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FINAL EVALUATION OF

OAS/AID REGIONAL NON-FORMAL SKILLS TRAINING PROJECT

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I. PROJECT EVALUATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regional Non-Formal Skills Training Project (USAID RDO/C Project Number 538-0073) was intended to achieve two main goals. The first was to train 1,250 youth for employment and self-employment -- 500 in Barbados, 550 in Dominica, and 200 in St. Lucia. The second goal was to make substantial progress toward institutionalization of non-formal skills training in each country.

The evaluation concludes that the goals have been largely, though not entirely, attained. A total of 1,672 young people have been trained, considerably above the target of 1,250. Substantial progress has also been made toward institutionalization. Well trained local staff are in place in all countries. Training modules have been developed and the necessary organizational structures to continue the work are substantially advanced. While solid progress toward organizational independence has been achieved, movement toward financial independence has not. Alternative sources of funding for continuation of the project after the termination of AID and OAS backing have not yet been identified.

A. Evaluation Methodology.

The principal objective of the final evaluation was to assess the project's training and placement records, progress toward institutionalization, aggregate costs and benefits, management effectiveness, and impact on national development. To this end, an evaluation team reviewed a broad array of documents, including employment identification reports and trainee tracer studies; interviewed more than 100 individuals with over 40 organizations, including senior government officials, company managers, instructors, and trainees; and observed training sessions in all three countries. The evaluation team consisted of two external evaluators, and they were joined for periods by three staff members of USAID's Regional Development Office for the Caribbean.

B. External Factors.

The region's economy was depressed at the start of the project, and while more recent signs gave rise to some optimism, youth unemployment remained over 25 percent and employment opportunities remained limited. The conclusion of a treaty returning Hong Kong to China in 1997 modestly enhanced the region's attractiveness for labor-intensive investment, however, and the arrival of several firms opened some new employment training opportunities.

C. Project Inputs.

At a total cost of US\$ 1.83 million, the project built a solid regional staff, created effective national organizations in St. Lucia and Dominica, and provided extensive technical assistance in Barbados.

D. Project Outputs.

In Barbados, 762 young people were trained, 52 percent above the target of 500. In Dominica, 538 youth have already been trained, and an additional 235 were undergoing training at the time of the evaluation. If all of the latter complete the program, the 773 trained youth will be 41 percent above the target of 550. In St. Lucia, 372 young people have completed training and 34 were still in training; if all of the latter finish the course, the St. Lucia program will have trained 406 individuals, 103 percent above the project target of 200.

If all trainees in the final program cycles complete the modules, 1,941 young people will have been trained at program's end, 55 percent above the project's original objective. Based on those trainees who had completed the program at the time of the evaluation, the overall placement rate stood at 59 percent (42 percent in Barbados, 70 percent in Dominica, and 76 percent in St. Lucia).

More than 90 percent of the trainees had virtually no regular income prior to their training in the program. After training, the average monthly income among the nearly two-thirds of the trainees who had found placement stood at US\$ 138 (US\$ 230 in Barbados, US\$ 80 in Dominica, and US\$ 132 in St. Lucia).

In Barbados, the program of the National Training Board is fully institutionalized and will continue as external support comes to an end. In Dominica and St. Lucia, effective management and training systems have been created. Training modules are carefully planned, employment surveys are frequently conducted, and decisions are effectively executed. The two national offices lacked adequate information in several important areas, however, including overall budgetary data and longitudinal information on the labor market experiences of youth before and after training. Project staff and instructors are generally well qualified and prepared. While organizational independence is close to achievement, financial independence in both St. Lucia and Dominica is not.

E. Project Beneficiaries.

The primary project beneficiaries were the nearly 2,000 young people, almost all unemployed, who passed through the training programs. Direct benefits also accrued to employers, who reported that their training costs were lowered and their

need for qualified entry-level employees more readily satisfied. In addition, by helping to retain industry and attract new investment to the islands, the Skills Training Project facilitated national development objectives.

F. Unplanned Effects.

The value of the Skills Training Project in attracting investors to St. Lucia and Dominica had not been anticipated. National development agencies and government officials in both countries report that the program is a significant asset in bringing new companies to the islands. The relatively greater importance of employment rather than self-employment as a training goal was also under-anticipated. Start-up funds for self-employment proved particularly difficult to obtain, and in any case the number of employment opportunities expanded faster than had been originally expected.

