-formal vocational without industrial attachment
- Non-formal apprenticeship with industrial attachment
- Non-formal apprenticeship without industrial attachment
- Agriculture field training
- Micro-enterprise training (enterprise-based only)

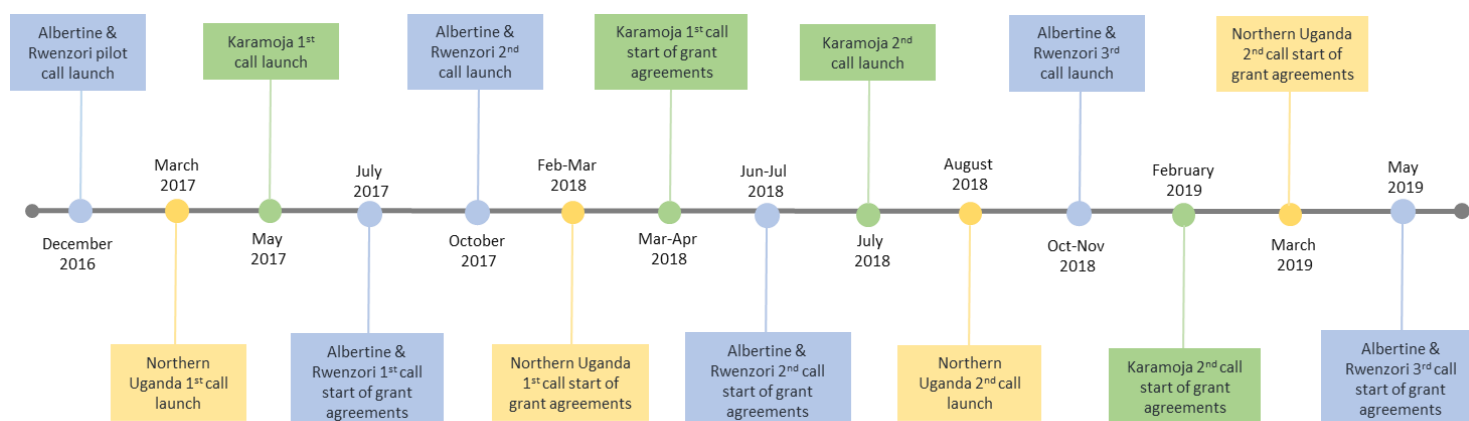
In order to define relevant training topics, Enabel conducted labour market scans in each region to identify market potential and private sector needs.¹² Training topics related to green economy have been integrated in all regions.

Organizations could apply for a grant with a proposal for implementing a specific initiative. For each proposal, a partnership needed to be established between a training provider (public or private not-for-profit) and a private sector organization. Grantees were selected through a standardized proposal evaluation process with the participation of an external consulting firm and a tripartite selection committee that included representatives from the Ugandan government, the private sector, as well as international development organizations. During the process of proposal elaboration, applicants received support from Enabel field staff as needed to be able to comply with the administrative and technical requirements of the calls.

A first pilot call and two subsequent calls were launched in Albertine/Rwenzori region, and two calls in Northern Uganda and Karamoja, respectively. The pilot projects in Albertine/Rwenzori were implemented in 2017-2018, the trainings of the first calls in Northern Uganda and Karamoja, and the trainings of the second call in Albertine Rwenzori took place in 2018-2019, and the trainings of the last calls (second calls in Northern Uganda and Karamoja, third call in Albertine Rwenzori) were done in 2019-2020. At the time of submission of this report, a share of trainings was still ongoing. Due to some delays in implementation, these trainings will conclude by the end of 2020 or beginning of 2021.

¹² These included a Labour Market Analysis in Preparation of the SSU Project conducted in Albertine/Rwenzori region in 2014; a Needs Assessment of BTVET Skills for Refugees in Kiryandongo, Adjumani and Arua to Contribute to EUTF Skills Development for Refugees, 2016; Karamoja Secondary Labour Market Study 2018; Northern Uganda Secondary Labour Market Study 2018; and an analysis of Skills for Green-Related Employment in Uganda, 2019.

Figure 3: Timeline of calls for funding of non-formal trainings



Source: Own elaboration based on desk review

From the € 4.7 million budgeted to non-formal trainings, a total of € 4.4 million has already been executed by end of 2019 through 46 grants.¹³ The volume of funds remaining will be completed by 2020. Through these initiatives, by end of 2019 the SDF reached around 5,500 beneficiaries who received non-formal trainings. Refugees participated with a share of about 66% in Northern Uganda. Female beneficiaries account overall for around 52% in non-formal trainings, and their presence has been particularly emphasized among refugees (65%). The share of Karamojong trainees, one of the main challenges in the past, accounted for up to 92% of the total participants in Karamoja.¹⁴

- **Instant trainings**

In parallel to the call for proposal process, the SDF offered financial support for the implementation of instant trainings. These trainings are short term, usually from 5 days up to 14 days, and target specific skills needs of beneficiaries identified by other agencies (livelihood partners) that are typically NGOs supporting livelihood and income generating activities at the community level.

Instant trainings are based on the assumption that the opportunity costs for especially vulnerable individuals are too high to participate in longer formal training programs and that local markets do not always demand highly qualified craftsmen across all types of trades given low purchasing power of the population and a related low demand for high-quality goods and services. Therefore, instant trainings aim to quickly improve the livelihoods of youths, women and men by providing technical and life skills trainings related to a more effective and efficient business management or the improvement of production processes or the quality of products in specific value chains, which should lead to increased and/or diversified income generation. To identify relevant skills, information from labour market analyses and needs assessments was used to offer livelihood partners a pre-selected number of different training topics to choose from. The training demand was then further verified through in some cases, additional needs assessments done by the livelihood partners and field visits of Enabel staff to applicants for the trainings.

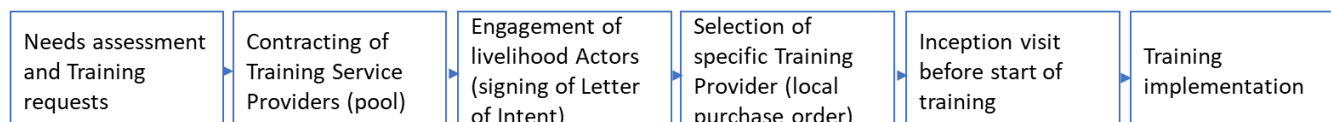
Instant trainings were not selected through calls for proposals. Initially, through wide stakeholders consultations, a list of priority instant training topics was developed and later complemented with a number of training topics that the SSU program considered needed, for example green skills. Based on this list, livelihood partners could request an instant training for their beneficiaries through a dedicated space on the SDF website. At the start of the engagement, Enabel signed a letter of intent (MoU) with the livelihood actor stipulating the intentions of instant trainings; roles and

¹³ The GIZ contribution financed another seven grants, thus amounting to a total of 53 grant agreements; however, as mentioned before, the GIZ contribution is not covered by this action research.

¹⁴ Data based on SSU annual report 2019.

responsibilities of the different parties (Enabel, livelihood actor and training service provider) during implementation of instant trainings. Enabel then assessed the specific training requests and upon approval, selected a suitable third-party training provider specialized in the training topic to implement the respective trainings. The livelihood partners were responsible for overseeing the trainings and to provide post-training support to their beneficiaries.

Figure 4: Instant trainings application process



Source: own elaboration based on Instant Training Manual

By the end of 2019, a total of 156 instant trainings had been completed, for a volume of funds of about € 500.000. By the end of 2020, a further € 650.000 will be executed. A total of 3.000 beneficiaries received skilling through instant trainings. Female participation has been high, with a representation of around 65% overall. Female targeting has been particularly strong in Karamoja, with a share of 79%.¹⁵

The SDF operates in close cooperation with a Skills Development Facility that is financed by the World Bank and implemented by Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) on behalf of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, which focuses on private sector-led short-term, practical and technical training of employees. Both the pilot Skills Development Fund and the Skills Development Facility are testing a variety of approaches for the improvement of BTVET.¹⁶

In addition, the SDF is embedded in a wider scope of activities as part of the SSU project. Although the focus of the action research has been exclusively on the SDF implementation, the broader context of the SSU has been considered for the analysis of the results of the field research data.

After the pilot phase of the SDF, which is planned to end in 2020, it is envisaged that in the long term the SDF will be a government-owned instrument, funded through the national budget, donor contributions and private sector contributions, to provide a sustainable financing and technical support system for skills development in Uganda.

2.3 Objective and Scope of the Action Research

In this context, learning from the pilot phase of the SDF regarding which approaches work best for inclusive and high-quality skills development is a key priority. To help provide this information, the purpose of the action research was to accompany the implementation of the pilot SDF through the collection of mostly qualitative data on grantees, partners, instant training livelihood actors and training providers, and final beneficiaries to better understand to what extent and how the SDF achieved its objectives.

Data collection took place in 2019/2020 and collected information on the overall implementation period of the fund (2016-2020) by including both current and former beneficiaries. In parallel, a tracer study was implemented through a different assignment that collected mostly quantitative data on labour market integration and any changes in the incomes of the non-formal and instant training graduates.

Specifically, the action research focused on the underlying assumptions of the SDF that are related to the key objectives of the Skilling Uganda strategy: to support achieving higher relevance, quality,

¹⁵ Data based on information from the SSU annual report 2019.

¹⁶ Both funds even share the same acronym and logo. In this document, SDF always refers to the Skills Development Fund.

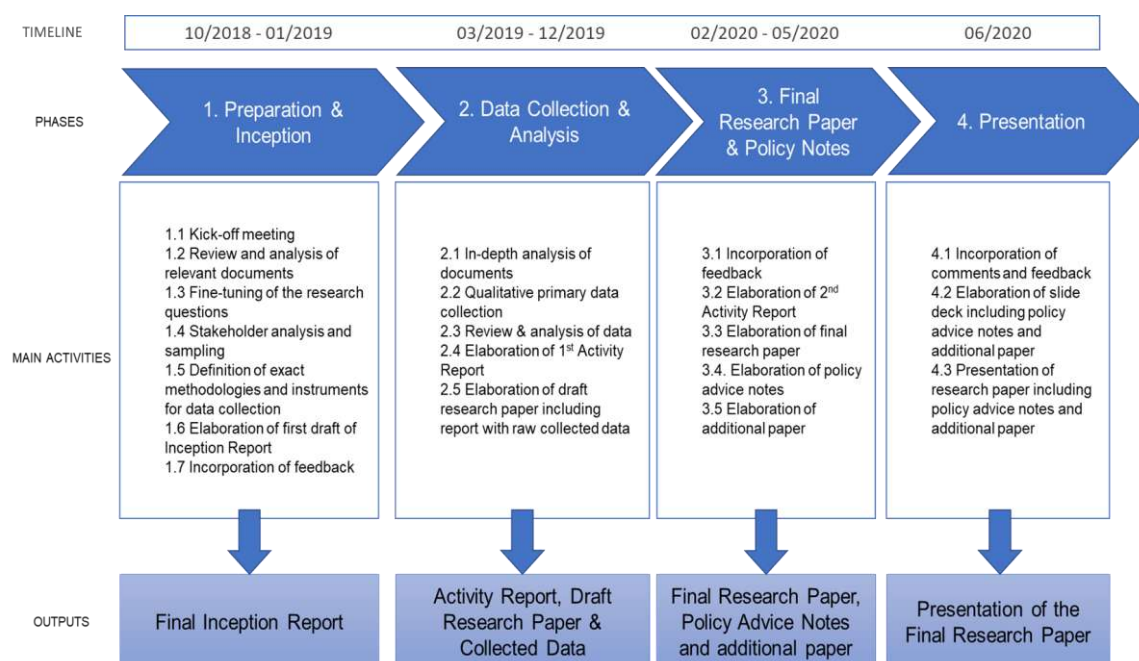
access, effectiveness and efficiency of skills development. In this sense, it analysed the extent to which the SDF with its deliberate conditioning contributed to achieving these core goals and ascertained what key influencing factors facilitated or hindered the achievement of results. The action research looked at the three geographical regions where the SDF operates to extract lessons learned regarding the different approaches, modes of liaison or mode of operation per selected action.

The final aim was to produce policy advice on what worked best and why, which will feed into the design and operation of the future national SDF.

3. Action Research Overall Approach

The SDF action research has been carried out based on four methodological phases¹⁷:

Figure 5: Methodological phases of the action research



The consultants made use of a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques to obtain evidence-based information, with a stronger focus on qualitative methods. They included:



Desk review of primary and secondary data on pilot SDF implementation and results¹⁸

This included SSU Enabel project documents and technical and financial reports, quarterly and final training reports from grantees and instant training livelihood partners, Enabel's monitoring data on the trainings conducted, as well as the results of the quantitative tracer survey that was implemented in parallel to the action research assignment by another consultancy.

In addition, the consultants conducted research on other secondary information about the TVET and labour market context in Uganda and reviewed a number of related studies and reports from government sources, donor organizations and academia.



Semi-structured interviews

The consultants conducted a total of 144 interviews with key stakeholders of the pilot SDF, including Enabel staff, grantees and partners, instant training livelihood partners and training providers, other donor organizations, members of the SDF selection committee and some members of skills development platforms (SDP) that fall under component 1 of the SSU initiative.

¹⁷ For a detailed overview on the sampling and data collection for this research, please see the annex.

¹⁸ The full list of documents reviewed is included in the annex.



Focus group discussions

41 focus groups were organized with a total of 478 trainees and graduates of the non-formal trainings and 21 focus groups with 258 graduates of the instant trainings supported through the pilot SDF.

Sampling of interviewees and FGD participants was done in a purposeful manner to ensure representativeness of the different regions, training types and training topics supported by the pilot SDF.

Primary data collection through interviews and FGDs covered 13 of the 15 districts where pilot SDF supported trainings were implemented. The number of non-formal trainees and graduates covered by the research overall is statistically representative with a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 5. However, the number of instant trainees covered falls below statistical representativeness.

The data and information collected through these different methods have been validated through triangulation techniques. Throughout all implementation phases, the research team guaranteed the quality of processes and outputs in accordance with the ToR requirements by establishing clear transparent guidelines and mechanisms for all team members as well as constant collaborative communication channels with the Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Officer for SSU. In addition, a designated quality committee composed of Enabel staff and SDF selection committee members was responsible for reviewing all deliverables of the research to ensure validity and quality of results.

3.1 Key research questions

The research was guided by five research criteria aligned with the key SDF assumptions, and respective research questions. The following table summarizes the key questions per criterion. A number of sub-questions were used to fine-tune the research focus.¹⁹ In addition, for each criterion, the research aimed to identify the key factors that facilitated or hindered the achievement of results.

Table 2: Research criteria, assumptions and questions

	 Relevance	 Quality	 Access & Equity	 Effectiveness	 Efficiency
Assumptions	<i>The SDF, through fostering partnerships between training institutions and the private sector, supports a demand-driven approach and thus increases the relevance of skills development and training programs for the local labour markets and responds to the skills needs of the local population.</i>	<i>Through its public-private partnership approach, the SDF brokers innovative and holistic training modalities with upgraded or new training curricula that address the needs of the local context, combine technical and life skills training and offer pre- and post-training support services that enhance employability and/or capacities of trainees to generate self-employment.</i>	<i>Through the prioritization of flexible, non-formal skills training programs that are adapted to the needs of vulnerable groups, the SDF enhances access of vulnerable youth, women and girls to skills development.</i>	<i>The SDF addresses gaps between the world of work and the world of school in a sustainable way, and thus enhances employment and livelihood opportunities for its target groups.</i>	<i>Through the application of streamlined and efficient management processes, the SDF ensures and optimal use of resources to achieve intended results and value for money.</i>
Key research questions non-formal trainings	Have the alliances established through the SDF become a relevant and effective “motor” for linking the private sector and training providers?	To what extent did the SDF partnerships contribute to upgrading the quality of skills trainings? To what extent did the alliances broker innovative collaborative skills training projects?	To what extent have the SDF grant agreements broadened access to skills development for vulnerable youth, women and girls?	To what extent did the SDF approaches/mechanisms contribute to the employability of the target groups and their integration in the local labour market? Which mechanisms can be identified as most significant change factors or best practices and which factors as obstacles/challenges in this regard?	How well does the SDF management convert inputs into outputs? Are the grant management processes efficient and streamlined? Did the SDF grant agreements produce value for money? Is the support delivered by the Fund optimally used to achieve its intended results?
Key research questions instant trainings	To what extent have the instant trainings been able to respond to identified acute livelihood needs?	To what extent did the instant trainings meet the high-quality standards they envisage to deliver?	To what extent have the SDF instant trainings broadened access to Skills Development for vulnerable youth, women and girls?	Did the instant trainings make a significant difference in improving livelihoods and contributing to income generating opportunities for beneficiaries?	Did the SDF instant trainings produce value for money? Is the support delivered by the Fund optimally used to achieve its intended results?

¹⁹ The full list of key questions and related sub-questions can be found in the annex.

The consultants have made use of these guiding questions to elaborate data collection instruments per stakeholder type that were applied during field research to capture the relevant information. Any data and information extracted from secondary data sources have also been categorized and analyzed according to the research criteria.

3.2 Challenges and Limitations of the Research

Some challenges and limitations of the action research need to be highlighted that are important to consider for the data analysis:

Table 3: Challenges and mitigation measures

Challenge/Limitation	Mitigation measures taken
Non-responsiveness of stakeholders	Where possible, stakeholders were replaced with other available stakeholders.
Difficulty to find some of the stakeholders in the field	Where possible, stakeholders were replaced with other available stakeholders.
Mobilization of FGD participants was sometimes difficult due to outdated contact data, or participants having moved to faraway districts. In some cases, participants were mobilized that were not part of the sample.	Based on challenges especially encountered in the first data collection round, the sampling method was adapted and a clearer protocol for participant mobilization was developed in collaboration with Enabel so that in the second round of data collection the challenges could mostly be avoided.
Initially, mixed FGDs and high numbers of participants limited the depth of information collected	Based on challenges especially encountered in the first data collection round, the second data collection round mobilized more harmonized groups of participants from the same trades and reduced the number of FGD participants.
Response bias: it can be assumed that results from data collection with recipients of funds and beneficiaries contains a certain bias towards the positive, as these stakeholders are especially interested to showcase good results and have an interest in future funding.	No mitigation measure can be taken to prevent bias; it is however important to consider when interpreting the results. Whenever possible, triangulation techniques were applied to verify information through different data sources.

4. Key Findings



4.1 Relevance of the SDF

The analysis of the SDF's relevance focuses on the question whether or to what extent public-private partnerships have been fostered and become a relevant "motor" for linking the private sector and training providers, and in how far this has led to the implementation of demand-driven skills development programs based on local labour market needs. Regarding instant trainings, the key question analysed relates to the extent to which instant trainings have responded to the identified livelihood needs of the beneficiaries.

Key data from the research:

Non-formal trainings

- Overall, **92%** of interviewed field staff and **86%** of management staff consider that the approach of the SDF of creating partnerships between the private sector/NGOs and training providers works to create relevant skills development training programs
- **91%** of interviewed field staff perceives the partnerships that have been created to be very relevant to generate training programs oriented towards increasing the employability and access to the labour market of the training participants
- **93%** of non-formal training FGD participants believe that the trainings helped them to be better prepared for the world of work, highlighting acquired technical and life skills as well as DIT certification as key contributing aspects
- Almost all interviewed grantees and partners think that the partnerships made through the SDF helped to offer more or better trainings that are relevant to the local labour market and local skills needs
- **77%** of interviewed grantees and **71%** of interviewed partners said they would not have been able to offer the same skills development without the SDF support
- **63%** of interviewed WBL providers find the approach of the SDF to support partnerships for offering more practice-oriented and innovative trainings extremely relevant, and still **26%** think this approach is fairly relevant for their businesses

Instant trainings

- **78%** of interviewed field staff think the instant trainings respond to identified livelihood needs of the communities, **22%** say they do this to a limited extent
- **83%** of interviewed instant training livelihood partners state that the trainings have to a great extent helped to address the humanitarian or development concerns of their organizations
- Again **83%** of instant livelihood partners and **89%** of instant training providers believe that the instant trainings are very or fairly relevant for improving or diversifying livelihood income generating activities for the trainees.
- **75%** of interviewed instant training livelihood partners say they would not have been able to offer the same trainings to their beneficiaries without the SDF support
- **81%** of instant training FGD participants think that the trainings helped them to better execute their income generating activity, or to diversify their income

Highlights

- The relevance of the SDF has been confirmed. Despite some limitations, most interviewed stakeholders agree that the partnerships created under the SDF facilitate important linkages and collaborations between sectors that have been historically disconnected in Uganda.
- Under the non-formal training approach, relevant partnerships between public and private sector organizations have been developed that have integrated approaches for more practice-oriented skills development that is relevant to the local labour markets in all three regions.
- The competitive grant selection process that channels resources mostly through local organizations for training implementation, the SDF regulations that require a public-private partnership approach, and the support provided by Enabel to organizations throughout the application and selection process as well as during grant implementation have contributed to the fund's relevance.
- Likewise, relevance has been ensured by conducting labour market scans to identify training topics with highest potential to meet private sector skills demands in each region.
- Regarding instant trainings, their relevance for addressing livelihood needs of the beneficiaries has been confirmed by all key stakeholder groups. Needs assessments conducted by Enabel and additionally by some livelihood actors prior to the start of trainings have greatly contributed to this.

Overall, most key stakeholders interviewed and participants of FGDs stated the importance and positive impact that the SDF offers to trainees. In addition, a vast majority of both non-formal and instant FGD participants showed a high degree of satisfaction regarding their future working prospects, thanks to the skills acquired during the trainings. The SDF is seen as innovative and flexible, with a special approach of focusing on reaching vulnerable groups.

Due to the high demand for skills development in Uganda, the SDF complements other government and donor led programs with similar purposes. Skills development is included in the country's UNDAF 2016-2020, and also other major donors and numerous NGOs have defined this topic as a priority, leading to a high number of actors engaged in this field. The wider SSU initiative, in which the SDF is embedded, aims to bring national and international stakeholders together through sectoral skills councils and district-based skills development platforms to foster dialogue and knowledge exchange on skills development and in this regard, the pilot SDF is also highly relevant. According to interviewed stakeholders, despite the existence of other skilling programs, the SDF fills a gap in the Ugandan TVET landscape because its approach differs from other programs, and there is still a large uncovered demand for skills development in the country.

- **Non-formal trainings**

Through the 46 SDF grants, different partnerships have been established in Albert Rwenzori, Northern Uganda and Karamoja. The type of organizations forming these partnerships vary by region. In Albert Rwenzori, the private sector is significantly more developed than in Northern Uganda. Therefore, there is a higher degree of private sector involvement in trainings, with a significant share of partners being private organizations. Northern Uganda's private sector, on the other hand, is much less developed, which made it challenging to identify private sector organizations with suitable size and structure to qualify for a formal partnership. For this reason,

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partnerships were mostly established between NGOs and other public or non-profit organizations, usually training institutions. Interviewed Enabel staff expressed some doubts on whether meaningful partnerships with private sector actors have been achieved in Northern Uganda. Similarly, partnerships established in Karamoja were made up almost exclusively by training and technical institutions and NGOs. Thanks to the conditioning of the SDF that made work-based learning mandatory, WBL providers were often engaged for the provision of industrial attachments, but they were usually not part of the official partnerships as per grant agreements. In most cases, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the grantee and the WBL provider to formalize the collaboration, without involvement of Enabel. Interviewed staff also raised the question whether Enabel's regulations that do not allow for giving grants directly to private for-profit organizations might have reduced the possibilities for private sector involvement in the SDF implementation.

Stakeholders see a high relevance in the set-up of SDF grants that require the creation of partnerships between public or civil society organizations and private sector organizations for the development of skills trainings that are based on local market needs. **Many positively highlighted the provision of regional labour market scans** by Enabel that have helped grantees and partners to focus on trades that are relevant for businesses in Albertine/Rwenzori, Karamoja and Northern Uganda. However, SSU staff also expressed the concern that the labour market scans are already several years old and SDF trainings have produced a high number of trainees in the same trades that might lie above the capacity of local markets to absorb. This aspect has also been raised by a WBL provider in Albertine/Rwenzori region who suggested more diversification regarding trades. A key challenge for a more granular analysis of private sector skills demands at the regional level is a lack of availability and accuracy of quantifiable labour market data in an economy that is mostly informal.

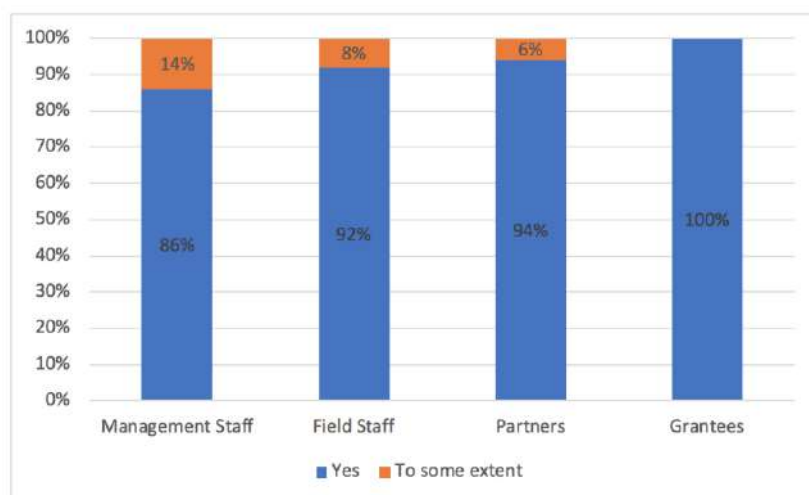
“The SDF funding allowed for upgrading our skills training, including acquisition of better equipment and integration of industrial attachment, which is expensive. The partnership provided additional resources.”

SDF Grantee, Albertine Rwenzori

Despite these limitations, most interviewed stakeholders agree that the partnerships created under the SDF facilitate important linkages and collaborations between sectors that have been historically disconnected in Uganda. Interviewed SSU staff, grantees and partners see a high value in the creation of synergies between institutions with different skills and experiences which in the end enhances all organizations' capacities. Grantees and partners especially valued the connection to private sector organizations for the integration of practice-oriented skills development through industrial attachments. Some cases have also been reported where private sector organizations were involved in curricula development, however this still seems to be the exception and private sector involvement usually comes late in time in trainings that are school based and then followed by WBL. Addressing this aspect in the set-up of a future Ugandan skills development fund could further enhance the relevance of trainings and their responsiveness to changing local labour market needs.

More critical voices among SSU staff expressed that while they agree to the overall relevance of partnerships, in some cases they observed that partnerships are created rather for the sake of responding to SDF requirements, but in practice there is a lack of engagement between grantees and partners that are not used to this type of collaboration. In this regard, SSU staff invested considerable resources into capacity building, as well as into monitoring and technical support to grantees and partners with the aim to mitigate this challenge and make the partnerships work.

Figure 6: Relevance of non-formal trainings from the viewpoints of key stakeholders²⁰

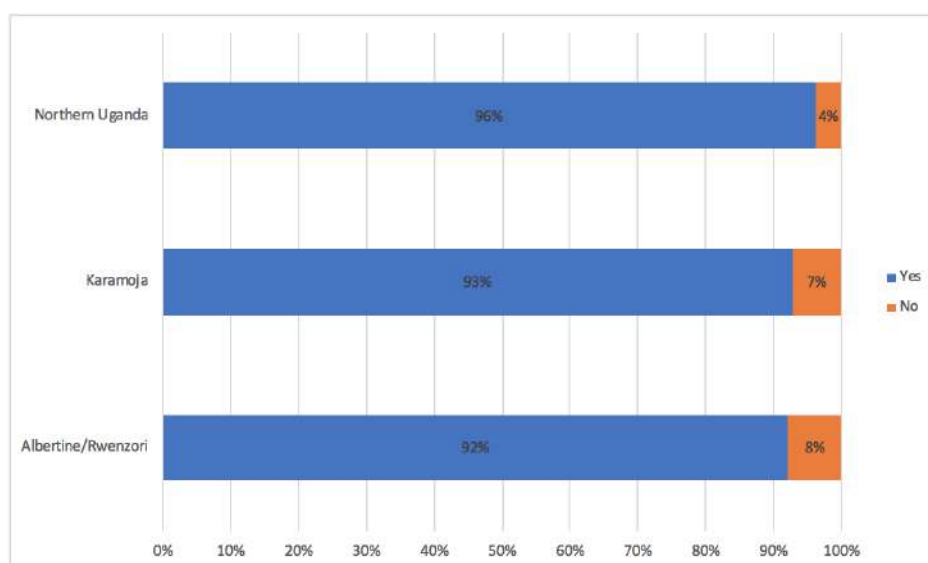


Source: Own elaboration based on KIIs

In addition, a significant number of partners and grantees declared facing one or more challenges in their partnerships. Challenges most commonly brought up were related to bureaucracy and administrative procedures. Other partnerships experienced communication issues, which lead to different types of misunderstandings and, in a few cases, to the delay of trainings. In these cases, more support might be required to help grantees and partners to engage in meaningful and collaborative partnership management.

Overall, the vast majority (93%) of non-formal FGD participants think the training was relevant for them to be better prepared for the world of work, in comparison to the 7% who expressed the opposite. Results show that differences in percentage units amongst regions or gender are minimal.