G. Lessons Learned.

The project's special lessons include: (1) a full-time job development and placement officer is critical to the project's success; (2) training in work attitudes is as important as training in technical skills; (3) on-site training is particularly effective, for it both lowers direct training costs and raises the probability of placement; (4) careful training of instructors significantly enhances their control of the teaching process and their ability to communicate; (5) flexibility in the subject and timing of training modules is key to achieving high placement rates; (6) stipends for trainees are essential to ensure daily participation; (7) detailed task analysis is required for the effective design of training modules; (8) financial institutionalization is far more difficult to achieve than organizational independence; (9) the selection of highly able regional and national staff members is a major precondition for the program's success.

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II. THE GOALS OF THE NON-FORMAL SKILLS TRAINING PROJECT

The underemployment of youth is a problem throughout the Eastern Caribbean. With national unemployment rates estimated at 25 percent or higher in the region, major fractions of the labor forces face continuing problems in obtaining adequate employment. For out-of-school youth, the problem is especially acute. They fail to find work at rates substantially higher than for adult workers. And the absence of early work experience and skills development can have debilitating effects on seeking and holding good jobs later on. Without exposure to the discipline and learning experience of work early in their lives, the successful entry of young people into the labor force becomes increasingly difficult. National economies suffer as well. Employers may fail to find the trained employees they require, and countries may fail to effectively utilize their human resources.

The entry of youth into employment or successful self-employment can be facilitated, however, by training in a range of practical skills demanded by employers or required for self-employment. What the formal school system did not furnish can be imparted through intensive short-term training. To this end, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) established, in collaboration with three host governments, the Regional Non-Formal Skills Training Project (STP). The collaborating nations are Barbados, Dominica, and St. Lucia, countries in which youth under- and unemployment has been chronically high.

The program in Barbados was a continuation of the National Skills Training Programme supported by OAS and AID; the Dominica and St. Lucia programs were new. All three commenced in December, 1982, and were slated to end in December, 1984. The Barbados program was completed as originally scheduled in 1984, while the St. Lucia and Dominica programs received three-month no-cost extensions through March, 1985.

The implementation plan of the Skills Training Program set forth two primary project goals:

(1) Employment training of 1,250 formerly unemployed or underemployed youths -- 500 in Barbados, 550 in Dominica, and 200 in St. Lucia.

(2) Institutionalization of the youth skills training program -- including the creation of a training network, trained staff, and appropriate training modules.

The project has been guided by these dual goals since its inception. The extent to which the goals have been met is a central purpose of this final project evaluation.

In brief summary, the first goal has been met in two of the three countries, while the second goal has not been fully achieved in St. Lucia and Dominica. The number of trained and employed youth is reported in Table 1, and we see that the totals exceed both the country-specific quotas and the overall project goal. As of December 31, 1984, a total of 1,672 youth had been trained, and an estimated 938 have been placed in employment (including part-time and self-employment). In addition, 181 apprentices were still undergoing training in Barbados, and 269 young people were still in training in St. Lucia and Dominica.

Institutionalization has been completed in Barbados, with in-plant skills training developed by STP now a regularized feature of the work of the National Training Board. In St. Lucia and Dominica, however, institutionalization is not complete. Training networks, a trained staff, and training modules have been successfully developed. The financial wherewithal for continuing the project after OAS and AID funding is terminated, on the other hand, is not at the moment within reach.

Table 1. The Number of Youth Trained and Employed by the Skills Training Program in Barbados, Dominica, and St. Lucia.

Country	Number trained and employed as project goal	Number trained	Number employed	Placement rate
Barbados (Apprentices)@	500	762 (181)	280***	41.5%
Dominica*	550	538	377	70.1%
St. Lucia**	200	372	281	75.5%
Regional total	1,250	1,672	938	59.1%

@ The Barbados project included apprentice training. Apprenticeships were for three-years duration, and thus all apprentices were still in training at the conclusion of the project period.

* An additional 235 youth were in training in Dominica at the time of the evaluation.

** An additional 34 young people were undergoing training in St. Lucia at the time of the evaluation.

*** Estimated figures based upon incomplete data.

This evaluation reviews the major project achievements, and it has two related purposes as well. The project will be continued, in all likelihood, for two more years in St. Lucia and Dominica, and expanded to include Grenada, St. Vincent, Antigua, and, possibly, St. Kitts. In the course of evaluating the project's past, this study was intended to identify key project elements in St. Lucia and Dominica requiring special attention during the next two years of effort. In addition, the evaluation was intended to specify the special lessons of the work in St. Lucia, Barbados, and Dominica that may be usefully applied to the new efforts in the three, and possibly four, new countries.