²⁰ Questions asked: **SSU staff:** From your experience so far, do you consider that the approach of the SDF of creating partnerships between the private sector / NGOs and training providers works to create relevant skills development training programs? **Grantees and partners:** Do you think that the partnerships made through the Skills Development Fund helped to offer more or better trainings that are relevant to the local labour market and local skills needs?

Figure 7: Relevance of non-formal trainings from the viewpoint of trainees²¹

Source: Own elaboration based on data from non-formal FGDs

Non-formal FGD participants considered that the main reasons why they feel better prepared for the labour market include the following:

- The training gave them pertinent technical skills to be more competitive in the job market, increasing their opportunities to either find employment or start their own business in the sector.
- In addition to technical competence, trainees highly valued the strengthening of soft skills and entrepreneurship skills.
- Thanks to the certificates obtained at the completion of trainings, trainees improved their CVs and got a greater confidence in their employment opportunities.

Similar positive aspects were expressed by trainees who received post-training support. Post-training support appears to be positively influencing the perception of relevance among trainees. Overall, those participants who did not receive post-training support had a higher share of negative opinions (13% vs 3.3% who received post-training support) on the usefulness of the training for preparing them for the world of work. Negative comments on the usefulness of post-training support relate to insufficient quantity of materials and the poor quality of start-up kits received. Similarly, trainees who had the chance to be placed at an enterprise or with a Master Crafts Person to do WBL (44% of total non-formal FGD trainees) also showed a high degree of satisfaction.

"I learned most of the technical skills necessary for the work of a carpenter. My only challenge is the lack of some of the necessary tools to start up my own business"

Non-formal training participant, Karamoja

• Instant trainings

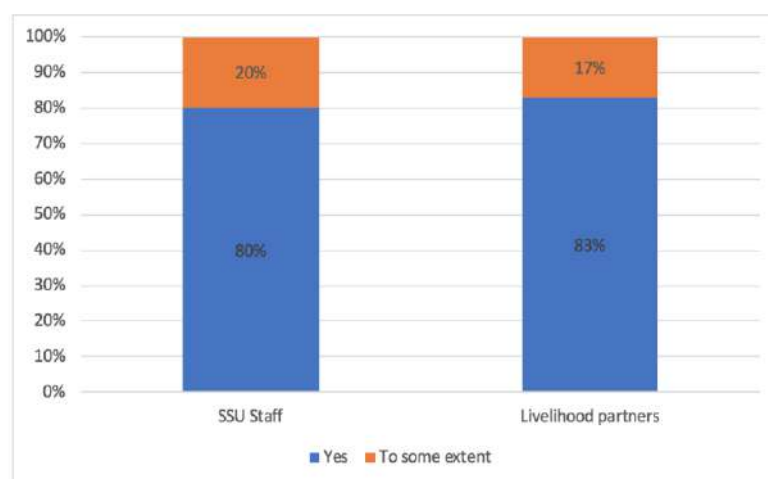
The basic assumption behind organising instant trainings arises from the fact that enrolling into long-term formal training programs imply high opportunity costs to certain vulnerable groups. For this reason, these groups remain trapped in low-skilled jobs. Instant trainings are designed to teach trainees relevant skills (one single marketable skill set) in a shorter period of time and help to

²¹ Questions asked: Do you think the training helped you to be better prepared for the world of work?

diversify individual livelihood and income generating activities. The number and type of trainings offered is defined on the basis of livelihood actors/labour market needs.

Data gathered through stakeholder interviews indicate that the relevance for responding to livelihood needs is perceived to be high by SSU staff and instant training livelihood partners. From the viewpoint of interviewees, instant trainings complement well the NGO's missions related to improving the economic situation (income generation), social or health challenges (e.g. malnutrition) as well as in some cases also environmental challenges (e.g. degradation of natural resources) of beneficiary communities.

Figure 8: Relevance of instant trainings from the viewpoint of key stakeholders²²



Source: Own elaboration based on KIIs

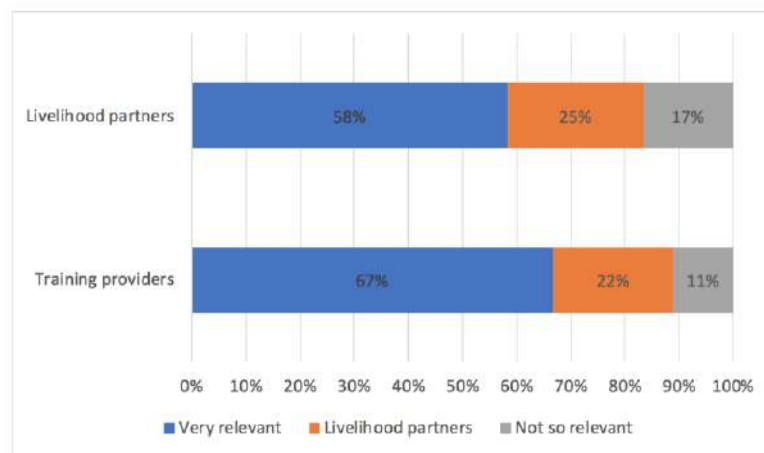
Interviewed stakeholders also see a high relevance in the set-up of the instant trainings in which an NGO identifies training needs among their beneficiaries and Enabel selects a professional training provider to conduct the respective trainings, and additionally oversees the training set-up and the quality of training delivery. Training providers are mostly private for-profit companies and are the main responsables for developing the training content and materials. Some livelihood partners positively mentioned a list of possible trainings that Enabel provides to choose from, which they perceived to be helpful to orient their needs assessments. According to interviewed livelihood partners, these assessments serve to adequately identify relevant skills trainings needs. Various training providers stated that prior to training start they held inception meetings with the livelihood partners and beneficiaries to confirm the trainings needs, which contributes further to the relevance of the instant trainings. On the other hand, interviewed SSU staff mentioned that Enabel might rely too much on livelihood partners for the needs assessments and has no effective mechanisms in place to verify those.

As to the livelihood partners and training providers that offer the trainings, while a majority agrees that the instant trainings address the humanitarian or development concerns of their organizations, perceptions on the relevance for beneficiaries are mixed, but generally positive. The NGOs that request instant trainings to be organised for their beneficiaries, highlighted that such short trainings can be instrumental in improving the livelihoods of vulnerable population in the short term, as they provide practical hands-on skills for marketable products. They see this especially relevant in local contexts where the population is mostly engaged in subsistence farming. Through the acquisition

²² Questions asked: **SSU staff:** In how far do you think the instant trainings respond to identified livelihood needs of the communities? **Livelihood partners:** To what extent do you think that being able to offer the training has helped to address the humanitarian or development concerns of your organization?

of skills in relevant trades such as bakery, beads making, shoe making, or goat and sheep keeping, beneficiaries can directly put their skills into practice and thus diversify their income generation.

Figure 9: Relevance of instant trainings for beneficiaries²³



Source: Own elaboration based on KIIs

However, the perceived relevance varies depending on the trade. For example, livelihood partners and training providers agree that production of eco-briquettes and eco-efficient stoves is mostly relevant at the household level as their use reduces time needed to fetch firewood, which is also beneficial for the environment (less tree chopping). It can also have health benefits as women are less exposed to harmful smoke when cooking. However, for income generation, interviewed stakeholders perceive a lack of relevant market linkages as a hindrance. This is also highlighted in the analysis on skills for green-related employment in Uganda that Enabel commissioned in 2019, which categorized energy saving cook stoves as a sub-sector that is growing and demands skilled workers, but also says that while their use at household and institutional levels is increasing, a more market-based adoption remains low and uneven across the regions.²⁴

A vast majority of FGD participants (81%) believe that trainings were relevant to improve or diversify their income generation because the trainings allowed them to earn a specific skill in a short time that is useful and marketable in their communities, whereas 19% declared trainings were not relevant in that matter. Male participants perceived the trainings to be more relevant (92%) for improving their livelihoods than female participants (76%). Regarding regions, participants who received training in Karamoja and Albertine/Rwenzori were more positive with 70% and 67% of the cases, respectively. Northern Uganda had the highest level of satisfaction with the relevance of trainings, with 97%.

The key aspects highlighted by participants on why the training has not been relevant to better execute their income generating activity, or to diversify their income are similar for all three regions. First, trainees were concerned about the lack of capital and lack of premises to start a business related to the training topic. Second, lack of market access. It is worth mentioning that instant training participants did not deny the relevance of training as such, but rather the

"We got the skills, yes, but we thought they would support with the materials to produce the product after the training".

Group of instant training participants, Albertine Rwenzori

²³ Question asked: How relevant are these trainings for improving or diversifying livelihood income generating activities for your beneficiaries?

²⁴ Skills for green-related employment in Uganda, 2019, p.15

apparent lack of post-training support to further help them becoming self-employed with the technical skills they earned.

These examples again highlight the importance of proper pre- and post-training support not only for the relevance but also for the effectiveness of trainings. Most participants who did not believe the training helped them in terms of income also expressed their dissatisfaction with post-training support.

In sum, the relevance assumption of the SDF has been confirmed. Under the non-formal training approach, relevant partnerships between public and private sector organizations have been developed that have integrated best practices for more practice-oriented skills development that is relevant to the local labour markets in all three regions. Regarding instant trainings, their relevance for addressing livelihood needs of the beneficiaries has been confirmed by all key stakeholder groups. A number of key hindering and facilitating factors have been identified through the research:

Facilitating and hindering factors for the SDF's relevance	
Facilitating non-formal trainings: The SDF fills a funding gap for quality skills development in Uganda Competitive selection process with different calls and windows, participation of grantees and their partners from the beginning (bottom-up process) Channelling of resources through mostly local organisations such as training institutes, NGOs and private sector (building local capacities) Support from Enabel throughout the application, selection and implementation of the grants; also in form of relevant information (e.g. labour market scans)	Hindering non-formal trainings: Relatively low/late involvement of private sector due to a number of factors including historical disconnection between public and private sectors, organizational culture, governance challenges, weak private sector especially in NU, as well as Enabel grant regulations, as companies cannot be grantees. Potential “overtraining” in the selected trades; need to update labour market scans to ensure relevance. Lack of or insufficient post-training support for some trainings limits their relevance for beneficiaries.
Facilitating instant trainings: Labour market scans and needs assessments conducted by some livelihood partners with their beneficiaries, based on initial needs assessments conducted by Enabel	Hindering instant trainings: Limited mechanisms at Enabel for assessing the need or relevance for the training requested by livelihood actors, also due to only limited or weak statistics and data and limited coordination among different donors working in the same field. Lack of or insufficient post-training support for some trainings limits their relevance for beneficiaries.



4.2 Quality

Under quality the action research seeks to answer to what extent the partnerships supported by the SDF contributed to upgrading the quality of skills trainings as well as brokering innovative collaborative training programs. For non-formal trainings, this refers to the development or upgrading of qualitative and demand driven curricula and practice-oriented training provision through qualified trainers and with adequate training materials and equipment. Regarding the instant trainings, it seeks to answer to what extent these trainings met the high-quality standards they envisaged to deliver.

Key data from the research

Non-formal trainings

- 46% of interviewed **SSU management staff** perceive the quality and level of innovation to be good, while 38% think it is fair and 15% consider it to be not very good.
- 57% of **SSU field staff** consider quality to be very good, and 33% say it is fair.
- Regarding pre- and post-training support, 33% of interviewed **SSU field staff** perceive it to be very good and fair, respectively. Another 33% think it is not good.
- Almost all interviewed **grantees and partners** think that through the SDF support and the partnerships created they were able to innovate and collaborate better for the delivery of practical, skills development-oriented trainings.
- However, 74% of interviewed **grantees** and 88% of interviewed **partners** state that they faced challenges in their partnerships, which partly affected the training quality.
- 78% of interviewed **WBL providers** say they have noticed a positive difference in the level or quality of skills of SDF supported trainees compared to other graduates
- **FGD participants** have a good perception regarding the quality of trainings:
 - ✓ 71% are very satisfied with the quality of the trainers
 - ✓ 58% are very satisfied and 37% fairly satisfied with the quality of learning materials during classroom training
 - ✓ 51% are very satisfied and 37% fairly satisfied with the quality of training venues and equipment for practical trainings
 - ✓ They show less satisfaction with time allocation: 31% say they are very satisfied, 41% are fairly satisfied and 28% think the time allocated is insufficient.

Instant trainings

- 33% of interviewed **SSU field staff** think trainings had good quality, while 22% perceive it to be good or fair. Another 22% believe the quality is not good at all.
- Of interviewed **instant training livelihood partners**, 40% state the trainings had good quality, 27% think the quality is very good and fair respectively
- 67% of interviewed **livelihood partners** state that they included pre- and post-training support, which seems to directly affect the training quality.
- **Instant trainee** FGD participants are highly satisfied with the overall quality of trainings:
 - ✓ 97% say the trainers were very good
 - ✓ 68% are very satisfied with the quality of the training venue and the equipment
 - ✓ With regards to time allocation, opinions are more mixed: 34% are very satisfied, 36% fairly satisfied and 30% consider the length to be too short.

Highlights

- The SDF has facilitated non-formal trainings that included innovative approaches to upgrade skills development and make it more practice-oriented. Improved equipment, the integration of technical and soft skills provision, the integration of WBL approaches and the provision of post-training support can be highlighted as key best practices. Although the quality of non-formal trainings varies and a number of aspects can still be improved, it can be stated that the SDF has achieved its objectives.
- Competence-based assessments of trainees and DIT certifications for most non-formal trainings ensured the quality of trainings according to national and regional standards, and the introduction of international certification for welding and metal fabrication trainings has further enhanced quality for this specific trade.
- Enabel's efforts to monitor training delivery, the provision of continuous support to grantees and partners and the results-based management approach have further contributed to the quality of non-formal trainings, although a stronger focus on monitoring compliance with administrative and financial regulations have reduced the available time and resources to monitor quality.
- Instant trainings have to a great extent been delivered with high quality standards in terms of trainers and materials used. Processes and criteria established by the SDF helped in this regard, although some improvements could still be made regarding stronger adherence to guidelines for the involved actors on roles and responsibilities, the provision of post-training support and a closer monitoring process.

Quality of non-formal trainings

Key stakeholders interviewed perceive the overall quality and level of innovation of the non-formal trainings supported by the SDF to be good, remarking that the partnerships that the SDF intends to broker work well to create training programs and delivery with higher quality as compared to national standards. The majority of interviewed grantees and partners think they improved the quality of their training programs by being able to introduce new equipment to offer more practical trainings, to modify and tailor training modules and, in most of the cases, also introduce a DIT certification, which ensures the quality of trainings according to national and regional standards. According to the 2019 SSU annual report, by the end of 2019, 61% of the trainees of non-formal trainings supported by the SDF successfully completed an internal or external assessment procedure (including DIT assessments). Certification with DIT's Worker's PAS is backed by a competence-based assessment and is recognized within the region of East Africa.

In addition, in the case of welding and metal fabrication, an international certification has been introduced under the third call in Albertine/Rwenzori as it is specifically relevant for this trade, assuming that most graduates will pursue work in the oil and gas sector that is projected to be growing in the region.

Interviewed SSU staff and members of the selection committee believe that although the overall quality of the trainings provided is good, especially when compared to the national average, it still needs improvement to reach internationally acceptable levels. In this regard, the more sceptical perceptions among SSU management staff as compared to field staff on the quality of trainings are mostly due to the higher level of international experience of staff located at Kampala offices and consequently, their more ambitious expectations. However, this is only a perception as there is no reference primary data for this comparison.

Enabel has put strong efforts into monitoring training delivery through monthly monitoring visits, quarterly support missions and direct support provided by SSU field staff to grantees and partners, which in addition to a results-based management approach of the SDF has contributed to ensuring the quality of trainings. However, due to the high standards of Enabel's administrative and financial regulations, monitoring of grantees' and partners' compliance with these rules had to be given priority, which has left little time for staff to effectively monitor quality aspects.

Moreover, the system in place for quality assurance in TVET institutions in Uganda has not allowed to systematically measure the quality of the training institutions providing non-formal trainings in the country and therefore, to measure quality as per international standards. Although the Skilling Uganda BTET Strategic Plan proposed the development of an accreditation system based on the evaluation of models and experiences in other countries, in practice, more actions are still needed to improve quality and training standards in the country.²⁵

With regards to the level of innovation, it is overall perceived, especially by grantees and partners, that the practical component of the training programs (WBL) not only increased the quality of the trainings but also adds an innovative component. The provision of post-training support is also considered an innovative aspect from the point of view of several stakeholders. Post-training support in the form of provision of start-up kits, internship placements and career counselling, is considered a key aspect to have quality training programs by several types of stakeholder.

Moreover, the inclusion of life skills and entrepreneurship as topics in the trainings is considered to positively impact quality. In this regard, as good practices to increase the quality of trainings, several SSU staff mentioned a holistic training approach that integrates technical skills with life skills and entrepreneurship skills and that combines classroom and practical trainings.

By comparison, different types of stakeholders perceive the length of the training programs as a challenge when it comes to quality, however they consider that it depends on the trade. For example, a 6-months training program in mechanics is perceived to be too short to master the skill, as also stated by some FGD participants, while for other trades like bakery, it is perceived to be enough. In some cases, the length of the training was shortened due to the lack of tools and equipment as well as delays in the partnerships that were usually caused by challenges of grantees/partners with complying with Enabel's administrative or financial regulations. This information has been confirmed in FGDs where several participants complained about delays in the start of the training. Staff mentioned Enabel's no cost extensions as a good practice to compensate for these delays. However other interviewed staff were of the opinion that Enabel could still become more flexible regarding training length, i.e., more generously allow for adaptations to the initially planned training time in case that challenges during implementation arise.

Various WBL providers stated that they have noticed a difference in the level of quality between trainees that participated in practice-oriented trainings and those who did not. Those trainees who took part in practice-oriented learning are perceived to be more focused, pick up things faster and are better able to do the practical work.

Moreover, they seem to have more ability for integration at work needing less time to do so. This

"Theory is important but not the most important. Those with theory can hardly do any practical work. They are always shocked when we bring them here for work. Those who have done practical and work-based learning are better off than those with only theoretical knowledge".

WBL provider, Albertine Rwenzori



²⁵ The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy

is also supported by data from the quantitative tracer study that found 86% of employers to be satisfied with the performance of SDF graduates.

Success Story: Two friends start their own hairdressing business: "We were very satisfied with the quality of the training and liked that apart from the technical hairdressing skills it also included entrepreneurship and life skills training."

Hairdressing training participant, Karamoja

From the viewpoint of trainees enrolled in non-formal trainings per region, results show that the highest level of satisfaction with the different aspects²⁶ of the training quality came from trainees in Karamoja. Only the time allocated to the trainings is an aspect they are less satisfied with. Trainees from Albertine & Rwenzori are mostly very satisfied with the classroom materials and quality of trainers, but not satisfied at all with the time allocation aspect. Participants from Northern Uganda are those with lower satisfaction rates among the regions, except for the time allocated to the training programs, which seems to be perceived as

adequate by the majority of the participants of the FGDs in this region.

In relation to the training topics covered in the action research, data shows similar level of satisfaction with the quality of trainings among the participants. Only a few cases showed low level of satisfactions with all aspects of the trainings, for example, trainees from some trainings in agribusiness and motor vehicle mechanics. This low level of satisfaction seems to come from factors such as late start of the training or irregular attendance of the trainer.

On the contrary, time allocation accounts for the aspect the trainees are less satisfied with in a large number of trainings topics. Data shows that many trainees from trainings in cooking/bakery, agriculture/livestock, concrete practice, carpentry and joinery, catering, eco-briquettes, garment and fabric, green business and motor vehicle mechanics, are not satisfied at all with the time allocated to the trainings. Several trainees from some of these trainings in Northern Uganda stated that the time was not sufficient to master the skill or they did not have sufficient time to complete a WBL component.

As per training type, data shows no significant difference with the level of satisfaction among participants, and similarly to the training topic, trainees are less satisfied with the time allocated to the training. The trainees less satisfied with the time allocated to the training are coming from agriculture field trainings.

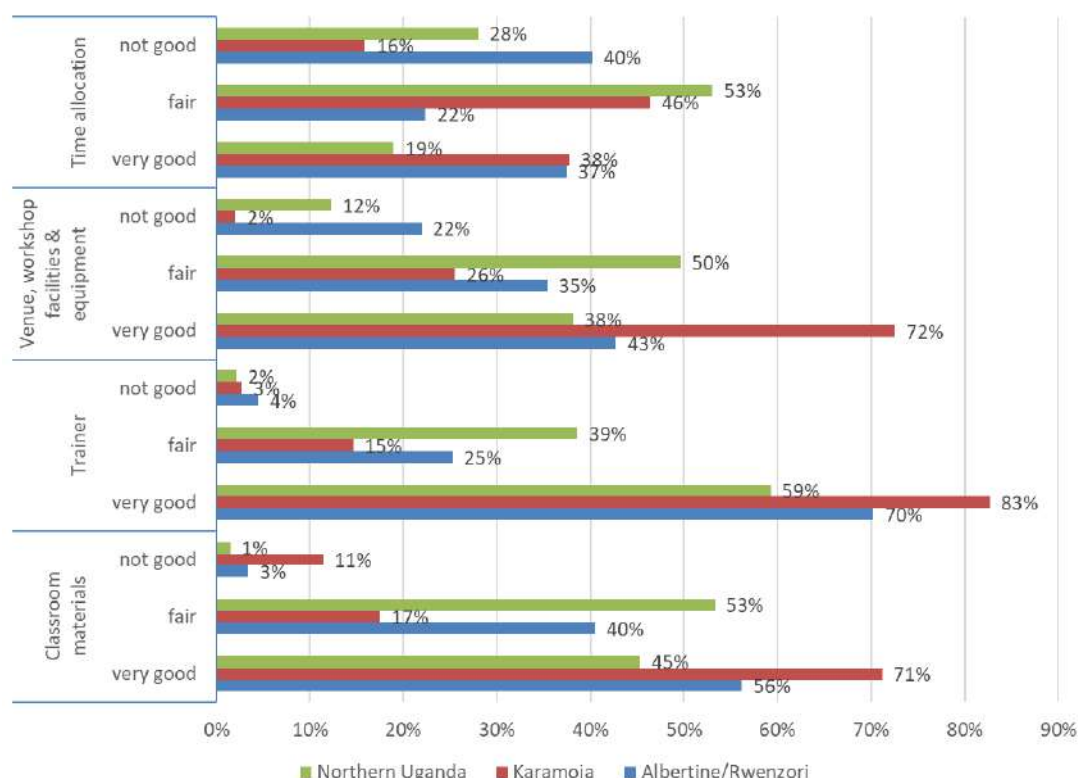
With regards to the post-training support received, more than 73% of the trainees who participated in the FGDs received some type of support before, during and after the training. The type of post-training support most commonly provided were start-up kits, and most FGDs participants are fairly satisfied with their quality. Start-up kits were provided either individually or to groups. In this regard, the participants mentioned that, overall, they prefer individual over group start-up kits. The majority of participants think that it was beneficial to receive the start-up kits but, in most cases, tools were missing or the quality of the tools was rather low. However, overall, satisfaction rates regarding quality are positive.

Overall, data shows no significant difference in the level of satisfaction of the participants of the training topics covered by the action research with the post-training support received. Nevertheless, some trainings in topics such as cooking/bakery, electronics, hair dressing and motor vehicle mechanics rate low among participants with regards to the post-training support. Some reasons mentioned were the poor quality or the material not being enough.

²⁶ The aspects to measure the quality of both non-formal trainings were classrooms materials, trainer, venue, workshop facilities and equipment and time allocation.

Regarding all aspects asked, the research found no significant differences on the level of satisfaction per gender.

Figure 10: Quality of non-formal trainings from the viewpoint of participants



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data – non-formal trainings

Quality of instant trainings

Instant trainings seek to respond to previously identified gaps in a specific skill relevant to improve the livelihood of a selected community. In order to do so, Enabel selects highly qualified, certified training providers that include work-based learning activities (when possible)²⁷ through a thorough selection process to facilitate a 10-100 hours training that provides certificates. For this purpose, Enabel has put in place a system of recruiting qualified training providers by launching public tenders to select a training provider on specific skills. Once the selection process is completed based on the terms of reference requirements, Enabel agrees the date of training delivery to the community selected by a livelihood partner. This system allows for a flexible and rapid response to eligible training requests from any of the three regions.

Key data from the action research show mixed perceptions among the different interviewed stakeholder types regarding the overall quality of the instant trainings provided so far. In comparison with the non-formal trainings, interviewed SSU staff with knowledge on the implementation of the instant trainings highlighted several challenges to ensure their quality. One of the aspects mentioned was that in some cases trainers were insufficiently prepared, but also that the selection of trainees by the livelihood partners was not done properly so that some participants were not motivated to take the training. Insufficient time allocation for instant trainings was also mentioned as a challenge, as some trainings could not properly convey all necessary skills during such short trainings. However, the opinion on this subject is similar to that on the non-

²⁷ Although Enabel's instant training manual states that an instant training could have a WBL component, when possible, the instant trainings provided until October 2019 did not include this component.

formal trainings, as the time allocation varies from trade to trade. For example, leather work/shoe making or beads making would require more time as opposed to bakery for which time allocation was perceived to be adequate.

In addition, interviewed staff highlighted the lack of coherent and well-structured post-training support as a key limiting factor for the training quality and effectiveness. In this regard, some interviewed staff mentioned that the design and delivery of the training was good in many cases due to the selection process of the training providers but the challenge was with the post-training support, which according to Enabel's instant training manual, is a responsibility of the livelihood actor. Nevertheless, overall, staff acknowledged that the process to implement and monitor the instant trainings was incorporated late in time and that in all three regions there is still a lack of monitoring and follow-up on instant trainings, also due to limited capacities of field staff and the high volume of ongoing trainings.

On the other hand, the perceptions of the livelihood partners and trainees differ from those of the interviewed SSU staff. The vast majority of livelihood partners believes that the quality of the instant trainings is between good and fair. This finding is confirmed by the second tracer study, which data shows that 86% of participants are either satisfied or very satisfied with the training received.

The trainer was mentioned as a key element for the quality of the instant training by both livelihood partners and trainees. In this regard, a high satisfaction rate with the trainers was shown in all three regions and also among men and women. Moreover, trainees showed a high level of satisfaction with the training venues, although the rates were lower than for the trainers. An explanation to this was the fact that some training venues had poor quality. For example, some trainings took place outside under a tree and were interrupted by wind and rain or in a building with a leaking roof. With regards to the time allocation, there is an even distribution on the trainees' level of satisfaction across the regions, being the trainees from Karamoja those with a better perception on the length of trainings. As per gender, no significant differences have been found during this research.

"The training was very practical so that even I who did not go to school was able to understand everything. I learnt about new materials and equipment which I did not know before even though I did bakery while in South Sudan."

Instant training participant - bakery, Northern Uganda

Regarding the post-training support, there seems to be a mismatch on the data derived from this action research. While 67% of interviewed livelihood partners stated that they provided training support during or after the training, 75% of the training providers stated the same²⁸. Nevertheless, only a 57% of the trainees said that they received post-training support and that they were very or fairly satisfied with them. Albertine/Rwenzori is the region where more start-up kits were distributed although trainees show lower level of satisfaction, while in Northern Uganda, the majority received start-up kits in combination with an additional support such as counselling. Among those trainees, slightly more female participants have received post-training support and at the same time women seem to be more critical than men, being fairly satisfied rather than very satisfied with the quality. Data suggests that in most cases, this is due to fact that the start-up kits did not provide enough material or were of low quality. Such problems are also a recurrent in the Tracer Studies, where quite a number of respondents stated having received damaged or insufficient start-up material. These findings show that although it is envisaged that the livelihood partner provides the

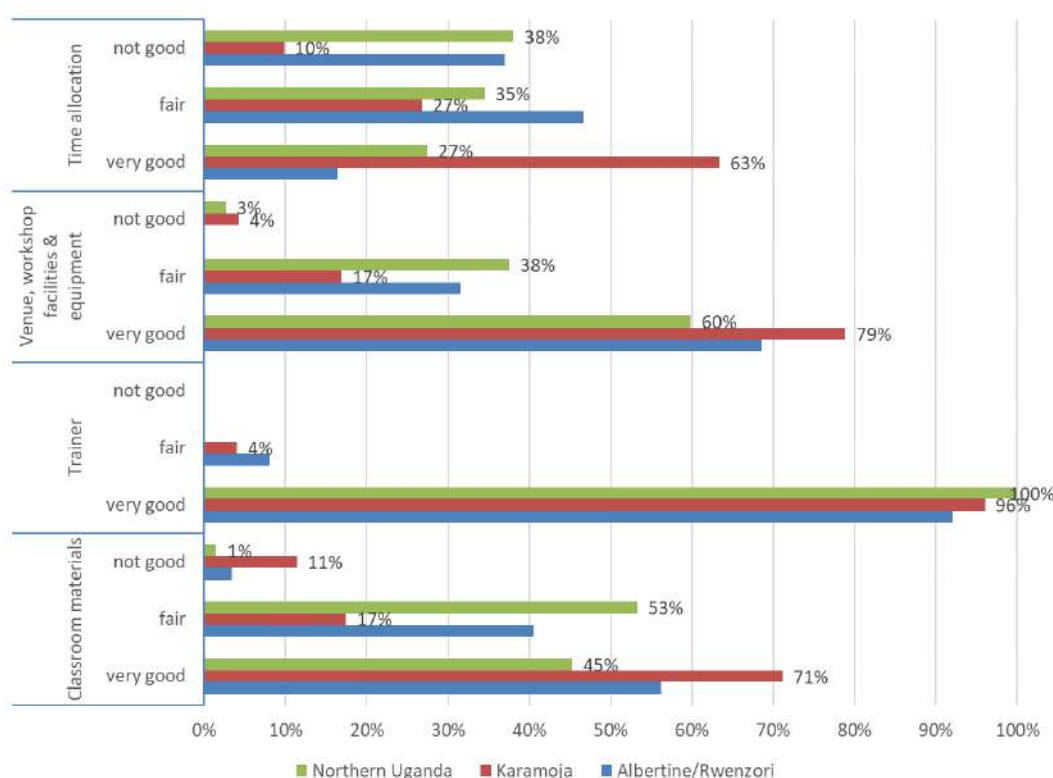
"Giving us the products to practice on without other raw materials and tools afterwards is not good enough."

Instant training participant, Albertine Rwenzori

²⁸ This difference can be due to several reasons. FGD participants were not entirely from trainings provided by interviewed grantees/partners and livelihood partners

post training support, in practice, there is a need to strengthen this process and define responsibilities among the different actors by incorporating clearer guidelines and more monitoring for the delivery of the post-training support.

Figure 11: Quality of instant trainings from the viewpoint of participants



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data – instant trainings

Overall, it can be concluded that the SDF has facilitated non-formal trainings that did include innovative approaches to upgrade skills development and make it more practice-oriented. Improved equipment, the integration of technical and soft skills provision, the integration of WBL approaches and the provision of post-training support can be highlighted as key best practices in this regard. Although the quality of non-formal trainings varies and a number of aspects can still be improved, it can generally be stated that the SDF has achieved its objectives in this regard.

For instant trainings, the same holds true: they have to a great extent been delivered with high quality standards in terms of trainers and materials used, although some improvements could be made regarding clearer guidelines for the involved actors on roles and responsibilities, the provision of post-training support and a closer monitoring process. The key facilitating and hindering factors for training quality can be summarized as follows:

Facilitating and hindering factors for the SDF's quality

Facilitating non-formal trainings:

Partnership and bottom-up approach of the SDF
Overall good quality of trainers, training materials and equipment
Integration of life skills training, work-based learning, as well as pre- and post-training support

Hindering non-formal trainings:

Insufficient time allocation (depending on the trade)
Insufficient funding for equipment and training materials, and untimely funds disbursements
Inconsistency in the provision of start-up kits (individuals vs groups); materials often

Part of the trainings certified by DIT or even internationally (for welding and metal fabrication)	below expectations of training participants; delay in delivery of start-up kits Inconsistent/insufficient follow-up on graduates /no consistent integration of counselling, mentoring as additional services.
Facilitating instant trainings: Overall good quality of trainers, training materials and equipment Integration of life skills training Provision of post-training support in the form of start-up kits and counselling	Hindering instant trainings: Insufficient time allocation (depending on the trade) Materials often below expectations of training participants; delay in delivery of start-up kits Insufficient monitoring on the quality of training implementation, including the post-training support



4.3 Access and Equity

The criterion of access and equity seeks to answer to what extent the SDF grant agreements and instant trainings have broadened access to skills development for vulnerable youth, women and girls and to what extent the SDF mechanisms and processes contributed to the delivery of training programs adapted to the specific needs of the target groups. The analysis aims at finding out which factors facilitated and hindered the above for both non-formal and instant trainings.

Key data from the research

Non-formal trainings

- **100%** of interviewed **SSU field staff** and **73%** of the **SSU management staff** believe that the outreach activities of the SDF helped to reach the intended targeted groups, especially vulnerable groups. **18%** of the **SSU management staff** perceives that this has happened to a limited extent.
- **94%** of interviewed **grantees** and **81%** of **interviewed partners** believe that the mechanisms used for outreach helped to a great extent to reach the intended targeted groups, especially more vulnerable groups. Only one grantee stated that vulnerable groups were not specifically targeted.
- **53%** of interviewed **WBL providers** say they pay specific attention to offering work-based learning to some vulnerable groups, while **47%** say they do not.
- Most of the of the trainees that participated in the FGDs belong to a vulnerable group (youth and women or girls), with another **71%** showing additional vulnerability characteristic (refugee, Karamojong).

Instant trainings

- **82%** of interviewed **livelihood partners** and **63%** of interviewed **training providers** believe that instant trainings increased the access of vulnerable groups to skills development. Youth, women, refugees and the poor in general were vulnerability categories most mentioned.
- A majority of **livelihood partners** states that they conducted a vulnerability assessment to be able to target those groups prioritized by the SDF.
- **100%** of **interviewed training providers** and **75%** of **livelihood partners** state that drop-out rates of vulnerable groups from the trainings do not represent a challenge.
- Most of the trainees that participated in the FGDs belong to a vulnerable group (youth and women or girls). **85%** belong to additional vulnerable groups (refugee, Karamojong)

Highlights

- The SDF has overall exceeded its targets for facilitating access for vulnerable groups to both non-formal and instant trainings.
- Among beneficiaries of non-formal trainings, 52% were women or girls, 66% in trainings in Northern Uganda were refugees and in Karamoja, 92% of beneficiaries were Karamojong.
- In the absence of a clear definition of vulnerability in Uganda, the SDF has contributed with the elaboration of detailed vulnerability criteria to define eligible beneficiary groups. In addition, the SDF has defined eligible costs that grantees could include in their budgets to facilitate participation of vulnerable groups.
- Consequently, many grantees and partners have adopted measures such as providing trainees with meals, transport and in some cases, accommodation to support participation of vulnerable groups in the trainings. Other support has been less common, e.g. providing childcare for single mothers or also healthcare services.
- Regarding instant trainings, women account for 65% of the participants. Additionally, 89% of Karamojong and 56% of refugees have participated in an instant training in Karamoja and Northern Uganda, respectively.
- Key challenges mentioned by beneficiaries to regularly attend both non-formal and instant trainings relate mostly to economic constraints and household responsibilities and show the importance of providing for basic needs of participants and supporting them with transport to the training as a minimum standard for facilitating attendance of vulnerable groups. In addition, considering beneficiaries' difficulties to accommodate the participation in trainings with household responsibilities and the need to provide for their families, more attention to training schedules could be given.

The SDF supports the access of vulnerable youth, women and girls to skills development that are marginalized from mainstream education and training provision due to various barriers generated by economic, social, and geographic fault-lines and physical disabilities and other specific constraints. Based on a review of different criteria used by government institutions (e.g. Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social development) and other international non-governmental organisations, the SDF developed more disaggregated eligibility and selection criteria for their beneficiaries including PWD, HIV positive, refugees or ethnic minorities. Specifically, in Northern Uganda²⁹ the SDF adhered to the targets of 70% refugees and 30% host communities, in Albertine & Rwenzori at least 80% youth (age between 15-35 years), 35 % women and girls, and in Karamoja 70% Karamojong and 30% non-Karamojong. These targets include both beneficiaries of non-formal and instant trainings.

Access & Equity of non-formal trainings

By end 2019, the SDF exceeded or almost met the targets set for that year: 52% of women, 66% of refugees and 92% of Karamojong benefited from a non-formal training. Consequently, perceptions on access and equity of non-formal trainings are rather positive among all types of stakeholders interviewed. Key data from this action research show that the majority of all

²⁹ The original target for refugee's participation has been 70% Refugees and 30% Host Community members. These targets have been changed in 2019 to 50/50 by the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).

interviewed stakeholders believes that more vulnerable groups have had access to skills development through the non-formal trainings supported by the SDF.

Additionally, data confirms that the vulnerable groups of youth, women and girls, refugees and Karamojong have had access to the trainings. This can be confirmed by the profiles of FGDs participants for this action research, where all of the participants were part of a vulnerable group, and among them, more than 70% was considered to have an additional vulnerability characteristic. With regards to gender, data from the action research also confirms that the SDF is meeting its intended targets. 47%³⁰ of the FGDs participants are females, which is in line with the outputs reached by the SDF by end 2019, exceeding the initial targets.

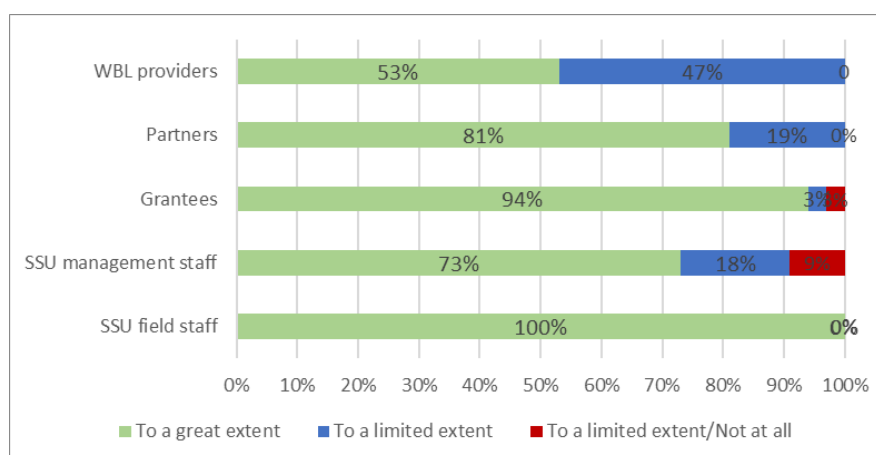
The majority of interviewed grantees and partners mentioned that they use Enabel's vulnerability criteria to select the training participants. However, specific criteria to assess the vulnerability of beneficiaries have been developed late in time by Enabel only after the first calls, hence, in the early stages of SDF implementation, given that there is no clear Ugandan definition of vulnerability, each applicant used own criteria to assess vulnerable groups benefiting from the SDF. A general challenge in this regard is the lack of data to verify the economic vulnerability of beneficiaries.

People with disabilities or living with HIV however have much less participated in trainings and have also not been systematically targeted in project designs except for specific cases. For example in Northern Uganda, over 220 beneficiaries with disabilities were trained. The fact that only a minority of grantees included PWD in their training designs might be due to a lack of more specific guidance from Enabel's side on how to work with these groups, which requires tailor-made approaches. In addition, the SDF allowed each grantee to define their own target groups among the vulnerability categories provided by Enabel. Some grantees and partners have included, however, HIV/AIDS sensitization into their training programs.

The percentage of WBL providers including vulnerable groups³¹ in their activities sits lower in comparison to grantees and partners. Although a good share of them pay attention to offer WBL to vulnerable groups, some of them also explain that often it is not possible to do so with some specific vulnerable groups such as PWD due to the nature of the trade itself, for example, construction and motor vehicle mechanics, where some people might not be able to perform the required work.

³⁰ 60% of the female participants had an additional vulnerability characteristic such as Karamojong (35%), Refugee (21%), PWD (3%) or HIV (1%)

³¹ In the case of WBL providers, the vulnerable groups referred to do not include women and girls.

Figure 12: Access of vulnerable groups from the viewpoint of key stakeholders³²

Source: own elaboration based on KIIs

With regards to mechanisms used to reach the intended vulnerable groups, several stakeholders are of the opinion that they were adequate. Outreach activities that have worked best, according to interviewed grantees and partners, are radio announcements and working with community-based organizations (CBOs) that have direct access to vulnerable youth, as well as local leaders and churches. Several grantees and partners agree that they were able to reach more than the intended numbers of applicants. This best practice is confirmed by the GEM Uganda - Supporting Africa's Young Entrepreneurs report ³³ that acknowledges that CBOs, specifically faith-based organisations, play a key role among the youth when it comes to making decisions about their career choices.

"The community leaders were supportive and played a key role in mobilising and identifying beneficiaries".

Grantee, Northern Uganda

However, grantees and partners also faced challenges to effectively enrol vulnerable target groups. A challenge mentioned by grantees and partners in all regions is that the demand for trainings is so high that the number of applicants exceed by far the number of trainees that can be accepted into the trainings, so that many youths are disappointed when not selected. Specific challenges identified per region were:

Albertine & Rwenzori	Karamoja	Northern Uganda
- Difficulties to reach people living with HIV because of social stigma - Language barriers; some youth do not know English well yet it is required in some trades	- Lack of motivation of people with disabilities because of low self esteem - Girls marry early and their husbands are often	- Girls marry early and their husbands are often opposed to them taking trainings - Difficulties to attract women to male dominated trades and also to attract men to female dominated trades

³² Questions asked:

SSU staff: To what extent do you think that the training outreach activities helped to reach the intended targeted groups, especially vulnerable groups?

Grantees & partners: To what extent do you think that the mechanisms used for outreach of the training program helped to reach the intended targeted groups, especially more vulnerable groups?

Instant livelihood partners and training providers: To what extent do you think that through the training you were able to offer with the SDF, more vulnerable people had the chance to participate in trainings that would otherwise not have had this opportunity?

³³ Namatovu, Rebecca, Supporting Africa's Young Entrepreneurs: an investment in job creation and future prosperity for all: Uganda, GEM 2013. Available at: <https://www.gemconsortium.org/report/gem-uganda-supporting-africas-young-entrepreneurs>

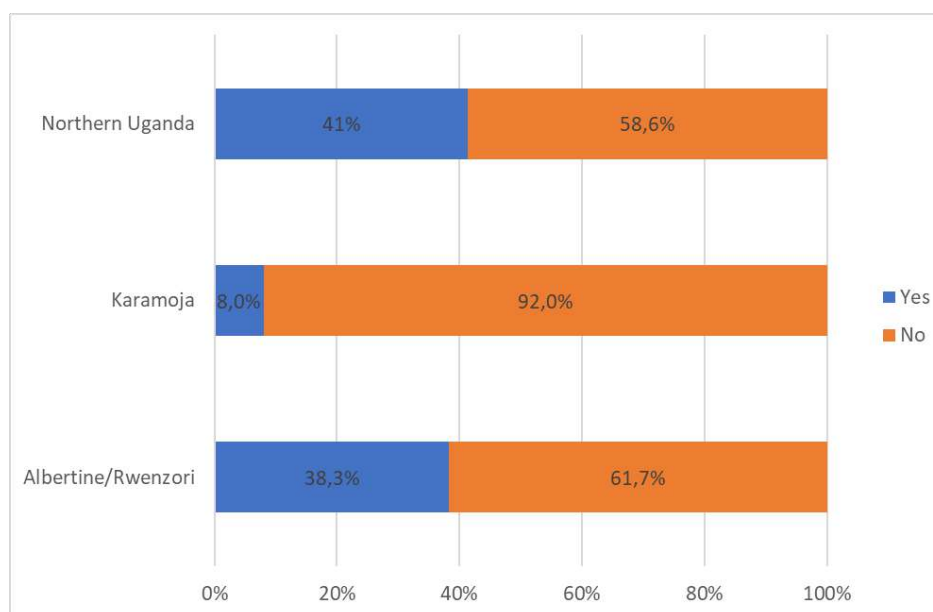
- Difficulties to attract women to male dominated trades - Because of high demand of trainings among youth, some CBOs might aim to bring their beneficiaries into trainings although some might not be among the most vulnerable	opposed to them taking trainings	Migration movements in refugee settings; some selected participants had left the country at the time of the start of the training
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From the viewpoint of trainees, the majority said the enrolment process was easy. The only challenges mentioned in some cases is that they had to pay a registration or commitment fee, and some found selection interviews to be difficult. However, a higher share of FGD participants indicated that they faced challenges with regularly attending the trainings: 39% of women and 29% men confirmed this. Overall, trainees from Karamoja were those facing less challenges (only 8%, most of them women).

"Some female married youths missed the opportunity to build/strengthen their skills in specific trades because their husbands could not let them attend the trainings."

Grantee, Northern Uganda

Figure 13: Trainees facing challenges to regularly attend trainings



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Trainees faced similar challenges in all regions, the main ones related to family responsibilities (providing for the household, taking care of children or siblings, etc.), long distances to training venues and lack of transport allowance, long training schedules which interferes with personal matters, bad weather during rainy season, bad roads and lack of provision of meals during day-long trainings, so that participants needed to look for their own food.

To mitigate those challenges, the SDF has defined eligible costs that grantees could include in their budgets to facilitate participation of vulnerable groups. Consequently, many grantees and partners have adopted measures such as providing trainees with meals, transport and in some cases, accommodation to support participation of vulnerable groups in the trainings. Other support is less common, e.g. providing childcare for single mothers or also healthcare services. However,

these measures are not integrated systematically into the trainings although they were included under eligible costs and grant applicants were informed about the possibility to provide these services.

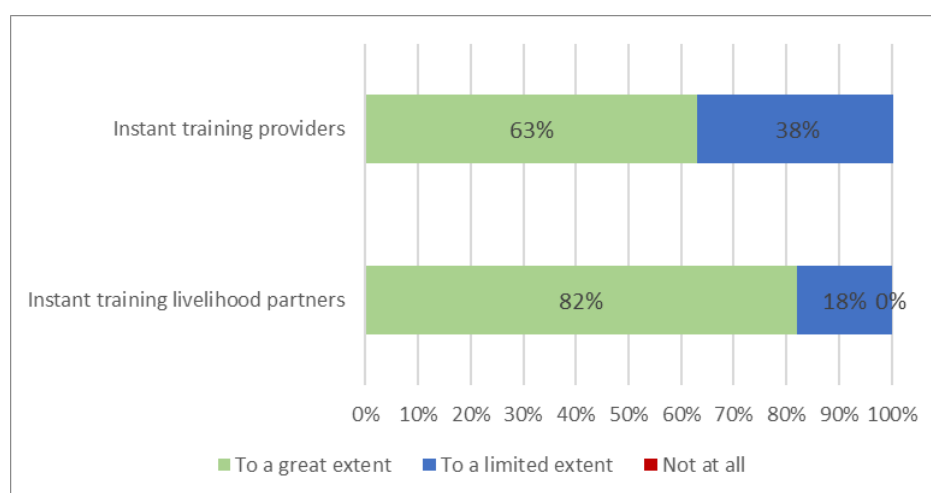
Access & equity of instant trainings

Data derived from this research show that a high share of vulnerable groups had the chance to participate in instant trainings. This is mainly due to the fact that the livelihood partners select participants from their usual beneficiary communities and thus experience no challenges in reaching out to vulnerable youth. SDF results from 2019 also show that vulnerable youth, women and girls have had access to skills development through the instant trainings. Women account for 65% of the participants. Additionally, 89% of Karamojong and 56% of refugees have participated in an instant training in Karamoja and Northern Uganda, respectively.

The profile of the FGDs participants confirms that a solid majority of vulnerable groups participated in instant trainings. In this sense, 85% of the participants was considered to have an additional vulnerability characteristic to youth and women or girl: 97% of the FGDs participants in Karamoja were Karamojong and 67% had a refugee status in Northern Uganda. Additionally, 68,6% of the FGDs participants were females, a similar percentage as indicated for beneficiaries of instant trainings in the 2019 SSU annual report.

Accordingly, the perception of key stakeholders interviewed is that the instant trainings gave more vulnerable groups access to skills development that would otherwise not have had the chance to acquire a skill.

Figure 14: Access of vulnerable groups from the viewpoint of training providers and livelihood partners

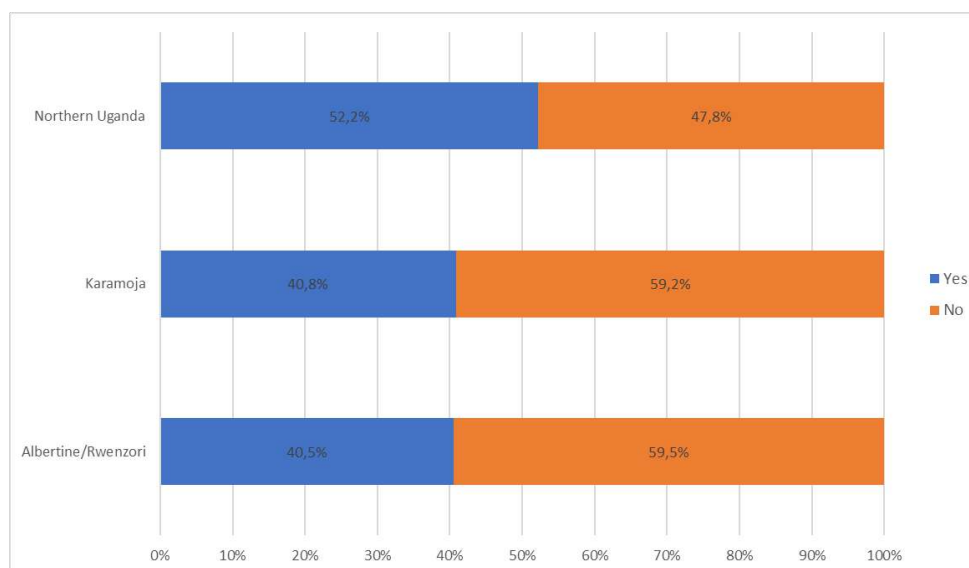


Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

With regards to the trainees, although the vast majority said that they did not face any difficulty to enrol in the training, a significant share (55%) had challenges to attend. Data collected show no significant difference per gender. Regarding the regions, participants of the FGDs in Northern Uganda seem to have faced slightly more challenges to attend to the trainings than participants from other regions.

These challenges happened despite the fact that instant trainings usually provided at least meals and a transport refund to facilitate participation. On the other hand, it is worthy to mention that despite these challenges stated by the trainees, the vast majority of the instant training providers said they had almost no challenges with regards to drop-out rates during the trainings.

Figure 15: Trainees facing challenges to regularly attend trainings



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Challenges mentioned by the trainees were similar among the regions which include long distance to the training venue with oftentimes high cost of transport and no allowance to cover it, interference of the training schedule with family and business responsibilities, health reasons, bad weather, sometimes lack of meals provision, especially for breastfeeding mothers and sometimes sickness.

These issues show the importance of providing for basic needs of participants and supporting them with transport to the training as a minimum standard for facilitating attendance of vulnerable groups. Although some interviewed stakeholders are of the opinion that trainees should not find the motivation of attending to the training through additional support, some others think that it is important to acknowledge these special needs of the vulnerable groups.

Despite the mentioned challenges, the SDF has overall exceeded its targets for facilitating access for vulnerable groups to both non-formal and instant trainings.

Facilitating and hindering factors for the SDF's access and equity

Facilitating non-formal trainings:

SDF guidelines require selection processes for vulnerable groups

Grantees and partners create specific outreach activities to target vulnerable groups, often including community leaders and community-based organisations but also government institutions that are able to identify and reach the most vulnerable

Vulnerability assessments made by grantees/partners and livelihood partners

Trainings are usually free of charge and in many cases provide at least a transport allowance and meals to participants; in other cases, also free accommodation, medical services, or childcare

Hindering non-formal trainings:

Late introduction of specific vulnerability assessment methodology by Enabel, therefore limited of control over methods used by different grantees or livelihood partners during first calls.

Lack of targeted approach for people with disabilities of people living with HIV

Higher demand in the communities for trainings than available capacities of grantees and partners/available funding allow to offer

Long distances to training venues are difficult for vulnerable groups due to lack of

	transport allowance in some cases and/or household responsibilities they need to fulfil
Facilitating instant trainings: Guidelines require selection processes for vulnerable groups Vulnerability assessments made by livelihood partners Trainings are usually free of charge and in many cases provide at least a transport allowance and meals to participants	Hindering instant trainings: Lack of targeted approach for people with disabilities of people living with HIV Long distances to training venues are difficult for vulnerable groups due to lack of transport allowance in some cases and/or household responsibilities they need to fulfil



4.4 Effectiveness

The effectiveness criterion focuses on the question to which extent the SDF approaches/mechanisms contributed to the employability of the target groups and their integration in the local labour market. For non-formal trainings, this refers to either employment or self-employment of graduates. Regarding the instant trainings, the question is whether these led to improved or diversified income generating opportunities for beneficiaries, and whether livelihoods of instant trainees have been improved. For both trainings, the analysis aims to identify facilitating and hindering factors as well as aspects that contribute to or hinder the sustainability of results achieved.

Key data from the research

On access to labour market

Non-formal trainings

- **86%** of interviewed **SSU management staff** and **90%** of interviewed **field staff** believes that the trainings have had a positive effect on the employability and access to the labour market of the participants.
- Almost all interviewed **grantees** and **partners** are confident that the trainings improved or will improve the employability and access to the labour market of the participants
- **78%** of **WBL providers** state that they perceive a positive difference in the level or quality of the skills of SDF supported trainees compared to other graduates, and **79%** say they employ SDF supported trainees after finalizing their trainings, or plan to do so in the future. The main challenge to retaining trainees is the number of available vacancies, as WBL providers are often small or micro businesses.
- Qualitative data from FGDs show that overall about **68%** of **regular trainees** have been integrated into the labour market either because they found wage employment (24%) or became self-employed (44%)³⁴
- Participants from **Albertine Rwenzori** region show the highest labour market integration through wage employment (34%), while for participants from **Northern Uganda** the highest share of business creation was registered (65,5%).

Instant trainings

- **78%** of interviewed **field staff** thinks that the instant trainings have responded to identified livelihood needs of the communities, and interviewed **SSU staff** at Kampala and field levels is generally positive that instant trainings improve the technical and life skills of training participants. There is less certainty whether this effectively leads to an increase of income and improvement of their livelihoods.
- Interviewed **livelihood partners** are also cautious: while **33%** say that trainings improved the income generating activity of the participants, another **42%** see this effect only to some extent and **25%** say the trainings did not affect the trainees' income generating activities.

³⁴ Numbers are based on FGD participants that had completed their training at the time of data collection and that gave an answer to this question; that is, 318 out of 478 of total FGD participants.

- Instant **training providers** are more positive with **57%** saying that the instant trainings had this positive effect, **14%** still thinking this is the case to some extent, and **29%** stating it did not.
- All stakeholders see a key hindering factor in the lack of well-planned post-training support and of proper follow-up on the instant trainees.
- Overall, **81% of instant FGD participants** are positive that the trainings helped them to better execute their income generating activity or to diversify their income, with differences per region: while **97%** of trainees in Northern Uganda say so, in Karamoja **70%** agree and **68%** in Albertine Rwenzori region.

On sustainability

Non-formal trainings

- **86%** of interviewed **current grantees** anticipate to maintain the partnerships they created under the SDF and **75%** of **former grantees** state that they continue collaborating with partners they worked with under the SDF grant.
- However, many **grantees and partners** mention the availability of funding as a key condition for being able to continue with the type of training activities they conducted under the SDF
- Qualitative data indicates that some **grantees** have been able to attract funding from other donors due to the experience with the SDF and the capacities that have been built within their organizations.

Instant trainings

- **92%** of interviewed **livelihood partners** confirm that they plan to offer short trainings in the future as part of their livelihood activities. Some organizations had already engaged in these activities regularly before receiving support from the SDF. Others see a challenge in the availability of funding, as according to them, the organization of instant trainings comes with high financial costs.

Highlights

- The SDF has been successful in equipping youth with relevant and quality skills, which led to labour market integration of a significant share of graduates of non-formal trainings: 68% of graduates has indeed found wage employment (23,9%) or became self-employed (44,3%) after graduating from the non-formal trainings. However, the results of non-formal trainings on labour market integration of beneficiaries are not SDF inherent but strongly conditioned by contextual factors, i.e., the general labour market situation in Uganda.
- There is no single factor that could be highlighted for training effectiveness but rather a combination of various factors that can facilitate participants' access to the labour market. Regarding non-formal trainings, although data need to be interpreted cautiously, it seems that non-formal vocational trainings with industrial attachments and additional post-training support have led to more positive results than other forms of trainings in terms of labour market integration of beneficiaries. Overall, there is a clear direct link between the trainings' relevance and quality with their effectiveness.
- Regarding instant trainings, 59% of FGD participants stated that they put the skills received through the instant trainings into practice and as a result they were able to increase or diversify their income, as well as to save money. Key reasons given by those participants that did not improve their livelihoods are a lack of capital or lack of a venue and adequate equipment to start business activities, as well as difficulties with market access.
- Post-training support for instant trainings in the form of start-up kits and counselling, and other support provided by livelihood partners, especially through the organization of savings groups had a direct positive effect on beneficiaries' ability to increase or diversify income.
- Additional positive effects of instant trainings have been improved self-confidence of beneficiaries, improved personal networks and relations within the communities, health benefits, time savings especially for female participants from certain trades (eco-briquettes, energy-efficient stoves), and reduced household conflicts due to increased available resources.