III. FINAL EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The final evaluation was required under the original project agreement. Identification of the specific evaluation objectives and formation of the external evaluation team were the product of discussions held between AID's Regional Development Office for the Caribbean, the Organization of American States, and the external evaluators in November and December, 1984. The evaluation was conducted from January 6 to January 20 by external evaluators Dr. Michael Useem and Dr. Robert Girling.

In completing the evaluation, Drs. Useem and Girling worked closely with both OAS and AID. In Washington, Dr. Useem held discussions and reviewed project documents with Mr. Tomas Rosenberg, Chief, OAS Manpower and Employment, and Ms. Norene Halvonik, Senior Specialist, OAS Department of Social Affairs. In St. Lucia and Dominica, the evaluators held extensive discussions with the OAS regional staff, Dr. Arthur Henry, Regional Project Director, and Mr. Kevin Kane, Employment Promotion Specialist; and with the OAS national staffs, led by Mrs. Gertrude St. Helene in St. Lucia, and Ms. Elizabeth Alfred in Dominica. The OAS regional and national staffs, and the Barbados National Training Board, facilitated the work of the evaluation team during their field visit to the region.

During the four-day working visit to St. Lucia, Drs. Useem and Girling were joined by Mr. Stafford Griffith, AID Senior Education Project Manager. During a similar visit to St. Lucia, they were joined by Dr. Ambrosio Ortega, AID Human Resource Development Officer, and Ms. Elizabeth Warfield, AID Capital Projects Officer. Helpful discussions were also held with several staff members of AID's Regional Development Office/Caribbean, including Mr. Darwin Clark, Evaluation Officer; Ms. Cecilia Karch, SPSS/PRG; Mr. Robin Phillips, Economist; and Mr. Spike Stephens, Capital Projects Officer.

The evaluation team gathered information upon which this report is based by interviewing a range of organizations and individuals, and by compiling a range of documentary sources and

reports. Intensive interviews and discussions were held with more than 40 organizations and well over 100 individuals in Barbados, Dominica and St. Lucia. The organizations and individuals included (1) all project staff and a sample of project instructors and trainees; (2) managers of employing organizations which assisted the training or hired its graduates; (3) senior officials of the responsible government ministries in the three countries -- the Ministry of Community Development in St. Lucia, the Ministry of Labour in Barbados, and the Ministry of Education in Dominica; and (4) officials and directors of a range of organizations and agencies familiar with the Skills Training Program, including commercial banks, related government ministries, and employers' and workers' associations. In St. Lucia, the latter, for instance, included:

Government agencies

- Department of Labour
- Government Printery
- Ministry of Community Development
- Ministry of Finance, Planning and Statistics
- National Development Corporation
- National Tourist Board

Major employers

- Anchor Ltd.
- Brabo Caribbean Ltd.
- Caribelle Batik
- Courts (St. Lucia) Ltd.
- Green Parrot Restaurant and Bar
- Hortex (St. Lucia) Garments Factory Ltd.
- Marstan Mills Ltd.
- Southern Caterers Ltd.

Other organizations and agencies

- Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture
- National Research Development Foundation
- National Workers' Union (6,000 members; St. Lucia's largest union)
- Project Development Assistance Program (AID supported)
- St. Lucia Employers' Federation (100 members)

At a number of the companies and agencies, training sessions were observed and participating trainees interviewed. A complete list of the organizations with which, and individuals with whom, discussions and interviews were held in all three countries can be found in Appendix 1.

The evaluation team also reviewed numerous documentary sources and reports. These included the original AID Project Paper for the Skills Training Project, OAS quarterly project reports, the OAS mid-term evaluation, country quarterly reports, employment identification reports, training application forms,

training module curricular materials, labor market surveys, tracer studies, and project files. A full list of the documents utilized in the final evaluation appears in Appendix 2.

IV. THE EMPLOYMENT OF TRAINED YOUTH

The most immediate objective of the Skills Training Project was the preparation of large numbers of under- and unemployed youth for successful entry into jobs or creation of gainful self-employment. In assessing the quality and impact of the skills training, three considerations are paramount. First, the number of trained and placed youth is important. Second, the quality of the organization established to conduct the training is critical, both for assessing the quality of the trainees who have completed the course and for forecasting the likely success of the program once it is institutionalized. Third, the experience of the trainees after completing the program is significant for gauging the impact of the training and for predicting the attitude of employers, government ministries, and other interested parties in the continuation of the program. This section reviews available evidence on each of these questions.

A. The Training and Placement of Youth

The basic training unit in the Skills Training Project in St. Lucia and Dominica is the short-term, highly-focused training module. Ranging from 2 to 12 weeks in duration, the skills modules focus on such subjects as fish farming, batik, book-binding, welding, and industrial sewing. In Barbados, the project rendered assistance to the National Training Board's short-term entry level skills training modules and to its three-year in-plant apprenticeship training program. The subjects of the training units appear in Table 2a and 2b. The experiences of several of the trainees, instructors, and employers are briefly chronicled in five case profiles appearing in Appendix 3.

In St. Lucia, overall figures on the recruitment of trainees and the placement of graduates imply that the training program has considerable strength in attracting young people and finding work for them upon completion of the training. A total of 21 training modules were fielded. Of the 1,368 applicants for the training, 434 (31.7 percent) were selected for and started a module. The completion rate is relatively high, with 93.5 percent of the starters completing the program of those modules which had come to a finish at the time of the evaluation. Of particular significance is the placement rate: 75.5 percent of those who have completed a module are employed or self-employed.

As an indirect indicator of the success of the program in St. Lucia, the number of applicants relative to the number of training openings grew over time. During the first three

training cycles, for instance, for every opening there were approximately two applicants (382 applicants for 216 positions). During the fourth and fifth training cycles, by contrast, there were nearly four applicants for every training opening (986 applicants for 258 positions). Information may be informally passing among young people that the Skills Training Program is a good way to find a job in St. Lucia; it may also be that STP has become more effective in recruiting applicants. Our informants suggest that both have happened. The overall flow of young people through the Skills Training Program is displayed in Table 3.

In Dominica, 36 training modules organized in four training cycles had been completed at the time of evaluation. Of 2,876 applicants for the skills training, the program interviewed 1,057 and selected 797 -- 27 percent of the applicants -- for training. The completion rate of the starters was again very high, with 95 percent finishing the training modules. The placement rate was also nearly as high as in St. Lucia, standing at 70 percent. While most of those placed in St. Lucia were working full-time, in Dominica more than half of the placed trainees had found only part-time employment or self-employment.

The Barbados program operated far fewer training modules but repeated them more often. Training in ten subject areas were provided to 972 program starters, of whom 78 percent completed the training. The placement rate of 42 percent, largely for full-time work, was the lowest of the three country programs. The overall Barbados placement rate will ultimately prove substantially higher, however, as the 181 apprentices still in training at the time of the evaluation finally complete their program. It is anticipated the most will enter full-time employment at the conclusion of their training.

The gender composition of the trainees was skewed toward men. In Barbados, 87 percent of the trainees were men, and in Dominica the proportion stood at 67 percent. No direct figures were available for St. Lucia, but indirect evidence suggests that the proportions are similar to those in Dominica.

Table 2a. Training Subjects in Skills Training Program in Barbados

Skills Training	Apprenticeship Program
Electrical installation	Electronics
Carpentry	Carpentry and joining
Masonry	Masonry
Plumbing	Plumbing
Mechanics	Vehicle body repair
Steel bending and fixing	Welding and metal fabrication
Tractor operation and maintenance	Automotive engineering
Upholstery	Refrigeration and air-conditioning
Horticulture	Mechanical engineering
Dressmaking	

Table 2b. Training Subjects in Skill Training Program in St. Lucia and Dominica.

St. Lucia	Dominica
Agriculture, livestock and crops	Livestock production/hogs
Industrial sewing	Small engine repair
Tour guide	Bricklaying
Fish farming	Plumbing
Silk screen printing	Auto mechanics
Root crops	Beekeeping
Electronics assembly	Home, hotel and restaurant assistant
Small appliance repair	Crop agriculture
Batik and tie-dye	Steelbending
Book-binding	Care of elderly
Basic electronics	Child care
Home/restaurant assistants	Electrical wiring
Welding/auto mechanics	Fishing
Fish processing	Industrial sewing
Chef training	Machine mechanics
Food and beverage service	Blacksmith/radiator repair
	Home assistant
	Auto body repair
	Chair upholstery and caning
	Food processing
	Rabbit production
	Floraculture
	Diesel mechanics
	Rural guest house
	Small engine repair
	Livestock/sheep and goat
	Sulphur block
	Refrigeration and air conditioning repair
	Spray painting
	Tour guides
	Motor winding
	Leathercraft
	Smocking
	General mechanics
	Superior Timber
	Dominica Gloves