Effectiveness of non-formal trainings

The key data collected through the research indicate that the SDF has been successful in equipping youth with relevant and quality skills, which led to labour market integration of a significant share of graduates of non-formal trainings. The majority of all key stakeholder types interviewed agree that the non-formal trainings have increased the young people's employability, and a high share of FGD participants confirmed that the trainings helped them to improve their skills and be better prepared for the world of work. These overall perceptions are also supported by analyses done on other skills development initiatives in informal economies that led to the overall conclusion that shorter-term skills trainings including vocational/technical skills development and soft skills development do lead to positive results, especially when they are designed to focus on vulnerable groups.³⁵

³⁵ Palmer, Robert, Jobs and Skills Mismatch in the Informal Economy, ILO 2017, p. 38

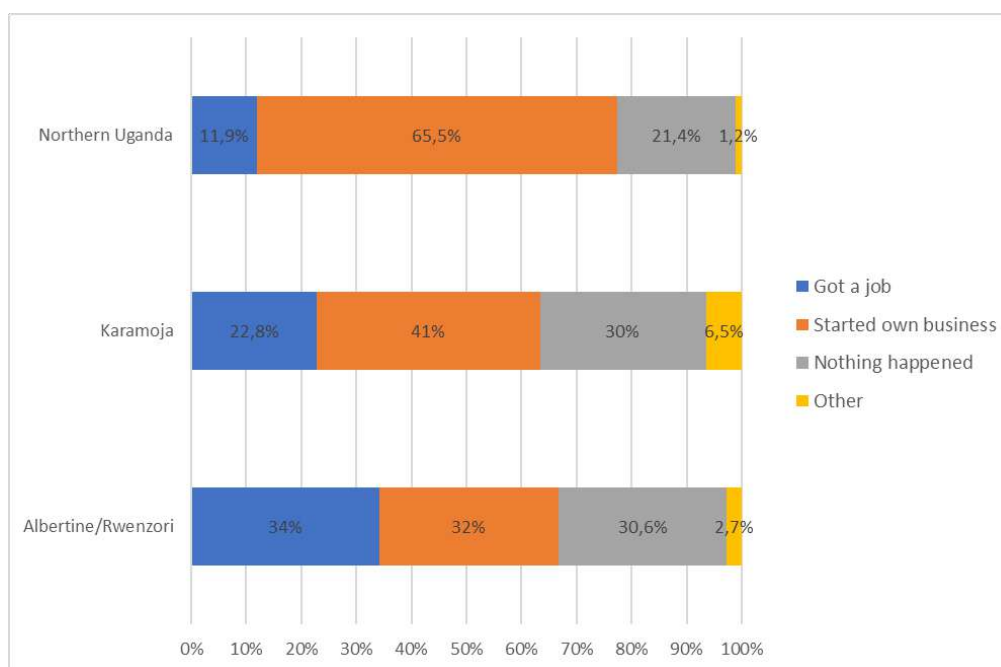
Success Story: Livelihood improvement: "I used to be idle most of the time, surviving of washing peoples' clothes. After the training, I started my hairdressing business from home and everyone in town now knows me for the best hair dos. I hope to be able soon to open my own salon."

- Graduate, hair dressing, Karamoja

According to the information provided by the participants of FGDs, a majority of 68% of graduates has indeed found wage employment (23,9%) or became self-employed (44,3%) after graduating from the non-formal trainings. Still, overall, 28% indicated that they have not yet transitioned to the world of work. Another 3,8% indicated other types of activities they are engaged in, which includes activities that are categorized as occasional labour or cases of self-employment not related to the training a participant took, as well as participants that continue studying.

These overall results are similar to the ones from the quantitative tracer study that found overall 65% of non-formal graduates to be integrated into the labour market after six months of graduation, with 16% in wage employment and 49% self-employed. The higher share of self-employment found in the tracer study compared to the action research might be due to differences in sampling; the tracer study covered a higher number of graduates from Northern Uganda and Karamoja while in the action research, the number of graduates from Albertine Rwenzori was higher. As can be seen below, the way that graduates found access to the labour market differs per region.

Figure 16: Labour market integration of FGD participants per region³⁶



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

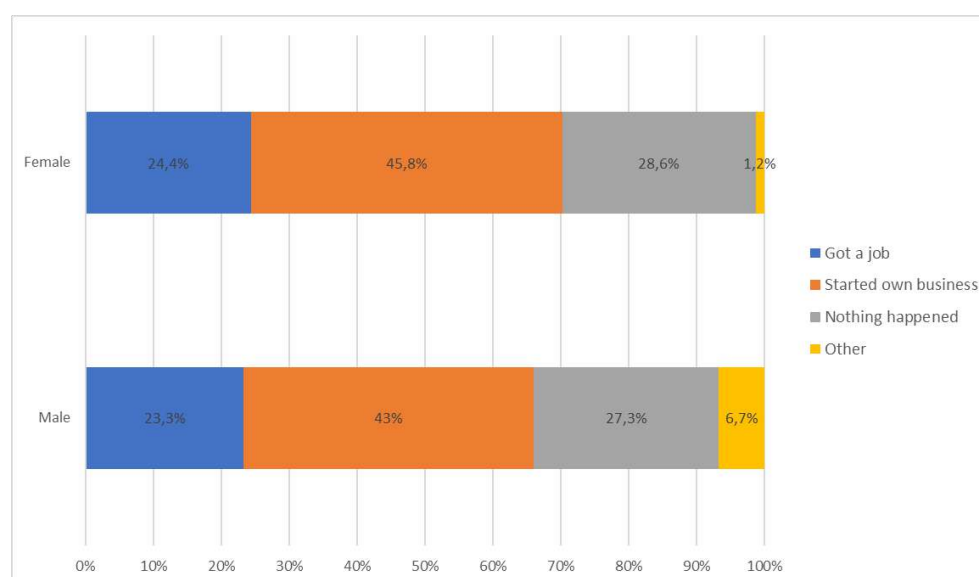
Data collected through the quantitative tracer study mostly confirm these tendencies; the biggest differences are self-employed in the Albertine Rwenzori region which the tracer study found to be only 16%, and wage employed in Karamoja that are 13% in the tracer study.

³⁶ Numbers based on FGD participants that had completed their trainings at the time of data collection only, and that gave an answer to the question. Total number of answers was 318 out of 478 total FGD participants.

The results are also in line with a recent World Bank study that identifies an increase of regional gaps in job opportunities, highlighting that paid employment has increased in and around Kampala as well as in the western and central regions of the country, while in the eastern region, self-employment and informal subsistence activities are the dominant forms of income generating activities and have even increased over the past years.³⁷ **In this regard, the results of non-formal trainings on labour market integration of beneficiaries are not SDF inherent but strongly conditioned by contextual factors.**

Overall, contrary to the results from the tracer study that found a higher share of female graduates to be self-employed and a higher share of male graduates to be in wage employment, the action research found no significant differences of labour market integration according to gender. This could again be due to the differences in the samples used for the two independent studies.

Figure 17: Labour market integration according to gender of FGD participants



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

However at the regional level, there are some significant differences: Albertine Rwenzori is the only region where a higher share of women (44%) than men (28%) found employment³⁸, whereas in Northern Uganda and Karamoja a higher share of male participants was successful in getting employed (11% and 27%, respectively compared to 4% and 20% of female participants) and a higher share of women opted for becoming self-employed (70% in Northern Uganda and 43% in Karamoja, compared to 61% and 36% of male participants). One factor that can explain this situation is the prevalent early marriage in Uganda and a high fertility rate that prevents women and girls from participating in the labour market to the same extent as men. A higher integration of women into the labour market in Albertine/Rwenzori might be due to the comparatively more developed economy of the region and a related higher demand for skilled workforce.

Wage Employment

Looking at FGD participants that indicated to have found wage employment per region, in Albertine Rwenzori, most did building and construction and hair dressing trainings. Those who did welding and metal fabrication trainings also were still quite successful in securing wage employment. In Northern Uganda, a higher share of those who found wage employment did hospitality and

³⁷ Merotto, Dino, Uganda: Jobs Strategy for Inclusive Growth, World Bank 2019, p.17. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2RQog9q>

³⁸ In total numbers, the same number of female and male participants indicated they found a job (19 each). However, the FGDs had more male than female participants.

catering, garment and fabric making, as well as hair dressing. Some of those who did motor vehicle mechanics trainings were also able to find wage employment. In Karamoja, carpentry and joinery and garment and fabric making are trainings with the highest share of participants that found wage employment.³⁹

Albertine/Rwenzori	Northern Uganda	Karamoja
Building and Construction (58%)	Hospitality and Catering (50%)	Carpentry and Joinery (63%)
Hair Dressing (50%)	Motorvehicle Mechanics (33%)	Garment and Fabric Making (56%)
Welding and Metal Fabrication (41%)	Hair dressing (14%)	Motorvehicle Mechanics (31%)

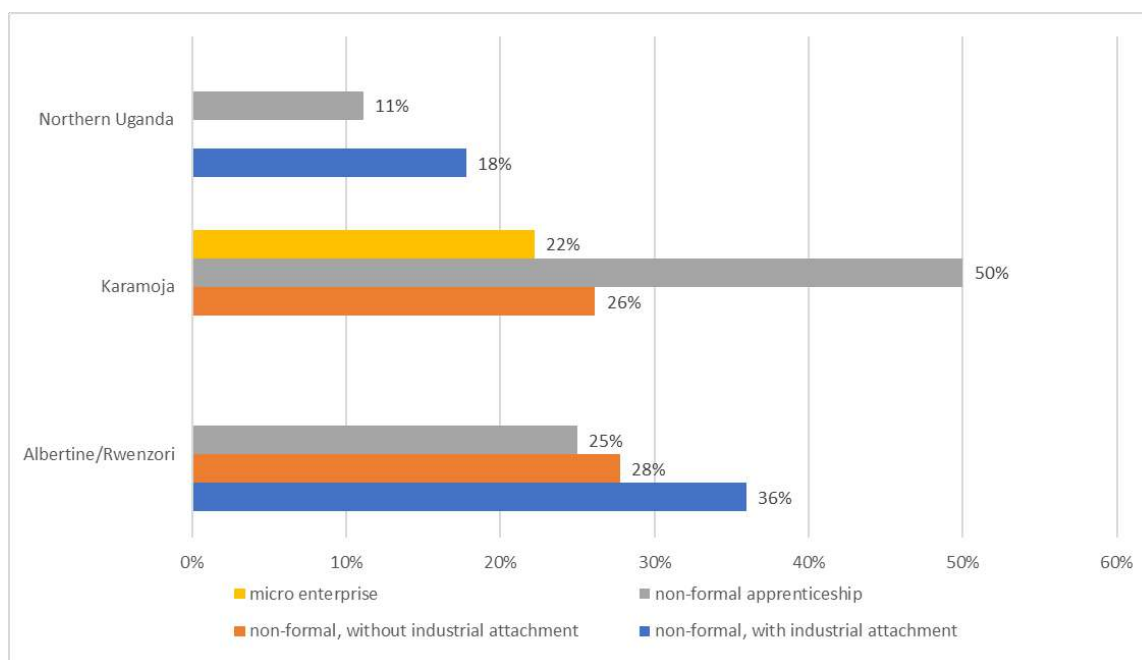
The women in Albertine Rwenzori who found a job come from different trades, including typically male trades such as building and construction, welding and metal fabrication, and plumbing. Others did hair dressing and cooking/bakery trainings. The majority stated to have found a job in building and construction and welding and metal fabrication, which points to a high demand of skilled workforce in these trades.

Looking at labour market integration per type of training provided, participants that did non-formal school-based training combined with industrial attachment have been most successful finding wage employment (28%), followed by non-formal school-based training without industrial attachment (25%). Of those who did non-formal apprenticeship trainings, as well as micro-enterprise trainings, still 17% found employment, respectively. Agriculture field trainings have not led to wage employment among the FGD participants. There might be some connection with the quality of these trainings, as the analysis in the chapter on quality has shown that beneficiaries of agriculture field trainings have been among the least satisfied with training quality.

Differences exist among regions, which could mean that different demands regarding skills levels of the local labour markets exist. However, it also needs to be noted that at the time of data collection, several trainings were still ongoing or had only recently been completed and thus, the results on labour market integration could not be taken into account. This includes several non-formal trainings with industrial attachment in Karamoja. While the below data insinuate that this training type has not led to wage employment of graduates in this region, the collected data are incomplete in this regard. As non-formal trainings with industrial attachments have led to the highest success rates of graduates that found employment in Northern Uganda and Albertine/Rwenzori, it is possible that in Karamoja the share of those in wage employment that did this type of training could also be significant. It can however be expected that due to the overall limited job opportunities in Karamoja, the number of graduates of those trainings that find wage employment would be low, probably similar to those in Northern Uganda. This aspect would need further data collection.

³⁹ Percentages indicate the share of FGD participants that did training in the specific topic and that indicated to have found employment.

Figure 18: Share of FGD participants that found wage employment, per training type per region



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

The majority of those who found a job did so in the private sector in nearby towns, and some also work in family businesses. Qualitative data indicates that a part of FGD participants have been retained at the businesses where they did their internships or apprenticeships, and some also indicated that they have been employed by the grantee or partner organization that organized the training.

Despite these successes, a closer look needs to be given to the quality of wage employment. The qualitative data from FGDs indicate that at least a part of beneficiaries are in unstable employment conditions, including seasonal or casual labour, which makes it necessary for them to engage in multiple income generating activities in parallel, either combining several jobs or combining waged employment with self-employment or subsistence activities, which is however a common characteristic of the informal economy that is predominant in Uganda. Some graduates also indicated that they found employment only short-term, and afterwards shifted to self-employment. On the other hand, quantitative data collected through the tracer study indicate that six months after graduation, 16% of the interviewed graduates are in a waged employment, which points to a certain sustainability of results achieved in this regard.⁴⁰

“The course involves a lot of practicals, and students are introduced to real work situations as opposed to those who just join the world of work from school. There is a lot of discipline and understanding of professionalism for those who have gone through skilling.”

WBL provider, Albertine Rwenzori

⁴⁰ The tracer study interviewed graduates six months after graduation, while the action research included FGDs with a mix of trainees and recent graduates, as well as graduates that had already finalized trainings several months ago. Apart from the differences in sampling for the two studies indicated above, the lower numbers for wage employment found in the tracer study could also indicate that indeed, a part of the employment situations are unstable and after several months some graduates transitioned into other situations, either becoming self-employed or unemployed.

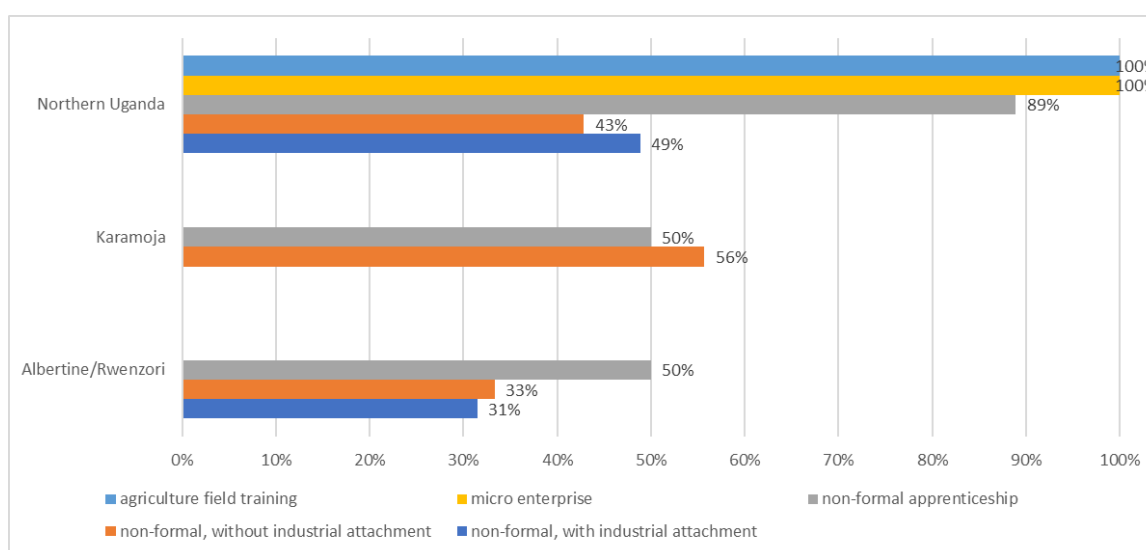
Self-employment

In Albertine Rwenzori, the majority of those who became self-employed did agribusiness trainings, followed by cooking/bakery and welding and metal fabrication. Overall, it seems that trainings related to agriculture or agribusiness mostly lead to self-employment in all regions.

Albertine/Rwenzori	Northern Uganda	Karamoja
Agribusiness (75%)	Agriculture (horticulture and livestock) (100%)	Agriculture (livestock) (100%)
Cooking/Bakery (58%)		Fashion and Design (100%)
Welding and Metal Fabrication (17%)	Garment and Fabric Making (94%)	Cooking/Bakery (94%)
	Catering, Cooking/Bakery (75%)	
	Hair Dressing	

Again, looking at the training types, overall, among those who did agriculture field trainings, non-formal apprenticeships and non-formal school-based trainings without industrial attachment, the highest shares of beneficiaries became self-employed. It needs to be noted that agriculture field training is covered in Northern Uganda only while micro-enterprise trainings are covered in Northern Uganda and Karamoja. However FGD participants from Karamoja that did micro enterprise trainings had, at the time of data collection, only recently completed the training and were only in the planning stage for starting a group business activity, so that they have not been categorized as being self-employed but rather fell into the category of “nothing happened yet”.

Figure 19: Share of FGD participants that became self-employed, per training type per region⁴¹



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Regarding self-employment, a part of the graduates is necessity driven as they could not find a job, and others opted for it rather out of personal motivation. In some cases, graduates also combine part-time employment with an entrepreneurial activity. Most FGD participants were positive that the trainings they took boosted their technical skills and also perceived the additional entrepreneurship and life skills trainings as a high added value. In addition to learning new skills,

⁴¹ Again the data need to be taken with a grain of salt given the incomplete picture they provide due to the limitations already mentioned above.

participants stated they gained more confidence and motivation to start a business and as a result of the trainings, they are more respected in their communities.

Effects on income

A majority of FGD participants who found employment or became self-employed confirms that they are now able to sustain themselves and family members, and some expressed they were able to raise their standard of living.

Success Story: Income diversification: "I have my own nursery bed of mahogany seedlings. People now know me and I am earning money to support my family."

- Graduate, agribusiness/green business Albertine Rwenzori

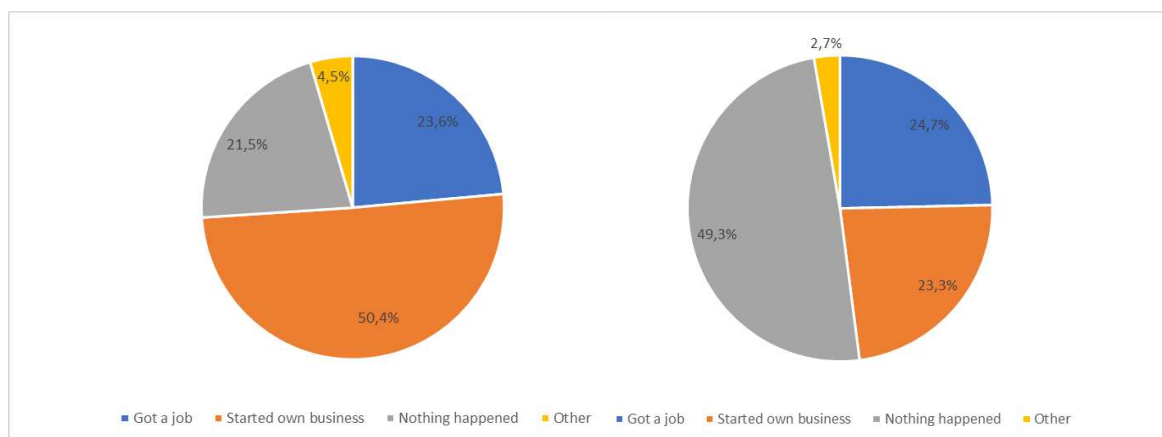
These qualitative data are confirmed by the quantitative tracer study that found that SDF graduates witnessed an average 82% increase of mean monthly income, with similar results per gender: overall, the average monthly income of non-formal training graduates was UGX 71.203, as compared to UGX 38.944 before the trainings. According to the tracer study results, beneficiaries from Northern Uganda registered the highest

increase of income (with no significant difference between refugee and host community members), followed by Karamoja and then Albertine Rwenzori.⁴² Tracer study data indicate that the highest increase of income has happened for graduates that took trainings in entrepreneurship and micro-enterprise, followed by motor vehicle mechanics, hospitality and catering, and beauty and care. Agricultural trades had the lowest levels of income changes. Again according to the tracer study, those who found wage employment registered a higher increase of income than those that became self-employed. As the action research did not put a focus on collecting quantitative data on income increase, no further support to these findings can be provided.

Post-training support, success factors and challenges

According to FGD data, one key factor that contributed to a successful integration into the labour market of participants was the provision of post-training support. Overall, 73% of FGD participants confirmed that they received some type of support after the training ended. While of those participants who indicated that they received some type of post-training support, 74% either found employment or started a business, for those that did not receive post-training support this was only the case for 50% of participants. However, post-training support only seemed to have an influence on the start of business activities of participants and not on salaried employment. This might be explained by the fact that the most common post-training support was given, according to FGD participants, in the form of startup-kits, usually materials and equipment related to the trade that participants took training in, which indeed had the aim to facilitate the start of business activities either of individual graduates or of groups of beneficiaries of the trainings.

⁴² The tracer study data on income increase are not disaggregated regarding the type of labour market integration. Please refer to the annex for a table with more information on income change of participants of non-formal trainings.

Figure 20: Labour market integration of FGD participants with post-training support and without⁴³

Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

A number of grantees and partners also provided other types of post-training support, including counselling, career guidance, support with job search or linking graduates with potential employers. A combination of several support types has also been provided by some. However, FGD participants who indicated they received these types of support were a minority compared to those who indicated they received startup-kits. In addition, while some FGD participants reported successful matching for jobs that were facilitated by the grantee or partner organization, in other cases participants stated that the introduction to potential employers was done at a rather superficial level, for example by a one-time event, and there was a lack of follow-up with potential employers so that in these cases, no significant results have been achieved.

Rather, a factor that facilitated finding employment have been family relations, as several FGD participants indicated they are now employed at a relative's business or found employment through contacts of a family member. This is again typical for the informal economy in Uganda where labour relations are mostly based on kinship or personal and social ties⁴⁴, and further points to the fact that there is a demand for better labour market information systems in Uganda that would help young people identify vacancies and job opportunities. Participants also highlight that the certificates obtained after graduating from trainings have been valuable for finding employment, as they can be shown as a proof of the skills received.

Looking at the training descriptions of grantees covered by the action research, most seem to have indeed put more focus on integrating entrepreneurship skills and business creation support into the trainings than on supporting graduates to find employment. In this regard, some FGD participants expressed that they would like to receive more support with job search, indicating that some grantees/partners could still improve on their post-training support activities.

Challenges for starting self-employment have been mentioned by beneficiaries mainly in cases where participants did not receive start-up kits, where the provision of start-up kits has been delayed or where start-up kits were of insufficient quality or quantity. In addition, while in some cases successful groups have been set up after trainings to jointly implement an income generating activity, qualitative data indicates that FGD participants often see the provision of start-up kits to a group of graduates as a hindrance. This is because graduates find it challenging to jointly use the tools and

"A challenge was late delivery of some training tools (including start-up kits) and delayed fund release for the trainees therefore the institution had to cater for some of their needs and get a refund".

Grantee, Northern Uganda.

⁴³ From the 364 FGD participants that had completed trainings at the time of data collection, 242 indicated they received post-training support and 73 stated they did not. Eight participants did not answer the question.

⁴⁴ Uganda Labour Market Profile 2019, Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA), p.12

materials provided, especially in cases where beneficiaries live in different districts. Several participants also mentioned a lack of start-up capital and additional counselling as a hindrance to a successful business creation. These perceptions are confirmed by data on the entrepreneurial landscape in Uganda that highlight access to skills and access to finance as the two major hurdles that young entrepreneurs face for creating but then especially for maintaining and growing a business. While Uganda has one of the highest rates of entrepreneurial activities in the world, due to the lack of a supportive ecosystem the discontinuation rate for businesses is also one of the highest, and Uganda's young people are not well equipped to manage commercial enterprises beyond the one-person start-up phase.⁴⁵ While the SDF did not put a focus on access to finance in its design due to budgetary restrictions and the defined duration of the grants, connecting young people to post-training business support schemes including access to finance services could be better integrated into a future Ugandan skills development fund.⁴⁶

The work-based learning (WBL) approach according to many interviewees is another success factor of the SDF, as it equips graduates with skills that businesses need. Some FGD participants mentioned that their supervisors at the industrial attachment served them as mentors who would support them with developing a business idea. In addition, the WBL providers where trainees did their apprenticeships or internships have sometimes directly employed them upon graduation, although the extent to which this happened is not completely clear: although 79% of WBL providers stated they retain or aim to retain a part of the trainees that did practical trainings with them, only a smaller share of FGD participants indicated that they have been employed directly at the company where they did the industrial attachment. However, some interviewed WBL providers also said that if they do not have enough capacities to absorb trainees due to a lack of vacancies, they also refer them to other companies they have contacts with. This could serve as a multiplier effect at the local level for bringing youth into employment, but it has not been explicitly confirmed by other stakeholders. Overall, this information points to a rather low absorption capacity of the labour market, especially in Northern Uganda and Karamoja where the economy is characterized by micro and small informal enterprises.⁴⁷

In addition, external factors outside of the control of the SDF need to be considered to conclude on the effectiveness of trainings. A World Bank report⁴⁸ highlights a number of job challenges in Uganda, among them:

- Slowing economic growth combined with an increased influx of available labour force
- Limited private sector demand for workers
- Jobs are not shifting into higher productivity firms
- Deteriorating labour force participation especially among youth and women
- Deteriorating quality of jobs

Considering this context, which indicates that the Ugandan labour market is in large parts characterized by a low skills equilibrium⁴⁹, improving skills development for young and vulnerable people is only one measure to be taken in order to facilitate access to the labour market, and while a share of SDF graduates have indeed been absorbed, in the medium to long term skills development needs to go hand in hand with other measures and policies that promote economic

⁴⁵ See for example Namatovu, Rebecca, *Supporting Africa's Young Entrepreneurs: an investment in job creation and future prosperity for all: Uganda*, GEM 2013, or *GEM Uganda Insights for Policy*, both available at <https://www.gemconsortium.org/report>

⁴⁶ This does not necessarily mean that the fund itself should provide these services, but that the existing ecosystem could be better leveraged to connect graduates with other organizations providing this support. Initiatives supported by ILO or the Uganda Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Initiative led by the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs could be considered for the creation of synergies. For more information see <https://www.andeglobal.org/page/UgandaEcosystem/Uganda-Entrepreneurial-Ecosystem-Initiative.htm>

Report of the first phase downloadable here: <https://bit.ly/3bAcfNb>

⁴⁷ Merotto, Dino, *Uganda: Jobs Strategy for Inclusive Growth*, World Bank 2019, p. 17

⁴⁸ Idem.

⁴⁹ A low skills equilibrium is a situation where skills demand and skills supply are both low.

productivity and job creation as well as the strengthening of the entrepreneurial ecosystem so that the labour market can absorb the skilled labour force.⁵⁰

Effectiveness of instant trainings



Success Story: A single mother diversifies and increases her income: "My overall livelihood has improved because my earnings are remarkably higher than they used to be before the instant training".

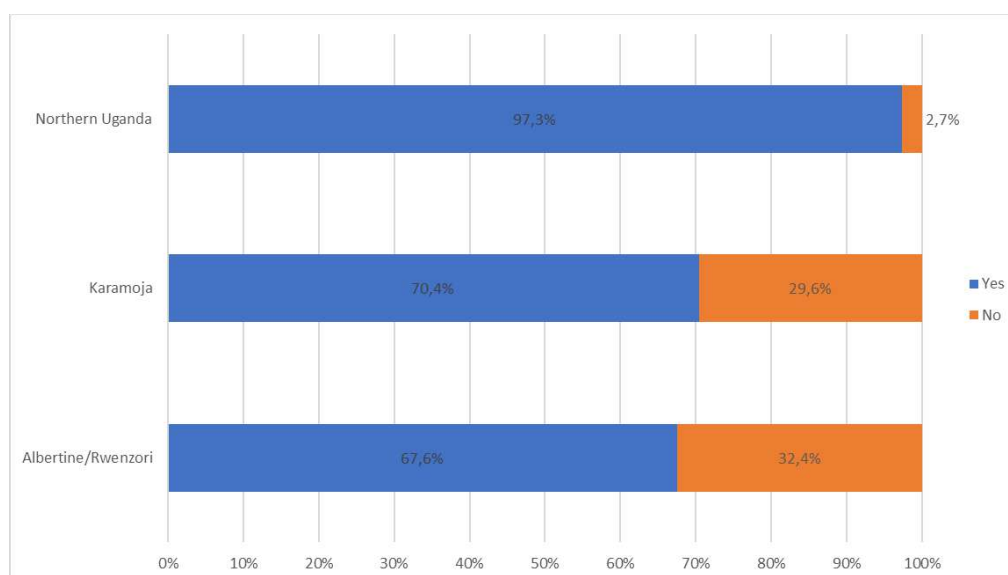
- Instant training participant, Albertine Rwenzori

Instant trainings had the aim to improve beneficiaries' livelihoods by equipping them with skills that enable them to improve or diversify their income generating activities.

Interviewed stakeholders are more sceptical on the effectiveness of instant trainings compared to their perceptions on the effectiveness of non-formal trainings. This is mostly due to a less rigorous monitoring on the implementation of instant trainings due to limited resources of SSU (among others, capacities of Enabel field staff), which has

led to less sound information on the results achieved. FGD participants however are highly positive, with overall 81% confirming that the trainings helped them to improve or diversify their income generating activities. Some differences can be noted among regions.

Figure 21: FGD participants stating instant trainings helped to better execute income generating activities or to diversify income



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

While in Northern Uganda, almost the same share of male and female participants is positive about this result, in Karamoja and Albertine Rwenzori male participants have a more positive perception than the female participants. Regarding trades, those participants that have more negative perceptions on the effectiveness of trainings on their income generating activities did trainings in handicraft - leather work and shoe making as well as in bakery/rolex making, followed by energy-efficient stove production and coding.