Table 3. Flow of Applicants and Trainees Through Skills Training Program in Barbados, St. Lucia, and Dominica

Training Stage	Barbados	St. Lucia	Dominica
Training Modules			
Number of subjects	10	16	36
Number of offerings	67	21	38
Trainees:			
Number of applicants	na	1,368	2,876
Number who started*	972 (181)	434	797
Starters as % of applicants	na	31.7%	27.7%
Completers as % of starters	78.4%	93.5%	95.4%
Graduates:			
Number who graduated	762	372	538
Percent of graduates placed**			
Part-time	na	na	34.9%
Full-time	na	na	28.4%
Full-time and part-time	41.5%	75.5%	70.1%

* Of the 434 starters in St. Lucia, 34 were still in training in at the moment of the evaluation; of the 797 starters in Dominica, 235 were still undergoing training. The completion rates are based on only those whose modules had been completed. This is a total of 400 young people in St. Lucia and 394 in Dominica (an additional 162 youth had completed their modules in Dominica, but the module training was still on-going for another 235 young people). In Barbados, an additional 181 apprentices were still in training.

** No breakdown between full-time and part-time placement is available for St. Lucia or Barbados. The St. Lucia national staff and the regional employment promotion specialist estimate that more than three-quarters of those placed in St. Lucia are employed full-time. Similar proportions are estimated for Barbados. The Barbados placement rates are for 1984 only; the rates for 1983 were unavailable.

Young people trained for self-employment or for yet unspecified employers generally fare far less well than those trained for already identified employment positions. This is evident in St. Lucia, for instance, when we compare the placement rates of four training modules, two without certain employment for the graduates and two with a commitment of a cooperating employer to employ the trainees who met minimum performance standards. The modules in Root Crops and Small Appliance Repair are in the former category; the modules in Industrial Sewing for Marstan Mills and Silk Screen Printing for Brabo Caribbean Ltd. fall in the latter. The placement rates for the 14 graduates of Root Crops and 21 graduates of the Small Appliance Repair are 43 percent and 33 percent. By contrast, the placement rates for the 83 graduates of the Industrial Sewing module and 8 graduates of Silk Screen Printing are 84 percent and 100 percent.

Initial placement of the trained youth is of course only a modest first step into the labor market. It is too early to reach even preliminary assessment of the trainees' longevity in their first position, let alone the broader labor market, upon completion of the training. Informal interviews with instructors and employers suggests that the turnover rate among STP graduates is on a par with the rate for other young people. Moreover, a sampling of a dozen cases of trainees no longer with their first employer suggests that most have left for other comparable or even better employment opportunities. Few of those who have left have returned to the ranks of unemployed youth.

B. The Management and Organization of the Training Program.

The quality of the organization developed for the Skills Training Program has direct bearing on not only the quality of the training received by the participating countries' youth, but also the successful institutionalization of the programs. Well organized and effective programs acquire a natural support from cooperating government ministries and employers. All are more likely to urge continuation of a program that appears responsive and efficient than one that is not.

We identify five critical organizational features of the programs, and review the quality of the national organizations in each of the areas. They are: (1) selection and training of module instructors; (2) appropriateness of the curriculum; (3) selection and placement of the trainees; (4) management information system; (5) management structure.

1. Selection and Training of Instructors. Judging by the background of the trainers, most possess the technical and pedagogical background required for effective teaching. Sampling five instructors in St. Lucia, for instance, we find that one served as a marine biologist with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (teaching a module in Fish Farming); a second was a

retired school principal (teaching Restaurant/Home Assistance); another was a primary school teacher (teaching a section on social skills that accompanied many modules); a fourth was the assistant manager of the fish marketing corporation that will operate a new fisheries complex (teaching Fish Handling and Processing); and another was a livestock extension officer with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (teaching Crops and Livestock Production).

For some instructors, however, communication of their professional skills to a young and largely inexperienced group of trainees did not come naturally. Pedagogical expertise did not always accompany technical expertise. In one case of an in-plant training module in St. Lucia, the instructor was unable to effectively express the nuances of his craft. The plant manager realized after several training sessions that the trainees were learning little, and he finally assigned one of his assistant managers to work with the training to ensure effective communication.