Key reasons given by those participants are a lack of capital or lack of a venue and adequate equipment to start business activities, as well as difficulties with market access. Some also

⁵⁰ For more information, see Palmer, Robert, Jobs and Skills Mismatch in the Informal Economy, ILO 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2VIlwft>

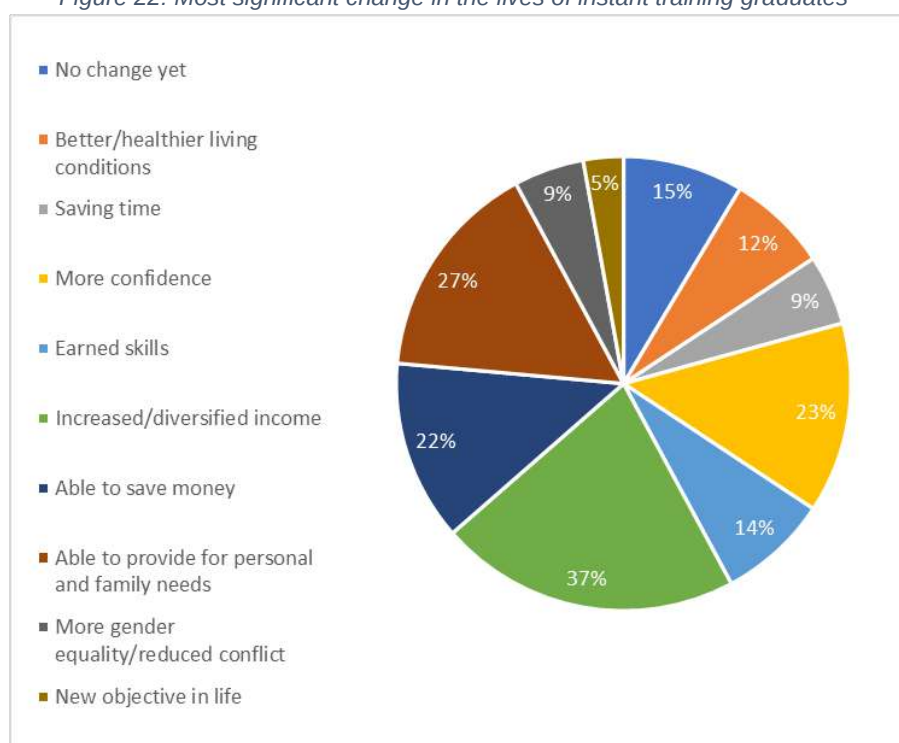
lamented the short duration of trainings. Regarding coding, some participants questioned the relevance of the training topic in the economic context of Northern Uganda.

In a particular case for a training on energy-efficient stove production, beneficiaries also mentioned that other village members had been trained on charcoal production through another project and as the energy efficient stoves work with firewood, due to the preference of the community to use charcoal, there is no market for the stoves. This example highlights the need to implement training needs assessments in which the market potential in the beneficiaries' communities might have to be considered.

These findings are further supported by tracer study data that highlight that for energy-efficient stove production 14% of respondents started an income generating activity after the training in Northern Uganda and Karamoja and mentioned limited market access due to low purchasing power as a main hindrance. For bakery/rolex making, the tracer study found that about 38% of respondents started an income generating activity after the training and 92-95% of respondents with an income generating activity before the training increased their income afterwards, however the increase of income is the third lowest compared to other trades. This is also true for handicraft - leather work and shoe making which the tracer study found to have the lowest increase of income among all trades that were part of the study.

When asked about the most significant change that has happened in the participants' lives due to the instant trainings they took, the qualitative data can be grouped into the following categories:

Figure 22: Most significant change in the lives of instant training graduates⁵¹



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Looking at answers related to financial aspects, 59% of FGD participants stated that they put the skills received through the instant trainings into practice and as a result they were able to increase or diversify their income, as well as to save money. Nearly one third also said that they are now able to provide for their personal needs and to take better care of their families, including paying

⁵¹ This was an open question, hence participants mentioned multiple aspects in their answers. Only answers of those participants have been considered that answered positively to the question whether the trainings helped to improve or diversify their income generating activity. The total number of answers received is 81.

for food and children's school fees. Individual participants indicated that they now have a more stable monthly income of in between 60.000 and UGX 120.000, which they perceive to be an improvement compared to their situation before the trainings. These qualitative data are confirmed by the quantitative tracer study that found the average monthly income of graduates of instant trainings to be UGX 78,618.27, meaning an average increase of income of UGX 26,653.31 as compared to income before the training.⁵² According to the tracer study, 75% of instant training graduates have been integrated into the labour market (with no significant differences per gender) and 69% indicated to have improved their socioeconomic situation (with more male beneficiaries that female ones stating this). According to tracer study data, the strongest increase of income has been registered for beneficiaries in Northern Uganda, followed by those in Karamoja. In Albertine Rwenzori, the lowest increase in income has been registered. These findings support the numbers shown in figure 22 that also point to the most positive results achieved in Northern Uganda, followed by Karamoja and then Albertine Rwenzori. Possibly, the assumption behind the instant trainings that the local markets do not demand qualified craftsmen across all types of trades and the demand for high-quality goods and services is low due to low purchasing power of the population, holds more true for the northern and eastern regions of the country than for the comparatively more developed economies of the central and western regions.

Other significant changes mentioned by FGD participants refer to **“soft” improvements in the beneficiaries’ livelihoods**, with a significant share of FGD participants stating that the trainings have boosted their self-confidence through the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Many mentioned that they are now more recognized and respected in their communities and that they have improved their personal networks. In addition, especially female participants that took trainings in energy saving stove production or eco-briquettes making highlighted that the use of these products leads to a healthier living environment and time savings due to reduced need to fetch firewood or make use of charcoal for cooking. A positive side effect, although not significant - only mentioned by 9% of FGD participants - has been a reduction of household conflicts and more respect towards female participants, as some can now better provide for the family and more availability of financial means led to reduced stress.⁵³

Post-training support, success factors and challenges

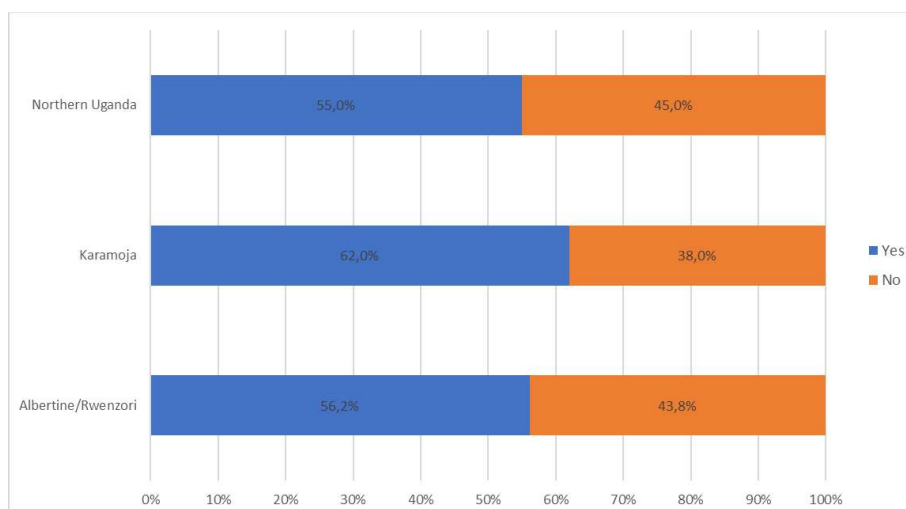
Overall, 57% of instant training FGD participants confirmed that they received support after the trainings ended, with no significant differences across regions, trades⁵⁴ or gender.

⁵² Please refer to the annex for a table with more information on income change of instant training participants.

⁵³ This was mentioned both by female FGD participants that perceived to be more respected, as well as by male participants that said they have reduced household conflicts. As this question was not specifically asked but it was a topic brought up in answers to an open question, it is possible that the effect on conflict reduction is even stronger than shown here.

⁵⁴ The only trades where a share of participants indicated they did not receive post-training support were bakery/rolex making and beads making. In addition, a group that did an instant training in coding did not receive post-training support, however, this training topic has been rather exceptional and was an add-on to a non-formal training.

Figure 23: Share of instant trainees that received post-training support, per region

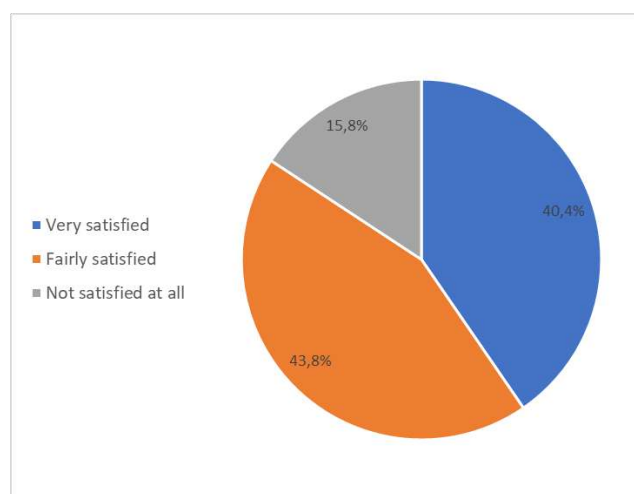


Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

The type of post-training support received were mostly start-up kits, with 53,4% of FGD participants who received post-training support indicating this type. Another 33% received a combination of start-up kits and counselling services, 9,1% received counselling only, and 4,5% indicated other types of support received, mostly in the form of certificates as proof of the skill acquired.

Overall, instant training participants showed high satisfaction with the post-training support received, with similar results in Northern Uganda and Karamoja. The highest share of participants not satisfied with the support given comes from the Albertine/Rwenzori region. Here, participants from various trainings complained about insufficient quantity of materials received.

Figure 24: Satisfaction of post-training support of instant trainees



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Positive examples were highlighted by participants that indicate that post-training support in the form of start-up kits in combination with counselling services led to the successful creation of group business activities, for example for selling eco-briquettes.

In addition, a share of FGD participants positively highlighted that the livelihood partner that offered the training further supported them by organizing savings groups, which according to the qualitative

information had a high positive effect on the beneficiaries' ability to save money and make investments that can further improve their livelihoods, such as in livestock.

A certain relation exists between the provision of post-training support and the perception of whether the trainings helped to improve or diversify beneficiaries' income generating activities: of those who did receive post-training support, 86% see an improvement in this regard, versus 74% of those who did not receive post-training support. On the other hand, a lack of equipment/materials, a lack of market access and a lack of capital are the main challenge mentioned by FGD participants that perceived that the trainings have not helped to improve or diversify income generating activities, pointing at the need for post-training support to enhance effectiveness.

While overall being positive about the results of trainings on the end beneficiaries, interviewed instant training livelihood partners and training providers are of the opinion that more needs to be done to support instant trainees after the trainings for being successful with their income generating endeavours, including coaching/mentoring but also support with marketing the specific products in the communities especially for products such as energy saving stoves or eco-briquettes. In this regard, there still seemed to be some confusion regarding the institutional roles for instant trainings, as some livelihood partners requested more support from Enabel's side for post-training support, while from Enabel's perspective this would be the responsibility of the livelihood partner. A clearer description of the expected services to be provided with related responsibilities of the livelihood partner might be beneficial, as well as a closer monitoring regarding the adherence to the principles and division of roles according to the MoUs between Enabel and the livelihood partners.

In sum, there is no single factor that could be highlighted for training effectiveness but rather a combination of various factors that can facilitate participants' access to the labour market. Regarding non-formal trainings, although data need to be interpreted cautiously, it seems that non-formal vocational trainings with industrial attachments and additional post-training support have led to more positive results than other forms of trainings in terms of labour market integration of beneficiaries. Overall, there is a clear direct link between the trainings' relevance and quality with their effectiveness. **While the SDF has achieved positive results for both non-formal and instant trainings, these are also highly conditioned by the overall labour market context in Uganda that bring some limitations for a successful transition into the world of work for the country's young population.**

Facilitating and hindering factors for the SDF's effectiveness	
Facilitating non-formal trainings: Increased exposure to private sector through industrial attachments/apprenticeships Post-training support, start-up kits have proven successful if start-up kits are provided with sufficient quality and quantity For self-employment, additional follow-up /coaching in combination with start-up kits is a best practice Individual start-up kits seem to be more effective than start-up kits provided to larger groups Provision of training certificates, especially DIT assessments and in certain trades, international certification (relevant, e.g., for welding and metal fabrication)	Hindering non-formal trainings: Insufficient start-up kits, distribution of start-up kits to large groups, and delays in their distribution Limited support with job search or linking graduates with potential employers Limited labour market information Low absorption capacity of the private sector, especially in Northern Uganda and Karamoja For self-employment, limited linkages to entrepreneurial ecosystem and especially access to finance services

Facilitating instant trainings:

Needs assessments conducted by Enabel and the livelihood partners

Good quality of trainings (trainers and training materials)

Post-training support: start-up kits in combination with counselling (to groups or individuals), if provided with sufficient quality and quantity; as well as supporting savings groups

Hindering instant trainings:

Insufficient analysis of market potential for specific trades previous to trainings, also due to lack of availability of sound data

Insufficient scope of post-training support (e.g. limited support for access to markets, limited quantity, or low quality of start-up kits)

Challenging economic and labour market context

Unclear division of/adherence to responsibilities between actors involved



4.5 Internal Efficiency

The analysis of efficiency of the SDF looks at two different aspects: on the one hand, overall cost efficiency and in addition, internal efficiency in terms of administrative and management processes, human resources allocation and knowledge management. The key assumption to be assessed is that through the application of streamlined and efficient management processes, the SDF ensured and optimal use of resources to achieved intended results and value for money.

Key data from the research

General efficiency

- 69% of interviewed SSU management staff and 42% of field staff think that the human resources structure for an efficient management of the SDF is very or fairly adequate.

Non-formal trainings

- 91% of interviewed field staff and 80% of SSU management staff perceive the grant application and evaluation process to be very or fairly efficient, and 88% of interviewed grantees and all interviewed partners say the application process to the grant was very or fairly efficient.
- Regarding implementation of grants, 50% of interviewed SSU field staff rate the capacity of the selected organizations to deliver on their intended results in an efficient way at high level and 50% at medium level. They acknowledge that significant investments had to be made for capacity building of grantees and partners to support them with administrative and financial processes, which in the end showed positive results.
- 94% of interviewed grantees and all interviewed partners say that the administrative and financial processes throughout training delivery are very or fairly efficient.

Instant trainings

- 64% of interviewed livelihood partners and 89% of interviewed training providers rate the efficiency of the application process to the SDF as very high to high.
- Regarding administrative and financial processes throughout training delivery, 82% of livelihood partners state them to be very or fairly efficient. Interviewed training providers rank the efficiency lower but are overall positive, with 67% saying very or fairly efficient.
- With the onboarding of an instant training manager at HQ level, SSU staff perceives that instant training management has improved but also acknowledges that key challenges remain at field level with insufficient processes in place to guarantee a proper quality control and follow-up on results.

Highlights

- With its investments the SDF has achieved and mostly exceeded its targets, therefore overall showing a high value for money. Overall, the financial implementation of the SDF has been efficient, in compliance with Enabel's rules and regulations. Stakeholders agree that Enabel has sound management processes in place that ensure smooth implementation and due to the results-based management, safeguards transparency and positive results.
- While key challenges remained, such as high staff turnover and some overlapping responsibilities among staff as well as fragmented internal communication and knowledge management, the overall perception on efficiency has improved over time due to filled vacancies at Kampala offices and increased staff allocation to the field level.
- Perceptions of stakeholders on the efficiency of the application and selection as well as implementation processes have improved over time, indicating that a learning process has taken place based on experiences from the first calls, showing Enabel's capacity to identify challenges and develop adequate mitigation measures.
- Grantees and partners especially value the support received from Enabel field staff for reporting and highlight that it has enhanced their overall institutional capacities. Interviewed staff also showed satisfaction with the monitoring process of routine spot checks, monthly monitoring and joint quarterly support visits to grantees.
- Regarding the costs of the trainings and value for money, no benchmark data exist to objectively assess this aspect. However, some interviewees see the costs as adequate, and believe the SDF produces good value for money. There might be a certain trade-off between benefiting mostly vulnerable populations and cost-efficiency, an aspect that will have to be well balanced in the design of a future nationally owned skills development fund that should facilitate an "open" BTVET system accessible for all Ugandans including the most vulnerable. The provision of different funding windows with higher and lower grant amounts as done by the pilot SDF can be a good practice in this regard.

Cost efficiency and value for money

The SDF established a number of objectives and targets to be reached through its implementation.

Table 4: Targets and achievements of the SDF

Objectives	Targets	Status ⁵⁵
Number of people trained, non-formal trainings	Overall, the SDF aimed to reach 8.400 beneficiaries	5.455
Number of people trained, instant trainings		2.965

⁵⁵ As at end 2019, numbers based on the SSU annual report as well as Enabel monitoring data.

Labour market integration of beneficiaries, non-formal trainings	50%	65-68% (based on tracer study and action research results)
Improvement in socio-economic situation (income/livelihood) 6 months after graduation, non-formal trainings	50%	76% (based on tracer study results)
Employers' satisfaction with graduates' performance, non-formal trainings	66%	86% (based on tracer study results)
Albertine Rwenzori region		
% of youth trained	80%	n/a
% of women & girls trained	30%	48%
Northern Uganda		
% of refugee/host communities trained	50/50 (original target was 70/30, changed to 50/50 in 2019)	62% refugees/38% host community
% youth trained	80%	n/a
% of women & girls trained	35%	60%
Karamoja		
% Karamojong/non-Karamojong trained	70/30	92% /8%
% youth trained	80%	n/a
% of women & girls trained	30%	61%

Results show that with its investments the SDF has achieved and mostly exceeded its targets, therefore overall showing a high value for money. Overall, the financial implementation of the SDF has been efficient, in compliance with Enabel's rules and regulations, as evidenced by external audit reports. In this regard, it can be highlighted that inappropriate use of funds by grantees has been minimal – about 1% according to the SSU annual report 2019 – which many interviewed stakeholders attribute to the transparent and clear guidelines and rules established by Enabel. The results-based financing approach of the SDF in this regard can be highlighted as a good practice.

Regarding fund implementation over the years, some delays in budget execution have been registered in the initial years of the SDF, however in 2018 and 2019 implementation accelerated so that by end of 2019, 93% of the fund has been executed. Some delays in signing grant agreements in the last calls mean that a part of the trainings will still be implemented beyond the original end date of the SDF (June 2020), however, this is done under no-cost extensions and it is

envisaged that by end of 2020 or early 2021 all trainings will have concluded. Overall, no important budgetary adjustments had to be made for SDF implementation.⁵⁶

Costs of non-formal trainings

By end of 2019, the SDF had awarded 46 grant agreements for a total amount of EUR 5.8 million, through which about 5.500 trainees completed non-formal trainings. As several trainings were still ongoing at the time of submitting this report, this number is likely to increase by end of 2020 to approximately 6.100.⁵⁷ According to the SSU annual report 2019, most training grants were successfully implemented within time. Only in Northern Uganda, five grants needed a no-cost extension because of administrative delays for closing the grant agreements.

According to financial data provided by Enabel, the overall average unit cost of non-formal trainings has been UGX 2.397.998, or EUR 599.⁵⁸ Quite some differences exist among the different trainings, with the lowest unit cost of UGX 483.241 or EUR 120 for a training on bee keeping, and the highest of UGX 3.966.687 or EUR 991 for a training on hospitality and catering, both conducted in the Albertine/Rwenzori region. On average, no significant differences exist regarding unit costs per region, although the trainings in Albertine/Rwenzori were slightly less expensive than the ones conducted in Northern Uganda or Karamoja. In addition, unit costs for the second call in Albertine/Rwenzori seem to have increased compared to unit costs of the first call.

Regarding the costs of the trainings and the value for money, most interviewed SSU staff did not have a strong opinion, also due to the lack of existing benchmark data. However, some interviewees said they see the costs as adequate, and believe the SDF produces good value for money. One interviewee criticized that too much of the budget is spent on the start-up kits. From a cost-efficiency perspective, another interviewee said that grant amounts should be increased to a minimum of EUR 100.000, as it is more costly to manage a high number of smaller grantees than to follow up on fewer but bigger projects. This interviewee also questioned whether such small projects could produce the intended results at a reasonable cost. On the other hand, interviewed staff highlighted that the SDF's objective to reach especially vulnerable groups made it necessary to design funding windows for smaller organizations that are closer to the targeted communities.

In this sense, there might be a certain trade-off between benefiting mostly vulnerable populations and cost-efficiency, an aspect that will have to be well balanced in the design of a future nationally owned skills development fund that should facilitate an "open" BTVET system accessible for all Ugandans including the most vulnerable. The provision of different funding windows with higher and lower grant amounts as done by the SDF can be a good practice in this regard.

Cost of instant trainings

156 instant trainings were completed by the end of 2019 for a total amount of about 500.000 euros. About 3.000 completed the SDF instant trainings (10-100 hours), indicating an average training cost of EUR 3.205 and an average unit cost of EUR 166.

Individual instant training costs varied in between UGX 53.859.000 or EUR 13.464 and UGX 5.954.000 or EUR 1.488 per training of a group of 25 participants.⁵⁹ According to the available data, training costs differ greatly per training topic, with trainings on more basic products such as beads making or soap making having the lowest costs, while trainings on more complex products, for example solar panel maintenance and repair have highest costs, most probably due to the necessary equipment and materials and a longer training duration. Trainings on livestock management for different types of livestock have costs in a middle range of UGX 11.080.000 (EUR

⁵⁶ SSU annual report 2019, p. 13

⁵⁷ Based on monitoring data provided by Enabel.

⁵⁸ As several trainings were still ongoing, financial information only includes the first calls in all regions as well as part of the trainings of the second call in Albertine/Rwenzori.

⁵⁹ Based on training costs indicated by Enabel for a limited number of trainings only. Unit costs per training are not available.

2.770) and UGX 28.750.000 (EUR 7.187). No significant differences seem to exist regarding costs per region.

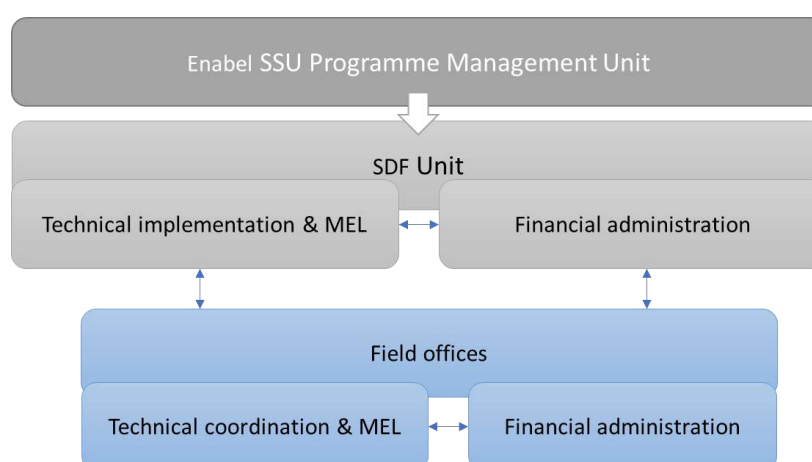
Overall, it can be stated that the procurement of trainings was done at a relatively low cost, thanks to the negotiated procedure and a market assessment of training provision that was carried out before the system was set up.

Internal efficiency

Management and administration

SDF implementation has been managed by the SDF unit under Enabel's SSU Programme Management Unit. The SDF Unit located at Enabel's Kampala offices was responsible for all measures regarding SDF operation including general administration and supervision, financial administration, and logistics, in close coordination with the field offices in each region.

Figure 25: Overall management structure of the SDF



Source: own elaboration based on desk review

Key tasks and responsibilities of the SDF unit and field offices can be broadly categorized according to the key phases of fund implementation:

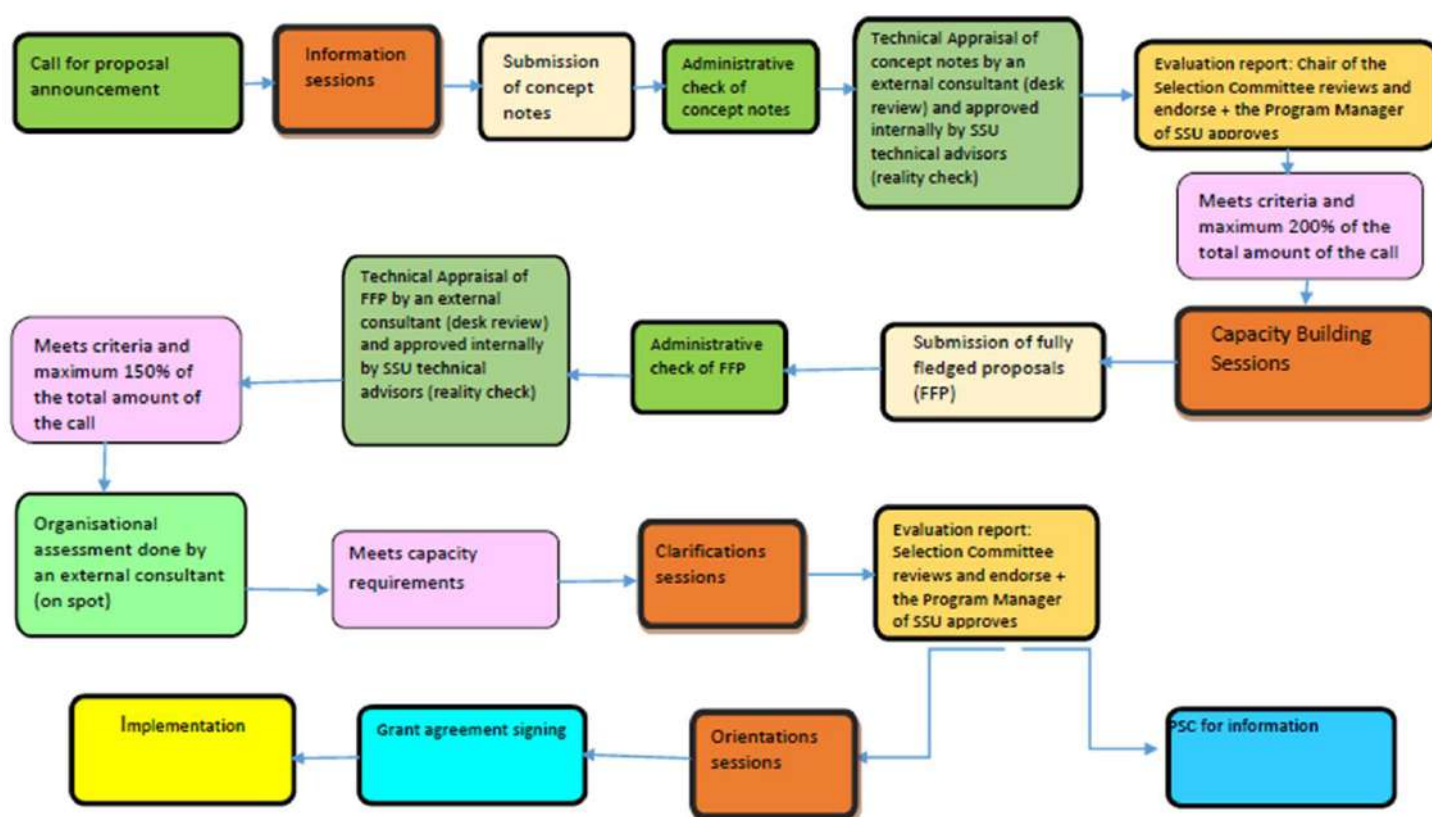
- Managing the application process
- Coordinating the implementation process
- Conducting follow-up/monitoring and evaluation

The following sections highlight processes and achievements regarding these aspects for the management of the non-formal trainings and instant trainings.

Non-formal trainings

Non-formal trainings involved an extensive application and selection process that involved staff at Kampala level and field offices, external consultants, as well as the SDF selection committee composed of representatives from government, private sector, and donor organizations. The process included the following steps:

Figure 26: Key steps for the application and selection of grantees



Source: Enabel

In this process, the SDF unit worked with an external consulting firm that was responsible for the technical evaluation of proposals and a due diligence assessment of the applicant organizations, as well as an assessment of organizational capacities. This involved desk review and additionally onsite visits to the applicants. Organizational assessments covered areas of general characteristics, technical capacity of the applicants to execute the trainings, control environment, financial planning, financial management, audit, and procurement. The consultants rated the applicants according to different risk levels: low, moderate, and significant. Lead applicants that were rated of significant risk were not considered while if the selected partners were of a high risk with a lead partner of low risk, appropriate mitigation strategies were put in place, especially in the form of capacity building.