Generally, however, the instructors have been screened well, they have received the necessary training for teaching in the special conditions of the Skills Training Program, and they have effectively organized their modules. Our interviews with a number of current and former trainees, and with employers, reveal that nearly all of the instructors receive high marks from those whom they have served.

2. Appropriateness of Curriculum. The ways in which modules are identified and curriculum developed have a direct bearing on the relevance and quality of the training. It is important to know if decisions on starting modules are timely and based on careful appraisal of employment opportunities. It is also important to know if the program follows procedures which ensure that module curricula are fine-honed to the tasks of the future jobs of the trainees.

The decision to commence a module has generally been based on reasonably good information on employment opportunities. In St. Lucia and Dominica, the Regional Employment Promotion Specialist and the National Development Officers invest considerable time in assessing job prospects before a module is initiated. When the training is to be in-plant, the process typically consists of a number of preliminary meetings between project staff and plant managers. In this way, the number of trainees is closely set to the immediate needs of the employer, thus ensuring high placement rates.

In Barbados, a more fixed set of skills training topics has evolved, allowing for more formalization but less flexibility. While the St. Lucia and Dominica programs permit development of a module in virtually whatever subject will ensure early placement of the graduates, the Barbados program is far more constrained to repeat what it has already well developed.

The organizational system in St. Lucia and Dominica for selecting modules ensures maximum flexibility, essential for obtaining high placement rates. While this is obviously a premium-feature for any employment training program, it is not without a problematic facet. By designing training modules according to immediate employment opportunities, placement rates are maximized. Yet from the standpoint of longer-term national development, this may lead to imbalances in the kinds of skills acquired by the country's youth. Textile and small-scale manufacturing may be the areas of most immediate employment growth. Given the vagaries of these sectors, however, other sectors such as agriculture and fishing may be the areas of greatest national priority during the decade ahead. It is arguable that the St. Lucia and Dominica programs would benefit from an organizational mechanism that more strongly introduced national development concerns into module selection. The National Advisory Committees might well be the appropriate mechanism for doing so.

The fashioning of the content of the skills training modules is developed in a way that generally assures that the instruction is targeted at the skills required for employment, particularly when the training is done within the future employment setting. At Marstan Mills in St. Lucia, for example, the training is carried out by two assistant supervisors of Marstan Mills, and the graduates are moved immediately into production once their skill levels have reached those required by the company (see Case Profile 3 in Appendix 3).

The module in Agriculture, Livestock and Crops, on the other hand, engendered basic skills in such areas as bee-keeping and rabbit-raising, but not a sufficiently full set of skills to permit most graduates to successfully start self-sustaining self-employment upon completion of the program. Since self-employment was virtually the only means for converting these skills into income, the absence of more extensive training in marketing, financial planning and related management skills required for self-employment was one major reason for this module's relatively poor success with those who embarked on the path of self-employment.

3. Selection and Placement of Trainees. In all three programs, the process of selecting trainees is well structured. In Barbados, the Skills Training Program is well known, drawing large numbers of applicants. In St. Lucia and Dominica, the commencement of new training modules is preceded by radio announcements and other means of publicity. We have already seen that the number of applicants far exceeds the number of openings, suggesting that the recruitment net is wide.

Applicants are screened through the review of a written application and a personal interview, and more than two-thirds of the applicants are not permitted into the programs. Age and

motivation to work are the sine qua non considerations. Prior experience in the skills area is not deemed relevant. The program drop-out rate of less than 10 percent suggests the screening on employment attitudes has been relatively successful.

The programs work hard to ensure placement of the graduates. In the case of in-plant training, this occurs with relatively modest effort since placement of many graduates is presumed at the time of the module creation. For other modules, however, considerable care and attention is required, frequently from instructors who continue informal contact with their trainees long after the program is completed. Among the more successful procedures is for instructors with extensive occupational contacts to use their reputation and networks to facilitate placement. A module in Welding and Auto Mechanics offered in St. Lucia, for example, was offered by the owner of a company specializing in auto repair and related metal work. He is well known on the island, and has willingly used his professional reputation to help place those whom he trained and could not hire himself (he trained six, hired two, and expects to place the other four; see Case Profile 4 in Appendix 3).