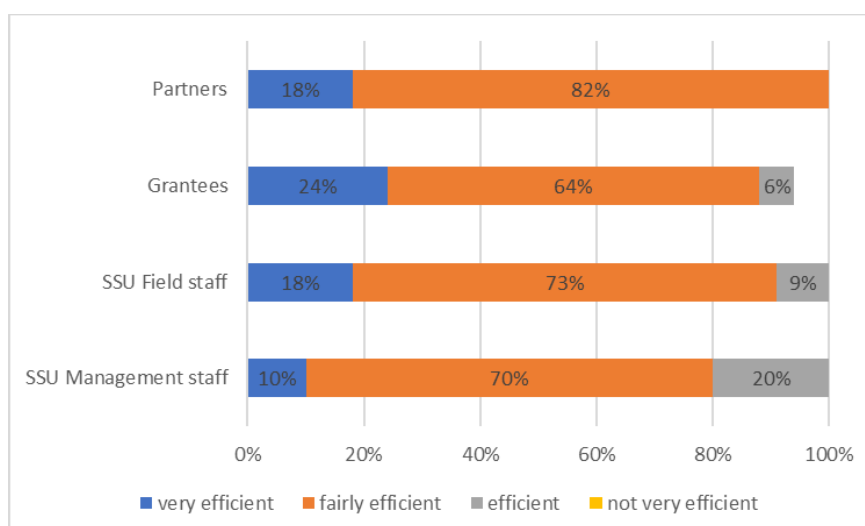
Based on the results of the administrative and technical appraisals, the SDF unit pre-selected a number of finalists that were then additionally assessed by the tripartite selection committee through in-person meetings and presentations. The selection committee took the decisions regarding the final selection of applicants.

Both applicants and SSU staff positively valued the transparency of the application process. Although some complained about the high level of bureaucracy and the length of the process, in general there is an understanding that the process ensured quality and showed Enabel's integrity as it prevented bias, partiality or undue influence favouring "renown" institutions or individuals.

"Enabel ensured that information reached everyone who had applied. They held an introduction meeting and we were taken through the application procedure. They worked with us step by step to the end. What could be improved is the feedback to applicants that were not selected on why they did not get the grant."

Partner, Albertine Rwenzori

Figure 27: Efficiency of the application and selection process according to key stakeholders⁶⁰



Source: own elaboration based on interview data

Perceptions of stakeholders on the efficiency of the application and selection process have improved over time, indicating that a learning process has taken place based on experiences from the first calls, showing Enabel's capacity to identify challenges and develop adequate mitigation measures. Improvements in the application process included the increased support given to applicants for elaborating proposals in compliance with SDF guidelines, which has been deemed helpful by interviewed grantees and partners. Although grantees and partners still perceived the whole process to be bureaucratic and rather long, most state that the SDF guidelines are clear and transparent and that the provided support helped to overcome all challenges. Interviewed staff also highlighted that due to improved procedures, it was possible to reduce the application and selection process from initially nine months to six months.

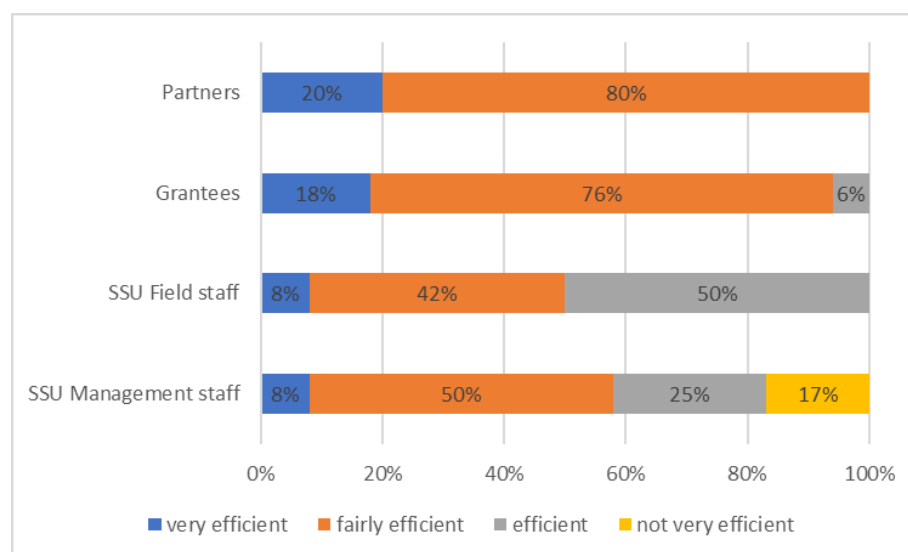
Regarding the selection process, some interviewed stakeholders mentioned that the selection committee could be more involved. While the chair of the selection committee has been briefed throughout all stages of the selection procedure, the fact that the other selection committee members only participated in the final stage of selection limited their engagement and ownership from the viewpoint of interviewees. In addition, interviewed SSU staff mentioned that the evaluation and selection process could rely more strongly on internal capacities rather than outsourcing part of the process to an external consultancy. Initially, there were also concerns regarding on what grounds the consultants came to their conclusions, which have been mitigated by an improved evaluation grid for the assessment of proposals.

Still, some interviewed grantees mentioned that Enabel could improve on the feedback given to all applicants regarding the reasons why they were selected or not.

⁶⁰ Six percent of grantees indicated "not sure" as an answer, which is the missing percentage to 100% in the figure.

Perceptions on the efficiency of **implementation** processes have also improved over time among all stakeholders.

Figure 28: Efficiency of implementation processes according to key stakeholders



Source: own elaboration based on interview data

Stakeholders overall agree that Enabel has sound management processes in place that ensure smooth implementation and due to the results-based management, safeguards transparency and positive results. Key challenges are mostly related to difficulties to comply with Enabel's financial reporting and procurement procedures. While some interviewed grantees complained about the administrative hassle and find regulations to be strict, they also acknowledged that the processes guarantee transparency and good use of the funds. In addition, they highly valued the support given by Enabel field staff with any issues they might face throughout the implementation and reporting phases. In this regard, during implementation Enabel field staff provided constant support to ensure that actions are implemented according to SDF regulations. Eventually, external audits were done as an additional impartial control mechanism.

Nevertheless, the support given could not prevent in all cases that funds disbursements were delayed because some grantees did not fully comply with the required reporting, which negatively impacted the implementation of trainings as grantees and partners would not make any upfront investments to pay for trainers and equipment. Due to this, as mentioned in the chapter on quality, some trainings were delayed and/or shortened. In some cases, Enabel mitigated this challenge through no-cost extensions of the grant agreements.

Another key was compliance with Enabel's procurement regulations which caused some confusion among grantees. Several interviewees reported that guidelines are not entirely clear to them and that they complicate procurement of materials and equipment for the trainings. This challenge has also caused delays in the delivery of training materials and start-up kits with negative effects on training results. One case has been reported where due to Enabel's regulations, procurement could not be done through local suppliers as they were not able to comply with the administrative processes, so that the grantee had to procure from a supplier in Kampala, which in the end increased the costs.

Despite these challenges, the vast majority of grantees and partners still perceive processes overall to be efficient. Grantees and partners especially value the support received from Enabel field staff for reporting and highlight that it has enhanced their overall institutional capacities. Interviewed staff also showed satisfaction with the monitoring process of routine spot checks, monthly monitoring and joint quarterly support visits to grantees.

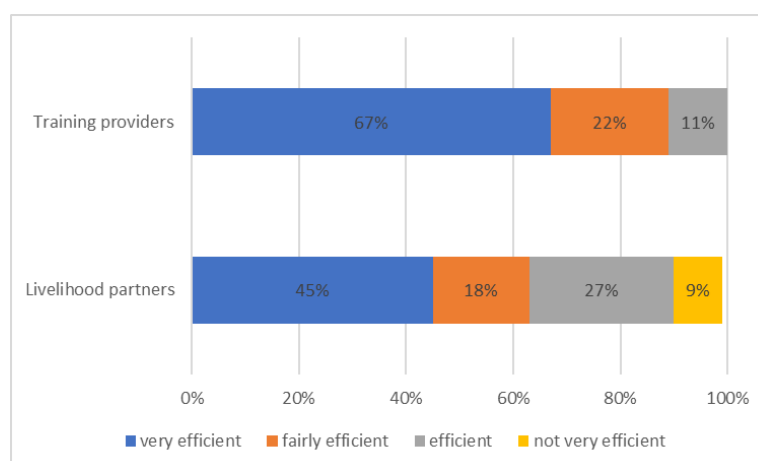
Instant trainings

Regarding the **application and selection process** of livelihood partners for instant trainings, interviewed staff saw an improvement in the onboarding of a dedicated instant training manager in 2019 to coordinate this process. This however has been done quite late in time, so that in the earlier phases of instant training implementation the coordination of instant trainings had been done rather ad-hoc by different SSU staff at Kampala offices in collaboration with field staff.

Instant training livelihood partners and SSU staff perceive the application process through an online form in combination with field visits to applicants by field staff and in some cases also the instant training manager to run smoothly. Training providers also show high satisfaction with the selection process, highlighting that it is based on clear criteria and transparency.

More negative perceptions expressed by some livelihood partners refer to technical issues with the online platform, as well as unclear processes for application and a lack of communication and follow-up from Enabel's side throughout the process. These opinions were mostly expressed by livelihood partners that were interviewed in the first round of data collection and they are most probably due to the fact that in the earlier phases of SDF implementation, there was no dedicated instant training manager in place and SSU staff had to put more focus on the implementation of the non-formal training processes.

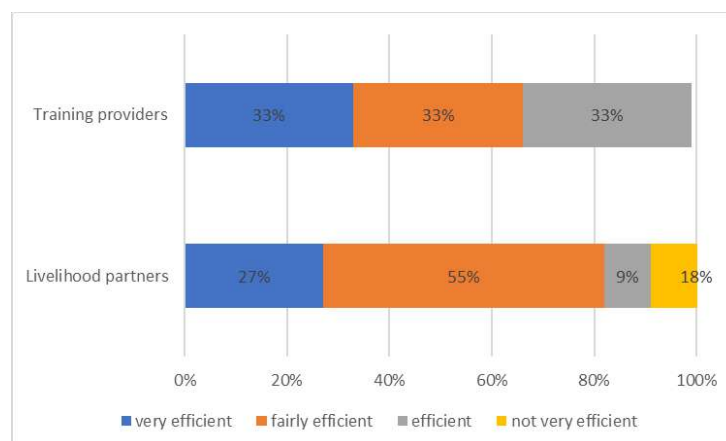
Figure 29: Efficiency of application and selection processes for instant trainings according to key stakeholders



Source: own elaboration based on interview data

Livelihood actors and instant training providers also showed high satisfaction with the efficiency of processes during and after training implementation. This is most probably again due to their shorter duration and lower levels of necessary administrative and reporting obligations as compared to non-formal trainings.

Figure 30: Efficiency of implementation processes for instant trainings according to key stakeholders



Source: own elaboration based on interview data

No major issues have been raised even by those livelihood partners that gave lower rankings; criticism is rather related to limited communication and monitoring from Enabel's side, however the efforts made by field staff to follow up on implementation have also been positively mentioned. In this regard, interviewed SSU staff both at field level and at Kampala level highlighted the limited capacities to follow up on all instant trainings as a major constraint.

"The approach of instant trainings should be revisited. Particularly, there should be criteria for trainee selection with some minimum requirements. Also, support for monitoring and supervision needs to be increased - regular visits (preferably bi-weekly) are very important."

SSU field staff

In addition, as already mentioned in the chapter on effectiveness, interview data suggest that there has been a lack of clarity among instant training stakeholders regarding specific roles and responsibilities, especially related to post-training support. Although the instant training manual that establishes guidelines for implementation mentions that post-training support is the responsibility of the livelihood partner, this could still be made more clear in the agreement between the livelihood partner and Enabel, and more detailed guidelines could be developed regarding the nature and scope of the expected post-training support.

Human resources

The SDF implementation required a significant number of human resources, at Kampala level but especially also at the field level. It is, however, difficult to quantify the exact number of staff for the SDF because most staff dedicated a certain part of their time to the management of SDF related aspects but was also involved in the management of other components of the SSU intervention.

Given the need to closely monitor and follow up on project execution with the grantees and partners, instant training livelihood actors and instant training providers, staff at field level has been increased over the years, showing Enabel's flexibility to react to emerging project needs. Accordingly, the views from SSU staff on the adequacy of the human resources structure have improved over time. While during the first round of data collection many interviewed staff felt overwhelmed with work, staff interviewed in the second data collection round mostly indicated that human resources structures were adequate to ensure an efficient management of the SDF. On the other side, some interviewees also mentioned the high human resources and administrative costs of the SDF as a concern for efficiency and sustainability. In this sense, there is a certain trade-off between the necessity to ensure an adequate human resources structure for the implementation of processes to guarantee the relevance and quality of trainings, as well as sound and transparent

financial management, and the quite high investment that this entails. These aspects need to be well considered for the set-up of a future national skills development fund in Uganda.

In addition, despite the additions some interviewed staff still indicated that they spend much more time on tasks related to the SDF than planned in their job descriptions, and while they perceive the monitoring of regular trainings to function well, highlighted that there are not enough capacities to consistently follow up on the instant trainings. This has been mentioned by many as a hindrance factor for instant trainings' quality and effectiveness.

Recruiting adequate staff especially at the national level has not always been easy and these challenges have sometimes led to staff positions remaining vacant for some time, which, however, overall has not affected the execution of the intervention. The biggest challenge regarding human resources, according to SSU annual reports and interviews conducted with Enabel staff, has been a relatively high staff turnover. Regarding national staff, this has been caused by a competitive recruitment landscape in Uganda among donor organizations, and challenges at Enabel to offer a conducive working environment with attractive remuneration as compared to other donors. Turnover of international staff has also become a challenge especially towards the final year of SDF implementation, as the approaching end of the initiative has caused staff to already look for other work opportunities.

Knowledge management

The SDF unit has put significant efforts into documenting SDF activities and results through a dedicated MEL officer at Kampala level and MEL field officers responsible for following up and monitoring the implementation and final results of both non-formal and instant trainings. In this regard, instruments and approaches applied to monitor progress on implementation and outputs/outcomes of the trainings are overall perceived to be adequate by interviewed staff. Several interviewees positively mentioned the joint review process of grantees' reports by different departments, as well as the use of Kobo for monitoring trainee enrolment as important improvements, although they have been introduced rather late in the implementation process.

The SSU communication unit also collaborated to disseminate information on Enabel's social media platforms, especially Twitter and Facebook. In addition, other activities addressed at external audiences have been implemented, including information sessions, radio talk shows, material development and distribution, conferences and workshops.⁶¹

A highlight in this sense was the skills development fair organized in 2019 with participants from government, civil society, private sector and the donor community to share experiences and raise awareness.

In addition, the research commissioned by Enabel on the SDF implementation and results, namely this action research and the quantitative tracer study, are positive examples of knowledge generation through independent parties.

While external communication and knowledge dissemination has worked well, interviewed SSU staff acknowledged that Enabel could still improve on internal knowledge management. In this sense, it has been highlighted that information flows and communication processes could be improved. This is perceived to be necessary not only from HQ level to field level and vice versa, but also between different field offices. Proper communication processes and knowledge exchange could further enhance learning on approaches and best practices in each region. Although it was also highlighted that internal coordination has been strengthened through more staff meetings at Kampala level and field staff visits, some interviewed staff suggested that Enabel should have an internal communications manager who would be in charge of regular standardized communication and installing a joint information management system with access for all SSU staff.

⁶¹ According to information from annual reports.

Despite the highlighted challenges, it can be concluded that SDF implementation has been efficient and has produced high value for money, and efficiency has improved over time through a learning process in which Enabel has flexibly responded to identified challenges.

Facilitating and hindering factors for the SDF's efficiency

Facilitating non-formal trainings:

Clear and transparent processes provided by Enabel's regulations

Organizational assessment of grantees supported by Enabel to improve on organizations' weaknesses

Support and training of grantees by Enabel staff during the application process, as well as to improve accounting and reporting processes during implementation

Increasing allocation of staff to the field level, as well as increasing filling of vacant staff positions

Hindering non-formal trainings:

Long application and selection process for grantees

Low reporting capacities of grantees lead to delays in fund disbursements, which slows down or even interrupts implementation

High administrative costs due to Enabel's grant regulations and procurement procedures

Staff turnover at Enabel

Limited internal knowledge management among HQ and field levels

Facilitating instant trainings:

Lower levels of necessary administrative and reporting obligations

Dedicated instant training manager (although position has been filled late in time)

Hindering instant trainings:

Limited capacities at Enabel for properly monitoring instant trainings

Limited clarity of roles and responsibilities especially regarding post-training support

5. Conclusions

The overall conclusion of this action research is that the implementation of the SDF has contributed positively to all five key assumptions of the SSU intervention that were to:

- Increase the **relevance** of skills development and training programs for the local labour markets and respond to the skills needs of the local population.
- Increase the **quality** of skills provisions
- Increase **equitable** access to skills development
- Improve **effectiveness** of skills development
- Increase internal **efficiency** and resources available for skills development

The following conclusions can be drawn as per non-formal trainings and instant trainings facilitated through the SDF:

On non-formal trainings

Through making it mandatory in its design that applicants to grants need to build partnerships between public or private non-profit organizations with private sector partners, the SDF has driven the creation of public-private partnerships for the provision of non-formal practice-oriented skills development trainings. The relevance of these partnerships has been widely acknowledged among the different stakeholders involved in the SDF implementation. In addition, a considerable number of grantees and partners indicate they aim to maintain the partnerships in the future, which reveals the sustainability and uptake of this model. Some limitations lie in the generally rather late involvement of the private sector mostly as work-based learning (WBL) providers but less so for joint work on upgrading curricula. Low institutional capacities and lack of experience of institutions with managing these types of partnerships, as well as especially in Northern Uganda and Karamoja a rather weak and mostly informal private sector are factors that have limited the possibilities for partnerships. Another limitation in this regard lies in Enabel's regulations that do not allow for allocating grants directly to private for-profit entities.

The relevance of the trainings to the local private sector has been increased by the definition of training topics, i.e. trades based on labour market scans commissioned by Enabel. Such labour market scans that were done at the regional level for the three regions where the pilot SDF operated (Albertine/Rwenzori, Northern Uganda, Karamoja) compensated for the generally scarce data on labour markets and private sector skills demands at the regional level in Uganda. This information-based definition of training topics has increased the relevance of the trainings to the local private sector, however, as training topics have been defined for several years based on the same labour market scans, the possibility exists that local markets become saturated with skilled youth and more diversification is needed.

Best approaches that have contributed to quality trainings are the combination of technical and life skills training, including topics such as entrepreneurship skills, conflict management, reproductive health, environmental topics, among others. These approaches can be classified as innovative in the Ugandan context. The integration of WBL approaches in the form of internships or apprenticeships has also highly contributed to the quality of trainings, as well as the introduction of post-training support in the form of start-up kits, coaching/counselling, career guidance or linking graduates with potential employers. DIT certification of most trainings, as well as international certification that has been introduced for trainings in welding and metal fabrication to cater to the needs of the oil and gas sector are further proof of the quality of trainings. Non-formal trainings have been overall implemented with good quality in terms of classroom materials, trainers, venues, and workshops/equipment. Training duration has been the most controversial

aspect regarding the quality of trainings, as many trainees and some grantees and partners perceived the training period to be too short to acquire/convey all necessary skills.

Providing trainings free of cost has contributed to broaden the access of vulnerable groups including youth, women and girls, refugees, and Karamojong to skills training. In addition, including eligible costs in the pilot SDF for providing further support according to vulnerable participants' needs helped to successfully address the key challenges that vulnerable groups face to regularly attend trainings. Travel costs or costs for food have been provided in the form of transport refunds, free meals and/or accommodation (in the case of boarding arrangements). In several cases, additional support such as childcare for single mothers or healthcare services has been provided. A factor that hindered the access to skills training for vulnerable groups are training schedules, as day-long trainings can make it difficult for participants to accommodate their participation in trainings with household responsibilities and the need to provide for their families.

The effectiveness of trainings is linked to aspects of relevance and quality: defining training topics that are relevant to the local labour markets and facilitating high quality trainings, helped graduates to feel better prepared for work and later on, to transition to the world of work. About 65-68% of graduates from non-formal trainings supported by the SDF have successfully been integrated into the labour market, exceeding the set targets. However, the Ugandan labour market structure with its large informal economy, low productivity and rather unfavourable tendencies over the past years including deteriorating job opportunities especially for vulnerable youth and women highly conditions the possibilities of training graduates to find wage employment, driving a majority of graduates to opt for self-employment.

Non-formal vocational training centre-based and practical skills-oriented trainings with integrated post-training support yield the best results for labour market integration. However, trainings usually put a stronger focus on post-training support that promotes entrepreneurship activities, especially through the provision of start-up kits and counselling services. This might have limited the possibilities of graduates to find wage employment, given the lack of labour market information or other support that they could turn to in this regard. Attention needs to be given to the quality and quantity of start-up kits provided to ensure their proper use. Both the quality of wage employment and the success of self-employment need further attention, and skills development initiatives should be part of concerted efforts to improve economic productivity as well as to create a more favourable entrepreneurial ecosystem for sustained results.

The pilot SDF has been cost-efficient and has created high value for money, exceeding all its set targets while no important budget adjustments were made over the years of implementation. In the absence of existing benchmarking data, no final conclusion can be made on the adequacy of training costs, however interviewed stakeholders that had an opinion on this topic mostly perceived them to be reasonable. A certain trade-off might exist between cost-efficiency and targeting mostly vulnerable groups, for which higher investments are necessary, including working with smaller organizations that are closer to the communities, and investing in their capacity building for being able to comply with quality standards and administrative regulations. In this regard, the creation of different funding windows with higher and smaller grant amounts has balanced this situation.

Ensuring transparent selection, financial, administrative, management and monitoring processes led to an efficient implementation of the pilot SDF and avoided misuse of funds. A learning process that has taken place over the years of implementation has allowed for efficiency gains. In order for this to happen, heavy investments in human resources allocation both at Kampala and the field level was needed. Assessments of institutional strengths and weaknesses and capacity building of grantees and partners especially regarding financial reporting have paid off, although not in all cases delays of training implementation due to challenges of grantees to comply with financial reporting could be avoided. Approaches and instruments for monitoring non-formal trainings supported by the pilot SDF have been improved over time and are deemed

adequate. Communication of results and best practices, both to external and internal audiences are important for an efficient knowledge management.

On instant trainings

Labour market scans and needs assessments conducted by Enabel and additional needs assessments done by some of the livelihood partners have contributed to the relevance of instant trainings. Due to this information-based approach, instant trainings have been relevant and complemented well the livelihood partners' missions related to improving the economic situation, social, health and environmental challenges of their beneficiary communities. Factors that have partly hindered the relevance of the instant trainings are limited or weak data available on specific value chains at local level as well as limited coordination among different donors or NGOs working in the same communities

Installing a procurement system for training providers with clear assessment criteria has ensured the quality of the trainers and this highly contributed to the overall good quality of instant trainings. However, there has been a lack of follow-up and monitoring by Enabel on the quality of trainings due to limited resources at the field level. According to beneficiaries, in some cases limited quality of the training venues has led to interruption of trainings under bad weather conditions, and often a lack of coherent and well-structured post-training support has been a key limiting factor for the training quality.

The identification of instant training beneficiaries through local livelihood partners that already work with the vulnerable communities has greatly helped to give the intended target groups access to these trainings. As with the non-formal trainings, for instant trainings the pilot SDF allowed for including costs in training budgets to support vulnerable participants, so that most trainings have provided meals and transport refunds, which has further facilitated participation. Adjusting the training schedule to beneficiaries' needs has been another factor; where this has not happened, participants partly missed out on trainings although overall, dropout rates have been low.

The provision of post-training support in the form of start-up kits and/or counselling, or a combination of both, has contributed to the effectiveness of instant trainings in terms of an increase or diversification of income as well as overall an improvement of beneficiaries' livelihoods. Additionally, livelihood actors that ran complementary activities such as the organization of savings groups, have achieved positive effects on the beneficiaries' abilities to save money and make investments that can further improve their livelihoods. However, post-training support has not been provided in a coherent way and with sufficient quality. The strongest effects have happened for beneficiaries in Northern Uganda, followed by those in Karamoja. In Albertine Rwenzori, the lowest increase in income has been registered. Possibly, the assumption behind the instant trainings that the local markets do not demand qualified craftsmen across all types of trades and the demand for high-quality goods and services is low due to low purchasing power of the population holds more true for the northern and eastern regions of the country than for the comparatively more developed economy of the central and western regions.

The onboarding of a dedicated instant training manager and the elaboration of manuals and guidelines for the application and implementation processes have contributed to an efficient management of these trainings. However, capacities to properly monitor and follow-up on all instant trainings have been low due to the necessity to allocate more resources to the monitoring of non-formal trainings, which has resulted in less sound data on their quality and results achieved. Guidelines for processes have also been developed late in time, and the existing manual lacks some detail especially regarding the clearer description of the expected nature and scope of post-training support and the respective responsibilities of the livelihood actors.

6. Recommendations

The above insights lead to the following recommendations for the design and set-up of a future national Skills Development Fund:

Labour market information should be regularly updated, seeking input from private sector actors at the local (regional) level.

- Given the high share of informal sector in Uganda, informal businesses or business associations should be included in the assessments.
- A more granular quantitative and qualitative analysis of skills demands per trades is needed in order to still better match trainings with private sector needs.
- A multi-sector approach should be taken to create synergies and joint learning among different government and development actors that undertake labour market research
- For instant trainings, more detailed guidelines for needs assessments with beneficiaries should be developed that consider the market potential of specific value chains in the communities, also considering activities of other livelihood actors to create coherence.

Public-private partnerships can still be strengthened by including in the design of the fund a stronger focus on joint training development between the partner organizations and by investing in building capacities of private sector actors.

- For trainings that have a school-based component, private sector stakeholders such as industry trainers or Master Craft Persons could also be involved in teaching, which is a good practice that some VTIs are already implementing.
- Organizational assessments and capacity building on partnerships and fund management should be provided for to enhance the creation of meaningful and functioning public-private partnerships.
- The possibility to give grants to private for-profit organizations should be included so that businesses can also take the lead
- Considering the weaknesses of the private sector especially in the northern and eastern regions of the country, region-specific approaches for strengthening private sector actors should be included, e.g., enhancing capacities of private sector associations and selected businesses, including especially those of the informal sector, as well as upskilling of Master Crafts Persons

The optimal length of trainings should be more carefully assessed, depending on the trade and the level of skills that are required

- The assessment of needed skills levels, e.g. semi qualified, qualified, highly qualified, instant skills, etc., should be part of regional labour market scans done per trade
- For certain trades, it could be beneficial to increase length of non-formal trainings from 6-9 to 12 months.
- While clear guidelines and regulations are necessary for training implementation, including school based and WBL, future programs should provide for some flexibility to adjust trainings to emerging needs during implementation.

Clear quality criteria for trainings should be established and regular monitoring and quality control through field visits should be included in the skills development fund design, with participation of experts in BTJET, pedagogy and related fields.

- Quality control should include the quality of teaching materials, the teachers, training venues and equipment.
- Quality control should also include visits to the WBL premises during internships/apprenticeships. Any quality control field visits should be done without prior announcement to the grantees or partners.
- For start-up kits, a set of minimum criteria for their quantity and quality should be developed and monitored.

As part of quality criteria, the inclusion of life skills as part of the technical trainings should be built into the fund design, as these are especially important to prepare youth with low education levels for the world of work.

- The type of life skills training needs to be catered to the target groups and can include a variety of topics, e.g., entrepreneurship skills, literacy and numeracy skills, conflict management, reproductive health, etc.

Quality criteria should also ensure that post-training support is mandatory for both non-formal and instant trainings and that in the ideal case, it includes a combination of start-up kits with counselling services.

- For non-formal trainings, while still providing post-training support for future self-employment, an equally strong focus should be put on support for job search, for which labour market information systems should be put in place.
- For supporting self-employment, more linkages should be created with Business Development Services providers and especially access to finance providers.

The recognition of skills acquired in non-formal and instant trainings should be ensured in order to enhance trainees' possibilities for finding employment.

- It is beneficial for the future of participants to include certification processes and skills assessment modalities into non-formal trainings as well as instant trainings; even though a more immediate objective of the latter lies on self-employment.
- For non-formal trainings, this should be done through collaboration with DIT and other officially recognized certification institutions, as applicable to specific trades.

In order to include vulnerable groups, keep training fees to a necessary minimum and/or include support schemes (e.g. scholarships) based on a set of defined vulnerability criteria.

- The vulnerability criteria developed by the pilot SDF could be taken up by a future fund.
- As implemented through the pilot SDF, during trainings the basic needs of participants should be covered, at least transport to and from the training venue and meals, or through boarding arrangements.
- For the especially vulnerable, e.g. single mothers, additional support such as childcare and healthcare should be offered.
- To further facilitate conditions for regular participation of vulnerable groups, training schedules should consider the responsibilities of participants, e.g. to provide for their families. That is, the schedules should provide for some free time so that participants can take care of personal matters.

A future skills development fund should be accompanied by other policies and initiatives to enhance economic productivity for the creation of higher quality employment opportunities, and the strengthening of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

- Close collaboration with other donors' initiatives working on skills development, job creation and entrepreneurship in Uganda should be ensured for a coordinated approach to skills development in the country.

Human resources allocation needs to be carefully planned for and enough financial resources need to be allocated to ensure smooth implementation.

- A similar structure as has been created for the pilot SDF, with central offices and a decentralized structure in the field, is recommended.
- Special attention should be given to the allocation of field staff in order to ensure a close and timely monitoring of the implementation of activities.

Clear administrative regulations and processes need to be put in place to ensure transparency and avoid misuse of funds.

- For non-formal trainings, a phased selection process with participation of public and private sector representatives should be established that includes administrative and technical appraisals of proposals and assessments of organizational capacities
- For instant trainings, transparent procurement processes for quality training providers need to be ensured
- A financing system that balances input-based and output-based funds disbursement as has been introduced by the pilot SDF is recommendable.
- Regular external audits should be implemented.
- Roles and responsibilities of each party involved in the implementation of the fund activities need to be well defined and clearly stated in written guidelines, MoUs among the partners and internally, with clear job descriptions.

7. Lessons learnt and best practices

There is a need for regular updates on labour market data at the regional/local level in order to be able to train youth according to market needs and avoid saturation of labour markets in specific trades. In general, a lack of labour market information (as the labour market is mainly informal) and a lack of information on household income sources and household spending patterns, as well as on value chains on consumption goods in the targeted regions, lead to a weak evidence base for any skills anticipation measure.

The combination of technical skills with life skills training is especially important when training vulnerable youth. The content and implementation of training needs to be tailored to the target group and depending on specific skills needs, should include non-technical skills, e.g., entrepreneurship skills, literacy and numeracy skills, conflict management, reproductive health, etc.

Combining theoretical and practical skills development through WBL approaches works best when combined with dedicated post-training support. In the Ugandan context, combining skills development with entrepreneurship promotion is particularly relevant given the limited opportunities for finding wage employment in the short term.

Improving the supply of skills needs to go hand in hand with other initiatives to also improve the demand side for higher skills levels so that the labour market can absorb enough skilled youth in the long term. This needs to include measures to improve the productivity of the agriculture sector and of non-farm informal sectors, especially micro and small enterprises.

Recognition of skills acquired can enhance possibilities for finding employment. It is beneficial for the future of participants to include certification processes and skills assessment modalities into non-formal trainings as well as instant trainings; even though a more immediate objective of the latter lies on self-employment.

There is a need for investment in labour market information systems to capture data on skills supply and demand at the local levels to facilitate the search for employment. In the Ugandan context, this needs to include information on job opportunities in the informal economy.

A combination of input-based and output-based financing in the management of training funds can enhance organizational learning and capacities as well as better coordination among partners. If initial capacities are low, it needs to be accompanied with capacity building efforts. To this end, an assessment of organizational strengths and weaknesses helps to mitigate implementation challenges.

Guiding applicants through the application and selection process as well as providing support and capacity building regarding administrative or reporting issues is important. Although this implies a higher investment in human resources, it nevertheless pays off due to future efficiency gains.

There is a need for the creation of clear instruments that guide the application process for financing and the implementation of trainings. This includes written guidelines and manuals, standard templates for MoUs between partners, quality criteria for trainings and additional support, vulnerability criteria for participants, etc. Roles and responsibilities of each party need to be well defined and clearly stated.

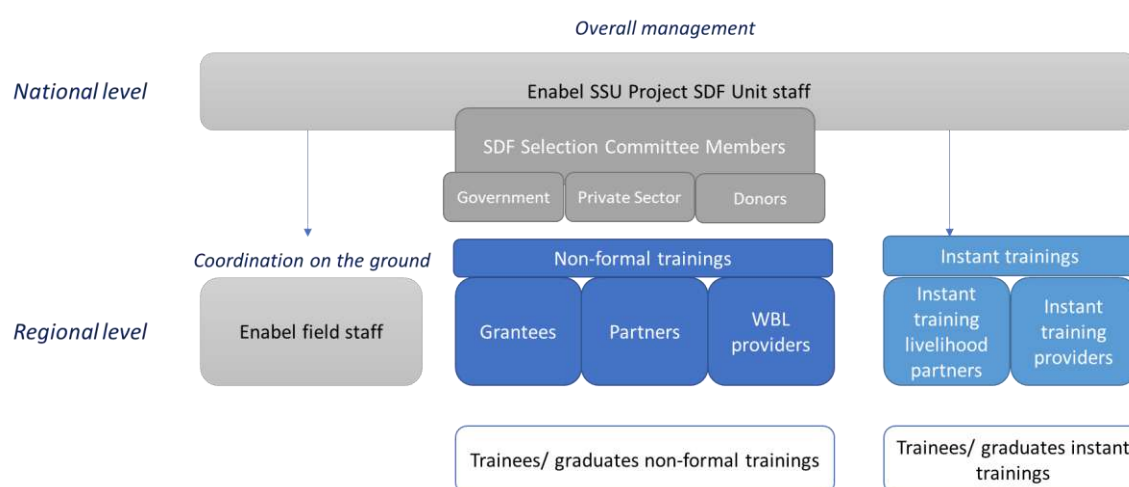
Annexes

Sampling & Data collection

Overview on SDF stakeholders

The SDF is an ambitious and complex initiative that includes a high number and variety of different stakeholders that needed to be considered for the action research. As a first approach to conduct the sampling for data collection, the consultants implemented a stakeholder mapping and categorized SDF stakeholders into two key groups: direct and indirect stakeholders. Direct stakeholders are those directly involved at some stage of SDF implementation. These groups were then further broken down regarding their level (national level, regional level).

Figure 31: SDF direct stakeholders



Source: own elaboration based on desk review

In addition to these, a number of indirect stakeholders have been identified which include mainly members of the skills development platforms (SDP) that were established through another SSU component to foster multi-sector dialogues on skills development at the district level, as well as one-time collaborators/service providers and religious or community leaders. However, the action research focused mainly on direct stakeholders only.

While the overall management of the SDF, including monitoring, MEL functions are located at the national level at Enabel offices in Kampala, and the selection of grantees for the different funding windows is done through a tripartite selection committee with national level representatives of government, private sector and development partners (donors/bilateral and international organizations), the key coordination and implementation of the fund takes place at the regional and district levels. For the action research, this means that key research activities focused on the regional and district levels, while national level stakeholders have been included to gather context information, as well as data mainly related to the relevance and efficiency assumptions.

Sampling approach

The sampling approach of the SDF action research was purposeful sampling, meaning that stakeholders to participate in interviews and FGDs were selected based on a set of criteria that serve the purpose of the action research. The overall aim was to select stakeholders in a way that

guarantees best possible representativeness of stakeholder types and the three geographic regions where the pilot SDF was implemented.

Table 5: Sampling criteria applied per stakeholder type

Stakeholder type	Sampling criteria
Enabel project staff	Level (national/regional) Specific role (management, coordination, MEL, financial controlling, etc.)
SDF Selection Committee Members	Type (government, private sector, donor)
Grantees	Region/district Type (public, private non-profit) Size (number of trainees) Type of training offered Training topics
Partners	Usually the selection of partners was linked to the sampling of grantees; the aim was to select partners of already sampled grantees
WBL Provider	Region/district Trade/sector
Instant training livelihood partners	Region/district Training topics
Instant training provider	Usually the selection of instant training providers was linked to the sampling of livelihood partners; the aim was to select training providers of already sampled livelihood actors
Trainees	Region/district Type of training received (non-formal, instant) Training topic Status in training (finalized, ongoing) Gender Age Vulnerability status (e.g. refugee, Karamajong, PWD, HIV)

Regarding the sampling of grantees and trainees/graduates, the consultants first conducted a purposeful sampling of the districts to be included in the data collection, based on the number and type of stakeholders per district. The aim was to be able to cover the highest possible number of grantees and instant training livelihood partners. In a second step, they applied a sampling process to the complete list of trainees of those grantees and instant training livelihood partners within the selected districts to obtain a representative sample of trainees/graduates.

Sampling was done in two rounds, one in March and another in November 2019. While in the first round, trainees to participate in FGDs were sampled mostly based on the aforementioned criteria to obtain a high representativeness of different training types and topics, this approach was

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changed in the second round. There, trainees were sampled mostly with the aim to create more harmonized groups for discussion in terms of training types and topics, compromising on the representation of the diversity of trainings conducted.

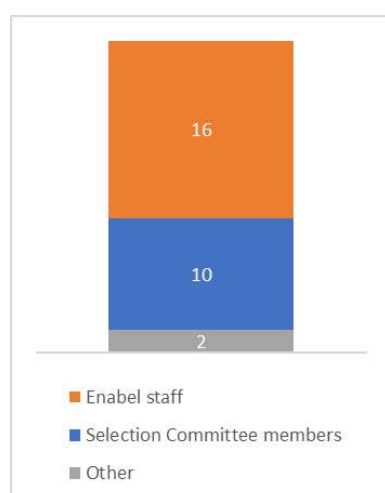
This change was done with approval from Enabel because it turned out in the first round that it was difficult to mobilize diverse groups of trainees and capturing all information from mixed groups of trainees that had taken different types of trainings in different trades was challenging. More harmonized groups with trainees from a single grantee and only one or two training topics were much better manageable.

Data collection

Data collection was done according to the approved sampling of stakeholders in the two aforementioned rounds (March/April and November/December 2019) by making use of semi-structured interview guides designed for each stakeholder type. Most of data collection took place in person through a mission to Kampala of the two international consultants from GlobalCAD, and through missions to the regions by a team of two field research coordinators and six field enumerators from EPRC. Interviews that could not be conducted during missions were done remotely through telephone or online calls.

The following overall results have been achieved: At the national level, 28 interviews were conducted and at the regional level, a total of 116.

Figure 32: Semi-structured interviews conducted at national level



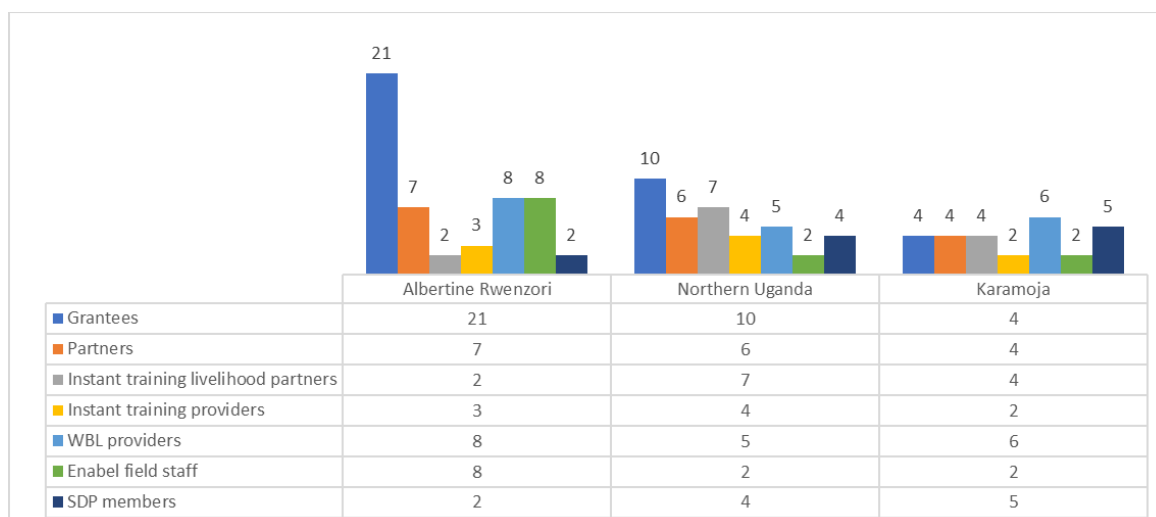
At the regional level, 51 interviews were done in Albertine/Rwenzori region, 38 in Northern Uganda and 27 in Karamoja.

Compared to the sampling done, not all interviews could be achieved due to several challenges encountered in the field, e.g. unavailability of stakeholders despite scheduled interview, or general unresponsiveness to requests for interviews.

However, despite these challenges, quite a high success rate was achieved for interviews compared to the original sampling, amounting to 83% overall (78% at national level, 90% in Albertine Rwenzori, 88% in Northern Uganda, 76% in Karamoja).

Source: own elaboration

Figure 33: Semi-structured interviews conducted at regional level



Source: own elaboration

Regarding focus groups with trainees, for non-formal trainings a total of 41 FGDs were conducted with 482 participants, and for instant trainings the consultants organized 21 FGDs with 258 participants. They had the following distribution among the regions:

Figure 34: FGDs non-formal trainings

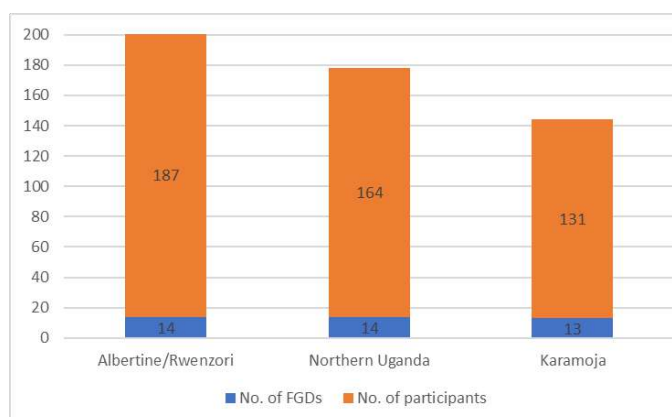
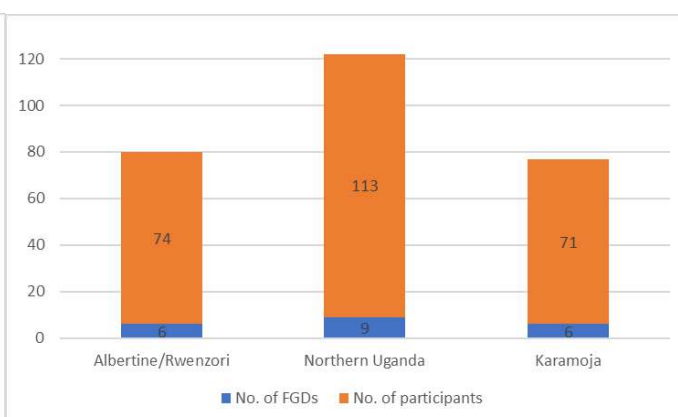


Figure 35: FGDs instant trainings

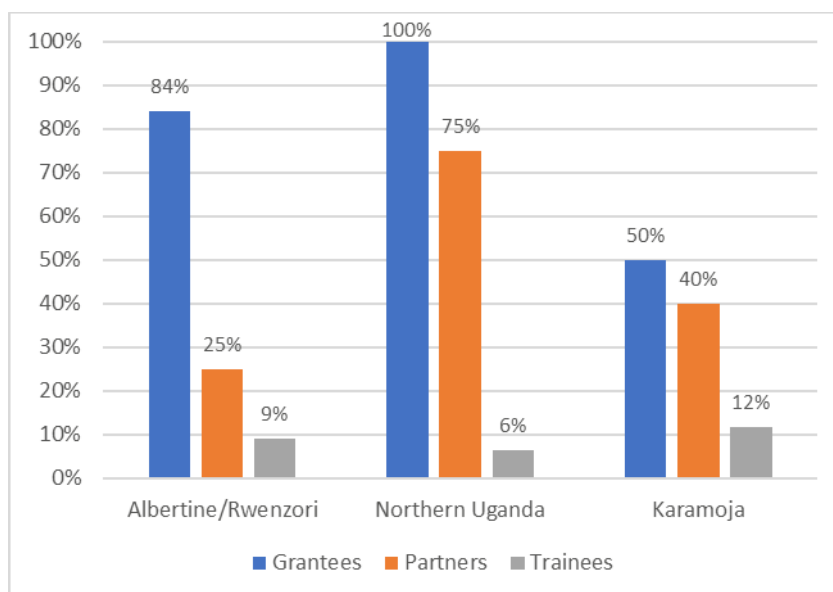


Source: own elaboration

Districts covered were: Kabarole, Kasese, Hoima and Masindi in Albertine/Rwenzori; Kiryandongo, Arua, Adjumani and Yumbe in Northern Uganda; and Moroto, Napak, Abim and Kotido in Karamoja. Thus, the action research covered 13 of the overall 15 districts where the pilot SDF was implemented.

Compared to the overall numbers of stakeholders per region as at end of 2019⁶², the action research covered the highest share of grantees and partners in Northern Uganda. In Albertine/Rwenzori region, the share of grantees covered is significantly higher than the share of partners, while in Karamoja, a more even coverage of these stakeholder types has been achieved. Karamoja also has a higher representation of trainees compared to the other regions.

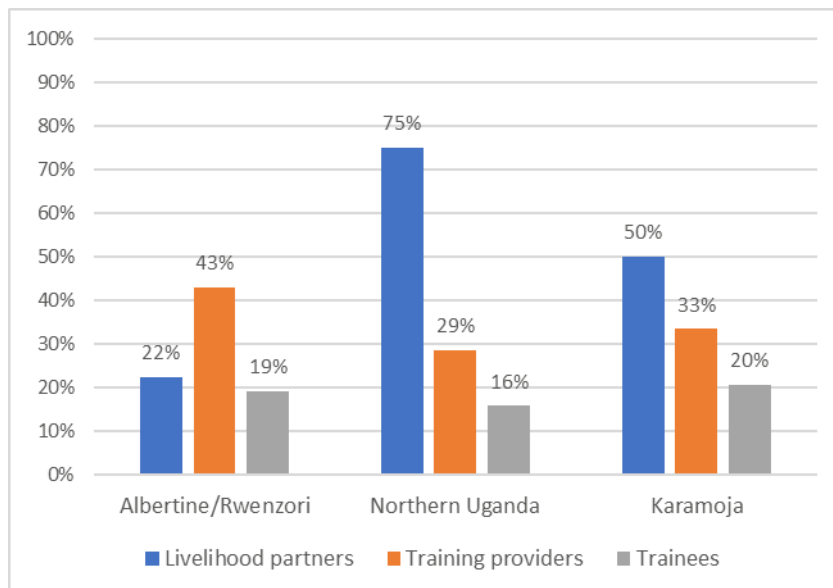
⁶² Calculated from monitoring data provided by Enabel.

Figure 36: Coverage of key stakeholders of non-formal trainings, per region⁶³

Source: own elaboration

Regarding the representativeness of instant training stakeholders, the picture is different: More livelihood partners were covered in Northern Uganda and Karamoja compared to the overall numbers, while in Albertine/Rwenzori region a higher share of training providers was interviewed. Regarding trainees, their representation is similar across the regions, but lowest in Northern Uganda.

Figure 37: Coverage of key stakeholders of instant trainings, per region



Source: own elaboration

⁶³ For grantees and partners, the coverage was calculated taking into account the total number of unique grantees and partners. Some grantees and partners were selected in several of the SDF calls but have been counted as one organization each.

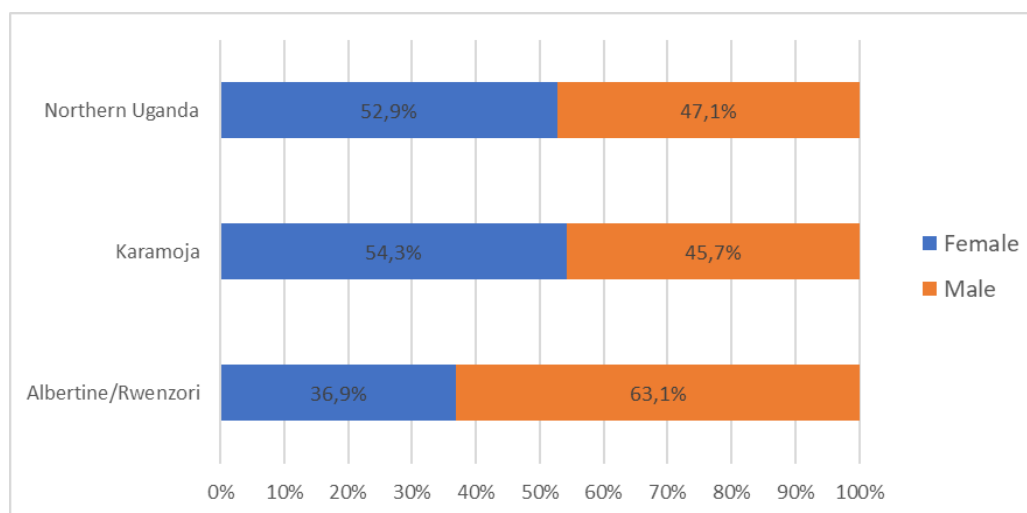
The number of non-formal trainees and graduates covered by the research overall is statistically representative with a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 5. However, the number of instant trainees covered falls below statistical representativeness.

Focus group participants represent the following characteristics:

Non-formal trainings

Overall, 47,1% of FGD participants were female and 52,9% were male, however with some differences among the regions: while in Northern Uganda and Karamoja more women participated than men, in Albertine Rwenzori the opposite was the case. This is probably due to the fact that typically male dominated trades such as welding and metal fabrication or building and construction were more predominant training topics in FGDs conducted in Albertine Rwenzori. In addition, according to information from Enabel, there generally were more female training participants in Northern Uganda and Karamoja than in Albertine/Rwenzori.

Figure 38: Gender of non-formal training FGD participants per region

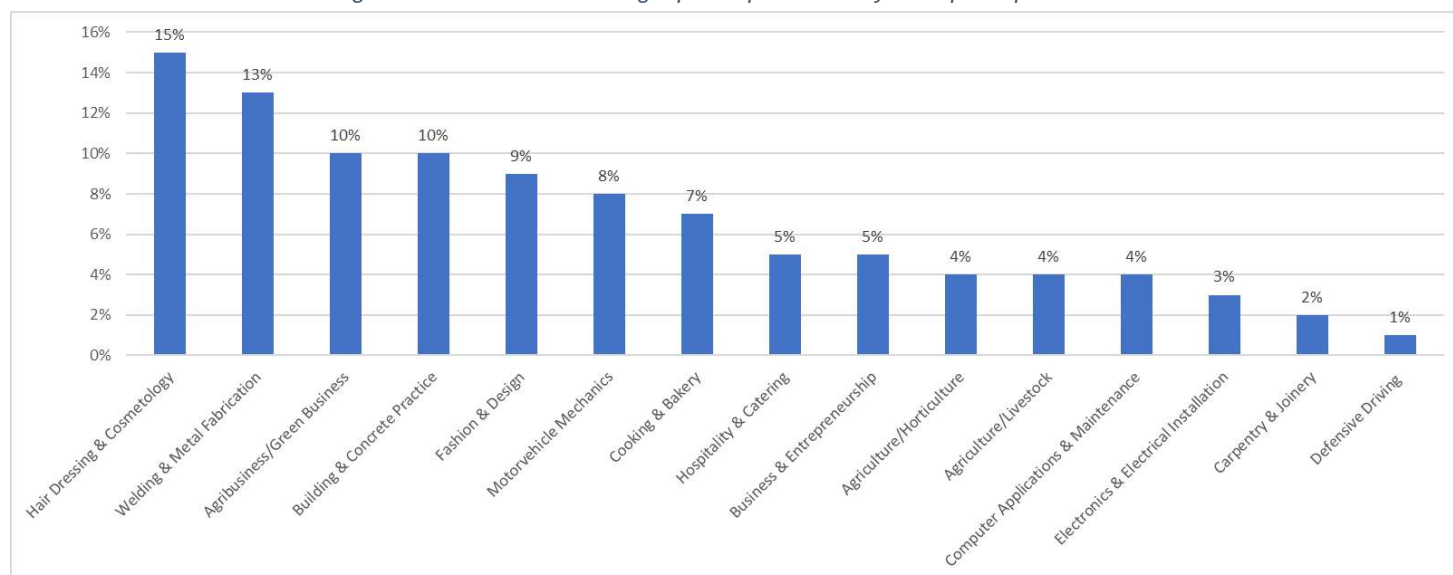


Source: own elaboration

The vast majority, 96,6%, fall within the envisaged youth bracket of 15-35-year-old, with almost no differences among regions. In Albertine/Rwenzori and Karamoja, 5% of participants were younger than 18 years, respectively, and in all regions 2-4% of participants were older than 35.

Apart from youth in general and women and girls that have been the main target groups of the SDF, other targeted vulnerable groups are also represented in the research. In Northern Uganda, 63% of FGD participants belong to refugee communities and in Karamoja, 96% of participants are Karamojong. However, the number of participants living with disabilities (PWD) or HIV are insignificantly low.

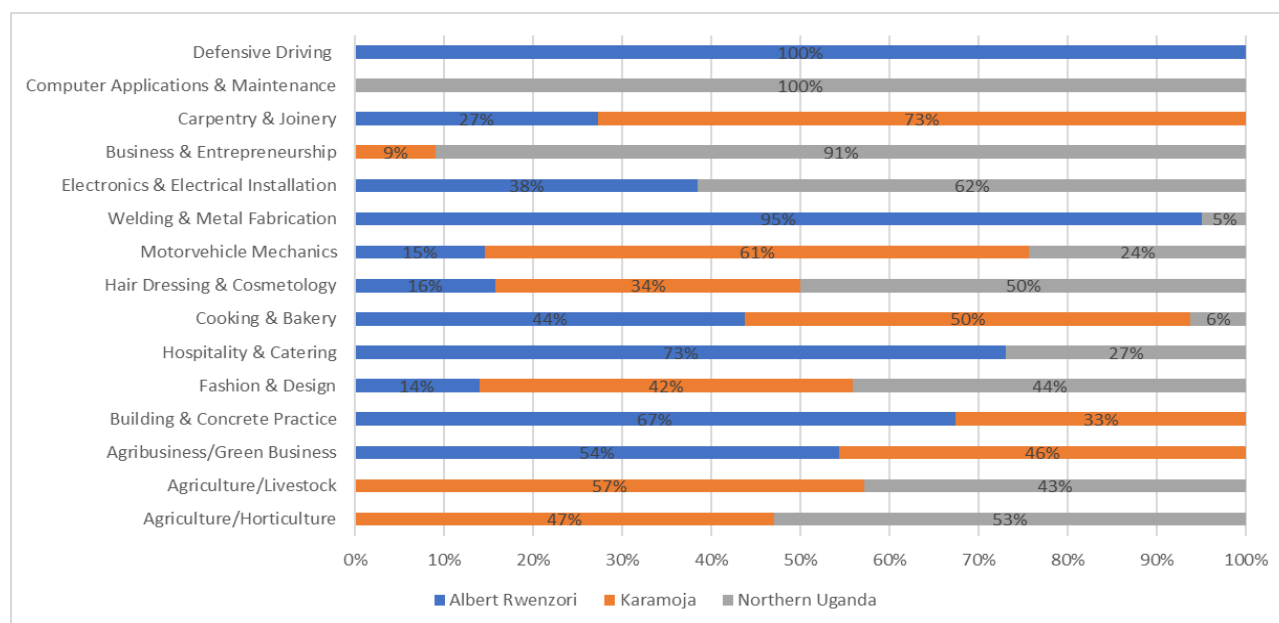
FGD participants for non-formal trainings represent a diversity of training topics that have been grouped into 15 categories.

Figure 39: Non-formal training topics represented by FGD participants⁶⁴

Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Each region has a different representation of training topics, and not all topics were covered in each region. FGD participants from Albertine Rwenzori represent predominantly trades such as welding and metal fabrication, building and construction, hospitality, and agribusiness, while participants from Northern Uganda did more trainings in agriculture and services such as hair dressing, fashion and design (including garment and fabric making), electronics, or computer maintenance. Northern Uganda also has the highest share of FGD participants that did business and entrepreneurship trainings. In Karamoja, agriculture is highly represented, and other top trades are carpentry and joinery, motor vehicle mechanics or cooking and bakery.

Figure 40: Representation of non-formal training topics per region as per share of FGD participants

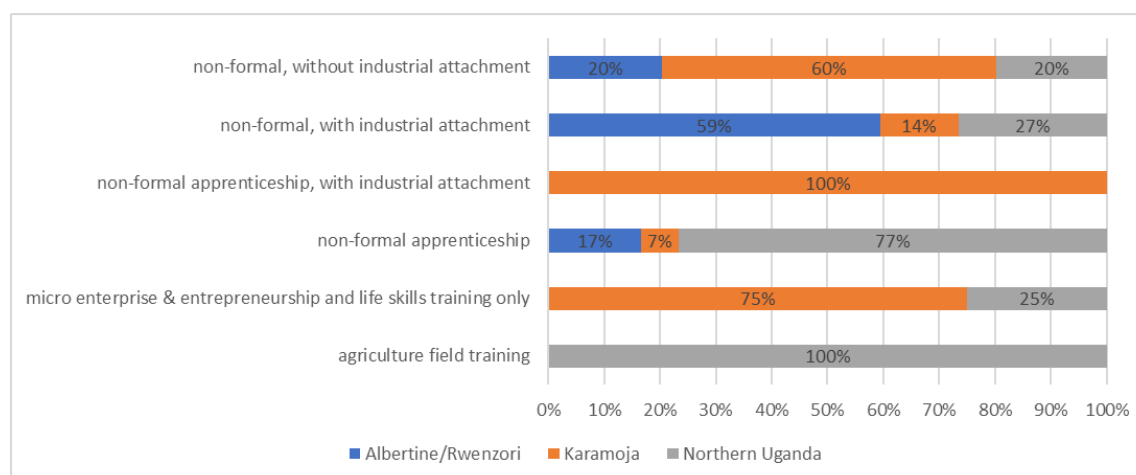


Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

⁶⁴ More granular training topics have been grouped into these broader categories to facilitate the analysis. FGD participants also did trainings in Soap Making, Plumbing and ECD Caregiver, but as the number of individuals that did these trainings is low, they do not appear as categories in the graphic.

Regarding different training types, overall, 54% of FGD participants did non-formal vocational trainings with industrial attachment, and 31% non-formal trainings without industrial attachment. The remaining 15% did other types of trainings. Representation per region also differs:

Figure 41: Representation of different training types as per share of FGD participants, per region

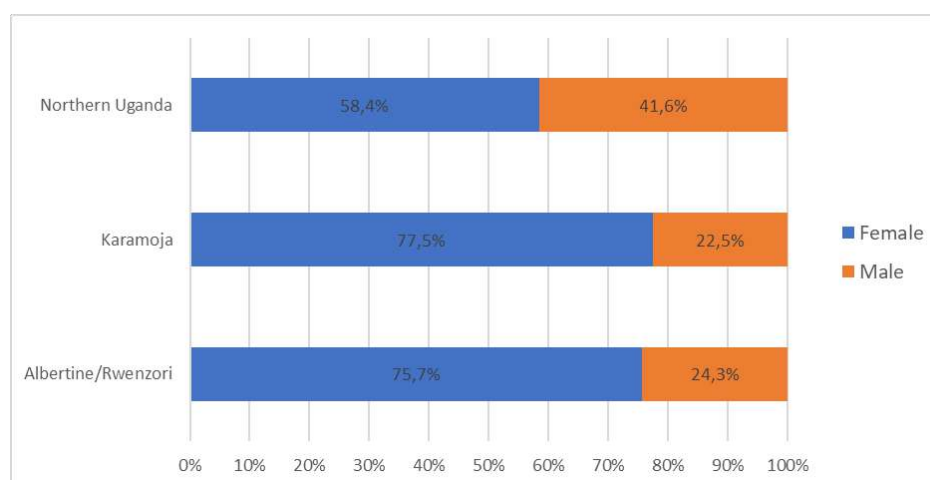


Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Instant trainings

With overall 68,6% female trainees had a higher participation in instant training FGDs than men (31,4%). The highest share of female participants was registered for Karamoja, while Northern Uganda had a higher share of male participants.

Figure 42: Gender of instant training FGD participants per region



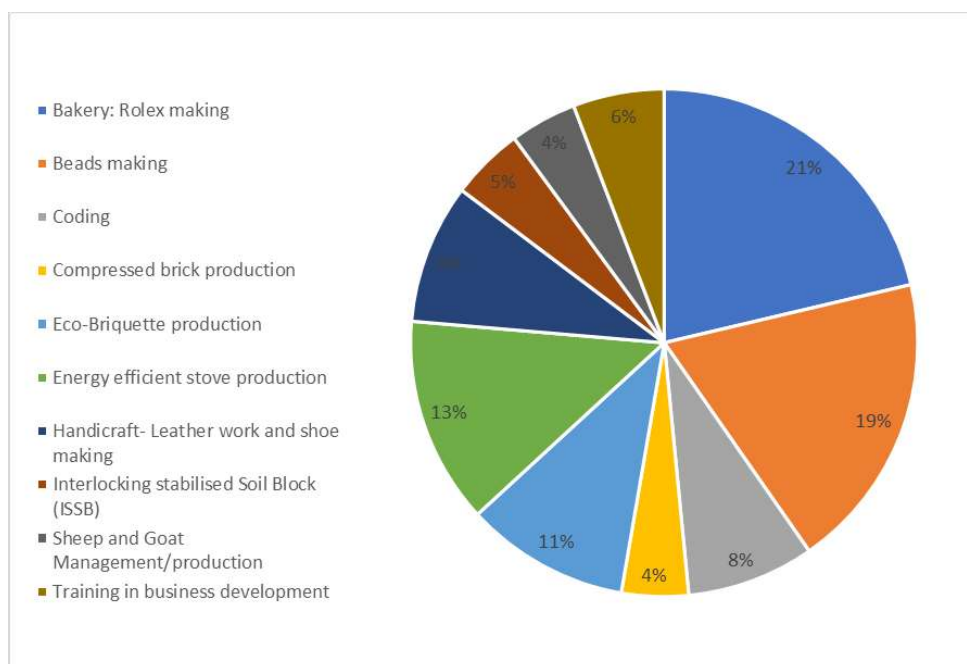
Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Regarding age, 71,9% of participants can be categorized as youth (15-35 years old), while 28,1% was older than 35. In Northern Uganda and Karamoja the age distribution was almost the same, while in Albertine Rwenzori the share of youth was higher with 79%.

In Northern Uganda, 67% of FGD participants had refugee status and 97% of participants from Karamoja were Karamojong. Only one participant per region fell into the category of PWD or living with a chronic disease.

Instant training FGD participants represent trainees from ten different training topics, the top three being bakery/rolex making, beads making and energy efficient stove production.

Figure 43: Instant training topics represented by FGD participants

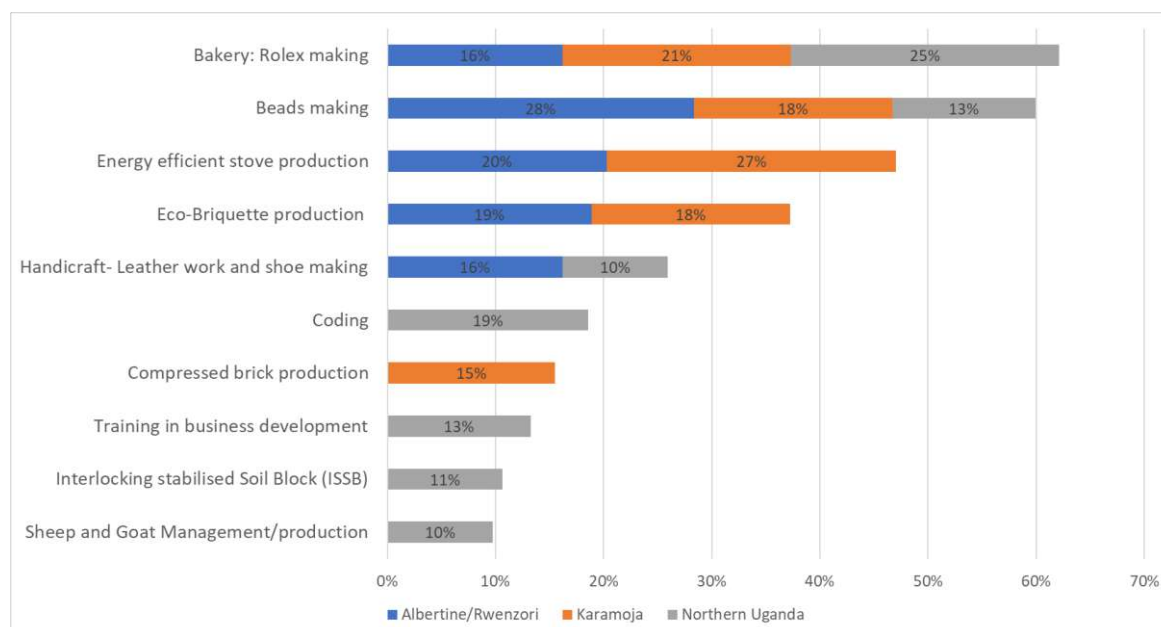


Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Not all training topics were covered in all regions. Only bakery/rolex making and beads making is represented in all regions, while energy-efficient stove production and eco-briquette production trainings are only represented for Albertine/Rwenzori and Karamoja. For Northern Uganda, the highest diversity of instant training topics is represented in the focus groups.

It should be noted that the instant training on coding done in Northern Uganda is rather an exceptional case and it was a training given as an add-on to trainees of a non-formal training.

Figure 44: Representation of instant training topics per region, as per share of participants



Source: own elaboration based on FGD data

Average changes in income⁶⁵

Non-formal trainings

	Average Income of Beneficiaries		
	Before	After	Mean Change
Overall	38944.72	71203.52	32258.79
Gender			
Male	43123.89	73628.32	30504.42
Female	36398.92	69726.42	33327.49
Region			
Albertine Rwenzori	30861.27	55682.08	24820.81
Karamoja	40362.5	69462.5	29100
Northern Uganda	43921.88	84745.54	40823.66
Citizenship			
Ugandan Citizen	40855.41	73473.51	32618.1
Refugee	32934.03	64062.5	31128.47
Training trade			
Agriculture and Livestock	45505.49	70527.47	25021.98
Electronics and Electricity	33625	62500	28875
Building and Construction	42520.41	66306.12	23785.71
Hospitality and Catering	39048.39	71596.77	32548.39
Beauty and Care	29868.42	63877.19	34008.77
Motor Vehicle Mechanics	47927.54	83217.39	35289.86
Entrepreneurship and Life Skills	23175	63275	40100
Micro Enterprise	47542.25	87507.04	39964.79
Other	31562.5	70000	38437.5
Employment status after training			
Wage employment	55081.4	109034.9	53953.49
Self-employed	45300.35	91630.74	46330.39
Unemployed, looking for a job	23580.11	29740.33	6160.221

⁶⁵ As per results of the quantitative tracer study

Inactive	28272.73	36515.15	8242.424
Student	35142.86	43714.29	8571.429

Instant trainings

Income before and after the training, per region

	Mean	S.E.
Albertine Rwenzori		
Average Income Before	77529.41	6984.51
Average Income After	71079.60	6420.12
Average Change in Income	14517.24	2746.634
Karamoja		
Average Income Before	50649.75	4744.98
Average Income After	74680.20	5854.29
Average Change in Income	28021.05	3400.27
Northern Uganda		
Average Income Before	57879.63	4248.27
Average Income After	89274.42	5750.95
Average Change in Income	35471.43	3993.78
Overall		
Average Income Before	62068.07	2952.10
Average Income After	78618.27	3650.92
Average Change in Income	26653.31	2051.81

Full list of research questions

Relevance <i>Assumption: The SDF, through fostering partnerships between training institutions and the private sector, supports a demand-driven approach and thus increases the relevance of skills development and training programs for the local labour markets and responds to the skills needs of the local population.</i> Key question: Have the alliances established through the SDF become a relevant and effective “motor” for linking the private sector and training providers? Sub-questions: To what extent did the SDF generate collaborative demand driven (i.e. relevant to the local labour market and local skills needs) training programs oriented towards immediate employment productivity and income generating opportunities? To what extent did the SDF generate flexible collaborative training programs, i.e. responsive to changing local labour market needs? To what extent have changing local skills needs remained sustained by the SDF grantees? To what extent have the ‘instant trainings’ been able to respond to identified acute livelihood needs? Which factors facilitated or hindered the above?
Quality of skills provision <i>Assumption: Through its public-private partnership approach, the SDF brokers innovative and holistic training modalities with upgraded or new training curricula that address the needs of the local context, combine technical and life skills training and offer pre- and post-training support services that enhance employability and/or capacities of trainees to generate self-employment.</i> Key questions: To what extent did the SDF partnerships contribute to upgrading the quality of skills trainings? To what extent did the alliances broker innovative collaborative skills training projects? Sub-questions: Has inclusion of pre- and post-training support improved the quality of training and learning? To what extent did the alliances facilitate qualitative and demand driven curricula development and/or upgrading? To what extent did the ‘instant trainings’ meet the high-quality standards they envisage to deliver? Which factors facilitated or hindered the above? Which significant change processes or best practices can be identified in the implementation of the SDF in this regard?
Access and Equity in TVET <i>Assumption: Through the prioritization of flexible, non-formal skills training programs that are adapted to the needs of vulnerable groups, the SDF enhances access of vulnerable youth, women and girls to skills development.</i> Key question: To what extent have the SDF grant agreements and ‘instant trainings’ broadened access to Skills Development for vulnerable youth, women and girls? Sub-questions: To what extent did the SDF mechanisms/processes (implemented through grant agreements and ‘instant trainings’) contribute to the delivery of training programs adapted to the specific needs of the target groups? Which factors facilitated or hindered the above?

Effectiveness

Assumption: The SDF addresses gaps between the 'world of work' and the 'world of school' in a sustainable way, and thus enhances employment and livelihood opportunities for its target groups.

Key question:

To what extent did the SDF approaches/mechanisms contribute to the employability of the target groups and their integration in the local labour market? Which mechanisms can be identified as most significant change factors or best practices and which factors as obstacles/challenges in this regard?

Sub-questions:

Did the involvement of the private sector lead to improved access to the local labour market?

Did concentration on work-based learning/hands-on training establish opportunities for an accelerated integration of the beneficiaries in the local labour market?

Did the alliances facilitate the inclusion of qualitative and effective career guidance and coaching/start up kits? Did these inclusive approaches contribute to an accelerated integration of the beneficiaries in the local labour market? Which post training support approaches deliver a real added value to the employability of the beneficiaries?

Did the 'instant trainings' make a significant difference in improving livelihood and contribute income generating opportunities for its beneficiaries?

Did the 'instant trainings' bridge the gap between humanitarian and development concerns?

Did the alliances facilitate continuation of "good practices" (i.e. work based learning, inclusive skills training provision, equitable access, social targeting)?

Are the alliances facilitated by the SDF sustainable?

Which factors facilitated or hindered the above?

Internal efficiency

Assumption: Through the application of streamlined and efficient management processes, the SDF ensures and optimal use of resources to achieve intended results and value for money.

Key question:

How well does the SDF management convert inputs into outputs? Are the grant management processes efficient and streamlined?

Sub-questions:

Does the selection procedure actually stimulate the type of collaborative, qualitative and innovative initiatives it intends to support?

How well do the SDF's implementing partners (grantees) convert inputs into outputs?

Did the SDF (grant agreements and 'instant trainings') produce value for money? Is the support delivered by the Fund optimally used to achieve its intended results? Or in other words, is the outcome of the implementation of the SDF maximized relative to the inputs invested?

To what extent does the management of the Fund truly engage its selected grantees around its core objectives and criteria? To what extent do the SDF procedures ensure the quality they envisage in project implementation, i.e. with regard to trainers and training delivery?

To what extent do the processes and instruments designed for the management of the SDF contribute to achieve management efficiency?

List of documents reviewed

Project Documentation

N°	Year	Title	Description/Abstract
Overall SDF documents			
1	2017/2019	Overview Instant trainings	List of instant trainings provided until October 2019
2	2018	Quality Committee Members (TBC)	Quality Committee for the Action Research
3	2019	SDF GRANT SET-UP	Description of non-formal trainings supported by the SDF in all 3 regions
4	2019	List_Regular trainings topics_Action Research	Training topics covered in FGDs for the Action Research
5	2019	List_Instant trainings topics_Action Research	Training topics covered in FGDs for the Action Research
6	2019	Grantees Report - Albertine & Rwenzori	Final reports grantees - 1st call Albertine & Rwenzori Quarterly reports grantees - 2nd call Albertine & Rwenzori Quarterly reports grantees - 3rd call Albertine & Rwenzori
7	2019	Grantees Report - Karamoja	Quarterly reports grantees - 1st & 2nd calls Karamoja
8		Grantees Report - Northern Uganda	Quarterly reports grantees - 1st & 2nd calls Northern Uganda
9	2019	Instant Training Operational Manual–DRAFT	Instant Trainings manual
10	2019	Instant Training Impact Analysis - Final	Instant Trainings analysis
11	2019	Completed instant SSU all consolidated	List of instant trainings provided until October 2019
12	2020	SDF Cost effectiveness	SDF costs data
Overall SSU documents			
13	2017	Audit of the Representations	External audit of Enabel Representation in Uganda
14	2018	Audit Assignment Awarding Grants	Preliminary results after fieldwork Uganda Intermediary reporting to local management
15	2016	ANNEX TO THE SUPPORT TO SKILLING UGANDA INTERVENTION (SSU): INTEGRATION OF THE KARAMOJA REGION	Baseline study for the SSU intervention in Karamoja
16	2017	TFF Skilling Uganda (UGA 14 027 11) Final Version	Technical & Financial File Support to the Implementation of the Skilling Uganda Strategy
17	2017	The European Trust Fund project to Enhance 'livelihood and labour market relevant' skills for youth and women of the refugees and host communities through Vocational Training and Entrepreneurship Support	Technical & Financial File Support to the Implementation of the Skilling Uganda Strategy (Northern Uganda)
18	2019	The Monitoring Matrix - IMPACT LEVEL	SSU Log frame Monitoring Matrix

19	2019	Financial audit services on expenditures of 5 SDF- grants within the intervention of the support programme for refugee settlements in Northern Uganda	Financial audit EU component
Labour Market Scans			
20	N/A	EXTRACT FROM THE LABOUR MARKET SCAN	Labour Market Scan
21	2014	Sarah Rosalynn Nalumansi, December 2014, REPORT ON A GEOGRAPHICAL LABOUR MARKET ANALYSIS IN PREPARATION FOR THE “SUPPORT TO SKILLING UGANDA” PROJECT LABOUR MARKET	Labour Market Scan
22	2016	Bachu Mubarak, November 2016, Needs Assessment of BTVET Skills for Refugees in Kiryandongo, Adjumani and Arua to Contribute to EU TF Skills Development for Refugees LABOUR MARKET	Labour Market Scan
23	2018	Dr. Alfred Lakwo, October 2018, KARAMOJA SECONDARY LABOUR MARKET STUDY FINAL REPORT, ENABEL	Labour Market Scan
24	2018	Dr. Alfred Lakwo, March 2018, SECONDARY LABOUR MARKET STUDY IN NORTHERN UGANDA, ENABEL	Labour Market Scan
25	2019	George Waigi, Kees van der Ree, Sam Bbosa, August 2019, Skills for Green-Related Employment in Uganda LABOUR MARKET	Labour Market Scan
Tracer Study			
26	2017	Tracer study of Graduates of SDF Trainings	Assessing SDF Graduates' Employment, Self-employment and Current Socio-economic Status
27	2019	Tracer Study	First Draft of Tracer Study
28	2019	Employer Survey Dataset 22-11-2019	Data set 2nd Tracer study
29	2019	Number of surveyed BTVET graduates by region and trade	Data set 2nd Tracer study
30	2019	Instant Training Beneficiaries Dataset	Data set 2nd Tracer study - Instant trainings
31	2020	First Results of 2 nd Tracer Studies for BTVET graduates	Enabel summary of first results
Government Documents			
32	2008	Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training Act, 2008	BTVET Act 2008
33	2012	Skilling Uganda - BTVET Strategic Plan 2012/3-2021/2	Skilling Uganda - BTVET Strategic Plan
34	2018	Technical Vocational Education and Training Policy	TVET Policy

External reports

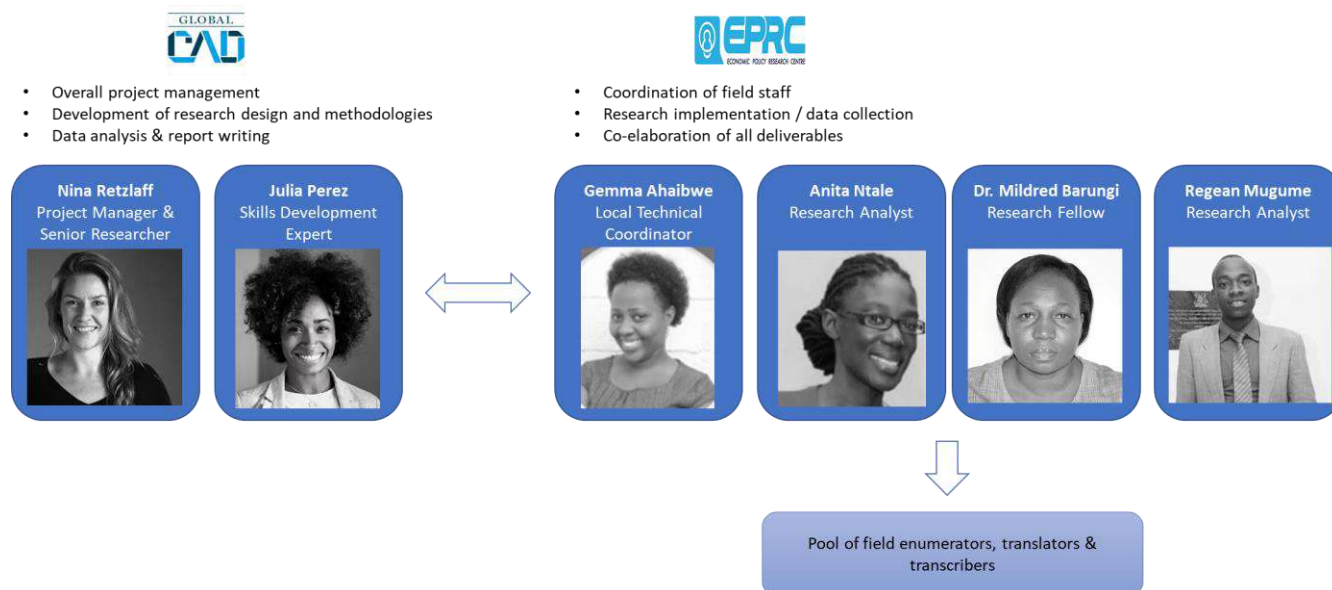
N ^o	Title / Year / Link
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1	World Bank, Uganda Workforce Development, 2012. Available at: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/20171
2	Jacqui Kew, Supporting Africa's Young Entrepreneurs: an investment in job creation and future prosperity for all, 2013. Available at https://www.idrc.ca/sites/default/files/sp/Documents%20EN/Africas-Young-Entrepreneurs-Unlocking-the-Potential-for-a-Brighter-Future.pdf
3	Robert Palmer, Jobs and Skills Mismatch in the informal economy, International Labour Organization, 2017. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_629018.pdf
4	UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training UN Campus, World TVET Database Uganda 2014. Available at: https://unevoc.unesco.org/wtdb/worldtvetdatabase_uga_en.pdf
5	Clara Schmitz-Pranghe, Heidrun Bohnet, Uganda: A role model for refugee integration? 2018. Available at: https://www.bicc.de/uploads/tx_bicctools/WP2_19_Uganda_web.pdf
6	Max Walter, Ronald Mukasa, Steven Koltai and Matt Muspratt, UGANDA ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM INITIATIVE: PHASE I, Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs, 2018. Available at: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.andeglobal.org/resource/resmgr/research_library/UEEI_Report_November_2018_Fi.pdf
7	Dino Merotto, UGANDA: JOBS STRATEGY FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, 2019. Available at: https://www.ldpg.or.ug/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Uganda-Jobs-Strategy-for-Inclusive-Growth-Launched-February-25-2020.pdf
8	ILO, The Mastercard Foundation, SWTS country brief, 2017. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/work-for-youth/publications/national-reports/WCMS_493731/lang--en/index.htm
9	DTDA, Uganda Labour Market Profile 2019, Danish Trade Union Development Agency 2019. Available at: https://bit.ly/2yBMxKj

Action Research Team

The project team is composed of two international and two national consultants/ researchers with sound expertise and experience in all areas required for this assignment. For the data collection implementation, the team is supported by a pool of local field enumerators, translators and transcribers that have been trained on the approved data collection methodologies and instruments prior to the start of the field work.

Overall team structure & responsibilities



Nina Retzlaff has a master's degree in Political Sciences from the University of Cologne, Germany, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Development Cooperation from the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona. She currently works at GlobalCAD's headquarters in Barcelona as a senior consultant and is specialized in sustainable economic development, including the promotion of (green) entrepreneurship, SME development, (women's) economic empowerment and financial inclusion. Another area of expertise is programme and project evaluations, using mixed methods and gender sensitive approaches. Through her previous work with InWEnt – Capacity Building International (since 2011 part of GIZ), Nina gained experience in capacity building programs for young professionals from developing and industrialised countries, assisting them in shaping processes of change in their own communities. At GlobalCAD, Nina has been working in projects worldwide with international organizations such as IFC/World Bank, IDB/MIF, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNV, UN Women, or Youth Business International (YBI), and with regional organizations such as the Regional Activity Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP/RAC) or the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). Some projects Nina managed or participated in are: an evaluability assessment and baseline study for a regional joint programme of UN Women, the ILO and the EU in Latin America, the strategic development of the green entrepreneurship programme of the SWITCH-Med Initiative, the final evaluation of a microfinance programme of the IDB in Mexico, the final evaluation of a philanthropic programme of the C&A Foundation in Europe, the final global evaluation of UN Women's Empower Women platform, the final global evaluation of UNV's strategic framework 2014-2017, or supporting the management of one of the biggest online platforms for SME development worldwide, IFC's SME Toolkit. In addition, Nina provided technical assistance to the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) on women's (economic) empowerment. Nina is experienced in facilitating workshops and trainings, and in conducting sound research and empirical studies. She also has excellent organizational, analytical and communication skills, is a highly committed constructive and results-oriented team player and used to working in a multi-cultural environment.

Julia Perez is a Sustainable Development Consultant with a focus on SMEs Development & Entrepreneurship. She has a Postgraduate Diploma in Development Cooperation from the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain; a Postgraduate degree in Corporate Communication from the Universidad de Girona Barcelona, Spain and a Degree in Business Administration from INTEC, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Julia has more than 6 years of experience working in the SMEs Development field. During her previous work with a business

incubator she designed, implemented and streamlined administrative processes to better support specific operational tasks at hand for a diverse range of start-ups. At GlobalCAD, Julia has provided support in the coordination and management of projects and has conducted research assignments for international organizations such as IFC/World Bank, UNDP, GGGI, AfDB, among others. Recent projects include the Development of a Learning Resource on Youth Entrepreneurship Programs for YBI, the Administration of the Web-based SME Development Program of IFC, the Development of a video on Strengthening Entrepreneurship for Micromentor, research on Blue Economy topics for UfM, among others. Recently, Julia received a certification for Teaching Entrepreneurship in Schools with an experiential approach and she is facilitating workshops for kids on social entrepreneurship. Julia is based in Berlin.

Gemma Ahaibwe is a Research Fellow at the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC). She received her undergraduate degree in Quantitative Economics at Makerere University and completed her postgraduate studies in Development and Natural Resource Economics at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB) in Norway. At EPRC, she works under the microeconomics department. Gemma's research focuses on health, poverty, governance and labour markets with a strong bias towards the youth. In partnership with the World Bank/DFID and the Inspectorate of Government, she was part of the research team that worked on the three issues of the annual report on Corruption trends in Uganda using the Data Tracking Mechanism produced in 2011, 2012 and 2014. With the Global Development Network (GDN), Gemma was one of the Uganda based researchers under the Strengthening Institutions to Improve Public Expenditure Accountability (SIPEA). In collaboration with UNICEF, she worked on the Situation analysis of child poverty and deprivation in Uganda. Gemma has worked with the ILO in developing the policy influence plan to support change facilitation in the area of youth entrepreneurship policies and interventions in Uganda, and has also produced blogs, op-eds and policy briefs on Youth Unemployment in Uganda in partnership with the Brookings Institution-AGI. With qualifications from The Abdul Jameel Poverty Action Lab (JPAL) and ILO as well as the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), University of Oxford; Gemma is well grounded in undertaking impact evaluation of interventions and is well versed with the concept of measuring multidimensional poverty. Accordingly, Gemma's research has been presented at various international conferences including the CSAE conference on Economic Development in Africa, Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa (YESSA) conference organized by IDRC, and the International Conference on Youth Unemployment in Africa organized by CODESRIA.

Anita Ntale is a Research Analyst under the Trade and Regional Integration department at the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC). She has previously undertaken research on gender and trade, labour market issues and peace and security (as it relates to cross-border trade). She has headed and supervised various surveys at the Centre; some notable ones include War to Peace survey in Northern Uganda and the Local Content Study in the Ugandan oil and Gas industry. She has also undertaken qualitative research on Rights based family planning and the early labour market transitions of young women in Uganda. Anita was part of the team that researched Corruption trends in Uganda using the Data Tracking Mechanism and has recently completed a study on tobacco consumption patterns and tobacco taxation. Anita's research interests lie at the intersection between gender, labour markets and trade (both domestic and international). She holds an MSc Globalisation and Development from the University of Manchester and an MA in International Relations from the University of Edinburgh. She holds an MSc Globalisation and Development from the University of Manchester as well as an MA in International Relations from the University of Edinburgh.

Mildred Barungi is currently working as Research Fellow at the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) in Uganda. She holds a PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics. Mildred has been involved in undertaking policy-oriented research in various fields including education, agriculture, water and health, among others. She has published a number of articles in peer reviewed international journals and made presentations at several local and international conferences.

Mildred is a member of the Uganda Economics Association (UEA), International Association of Agricultural Economist (IAAE) and African Growth and Development Policy Modelling Consortium (AGRODEP).

Regean Mugume is a Research Analyst in the Micro-economics department with over 5 years' experience in project Monitoring and Evaluation, data management, policy analysis and operational research. Regean possesses a vast experience in designing and developing evaluation frameworks, systems, strategies, and survey data collection tools. He has expertise in statistical modelling and analysis and progress project reporting. Reagan holds a Master's of Science in Quantitative Economics and a Bachelor of Science in Economics from Makerere University.

Action Research Quality Committee Members

The Quality Committee is comprised of eight members who will review and provide comments on all key deliverables of the Action Research assignment:

	Institution	Nominee
1	The chairperson, an industry practitioner with considerable knowledge of private sector, BTJET issues and member of the RTF or SDA board	Nicholas John Okwir Federation of Uganda Employers
2	Ministry of Education and Sports	Elliot Arinaitwe Project Coordinator SSU
3	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development	Timothy Namboga Economist
4	Representative of the Skills Development Matching Facility supported by World Bank	Ruth Biyinzika Musoke, Head Skills Development Facility
5	World Bank	Kiril Vasiliev Senior Education Specialist
6	Enabel	Niels De Block Skills Development Expert SSU-EU
7	Enabel	Christine Karungi SDF Manager
8	Enabel	Geraldine Ladrière Grants Expert
9	Enabel	Beatrice Ecuru Gender and Vulnerability Expert
10	Enabel	Silke Goubin MEAL Officer
11	Enabel	Adam Timothy Mayemba MEAL Officer



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