4. Management Information System. The purpose of a management information system is to provide useful information in a timely fashion for project monitoring and decision-making. This includes information on trainees, employers, and training modules.

Although a formal system of information compilation on trainees and employers had been developed for St. Lucia and Dominica, it was viewed as too cumbersome and a more streamlined system of data collection was finally devised. The revised information system consists of brief follow-up surveys of all trainees and employers. Though the information compiled is useful for tracking the immediate work experience of trainees, it is too scant to permit analysis of the impact of such project goals as the improvement of trainee income. While simple information on post-training income is obtained, for example, no analogous pre-training information is acquired. Project staff consider the existing system adequate for their purposes, for it permits systematic, albeit minimal, monitoring of the graduates' post-training experience. Moreover, because the project staff is in such frequent contact with employers -- and directly or indirectly through its instructors with large numbers of trainees -- the staff has considerable informal information on the operation at its disposal.

Yet systematic information is largely unavailable for an equally important function of a management information system, the analysis of program strengths and weaknesses. If modestly more extensive information were collected from trainees before a module commences and then periodically after graduation, the program could acquire more systematic appraisal of what works best. For example, with the coding of simple age, gender, and

income data, STP could readily determine for which ages the specific training programs work best, and whether specific modules are working better for young men than women or perhaps the other way around.

The compilation of more information would also permit systematic analysis of one of the project's goals for which presently available data are completely lacking -- the enhancement of trainee income. The measurement of income is inherently problematic because of the irregular sources of income of the young people who enter the program, and because some of their income is not readily converted into monetary figures, particularly of those who are engaged in agricultural work before or after the program. Yet these measurement problems are all solvable in principle. The difficulty of solving them in practice is the staff time required for data collection. The selection of a random sample of trainees for a detailed tracer study, rather than a complete survey as is the current practice, would contribute to the solution of this problem.

Equally problematic is the routine unavailability of information to the national offices on their spending levels and costs. The St. Lucia program, for instance, did not have timely information on its remaining funds during the final months of the project. This made decisions difficult on launching a final cycle of modules. Similarly, neither office receives information on the total costs of each of its training modules. This makes decisions on launching training modules at any time problematic, since they vary considerably in costs. In a situation of limited funds, the overall expense of new modules under consideration may importantly affect a decision to select one over another.

The addition of an inexpensive micro-computer, appropriate software, and brief staff training to each program office may be essential to allow tracking and financial data to be actively used in program decisions. Without a means of fast, inexpensive access to and analysis of information, as is the case at present, even the best data system remains largely inert.

5. Management Structure. The issue of management structure is least salient in the Barbados program since OAS assistance was largely rendered as consulting services to the National Training Board rather than as direct management, and the Board administers a range of programs in addition to the skills training program. In St. Lucia and Dominica, however, the project has built distinct, quasi-autonomous organizations to operate the programs, and thus the Skills Training Project bears more direct responsibility for the design of their management.

The qualifications and experience of the national directors, job development officers, and instructor trainer/job analysts associated with the programs are relevant and strong. Employers, government officials, and others familiar with the program give the management of STP a favorable assessment. The Regional OAS

team also receives high marks for its work with both the national offices and local agencies and organizations.

The overall management of the St. Lucia and Dominica projects has its cumbersome elements because of the involvement of four offices in project decision-making and financial accounting: the national office, the island OAS office, the regional OAS office, and the Washington OAS office. Major local decisions on module selection, instructor appointment, and significant expenditures are presently reviewed by the regional office. As the two national projects move toward full independence during the next phase of the effort, however, delegation of as much decision-making authority as possible to the national offices would facilitate the foundation of full organizational independence, a prerequisite to permanent institutionalization of the program. It will be particularly important for the project to furnish timely financial information to the national offices to enable them to take increasingly full responsibility for overall budgeting and the selection of training modules and instructors.

C. The Performance and Income of Trained Youth

The successful impact of skills training should be measured not only in the placement rate of the trainees, but also in the placed trainees' new earnings and their performance on the job. Trainee earnings after training should be higher than before, and their performance should be superior to that of entry-level employees who do not go through training. Our evidence suggests that both have been achieved.

While detailed information on trainee earnings before the skills training experience is not available, we were able to infer typical trainee income from information obtained through a selected sample of trainees which provided information on earnings before and after training. On the basis of interviews with project staff, employers, and graduates of the training programs, we estimate that fewer than one in ten of those passing through the training programs held regular employment before entry. Analysis of data on a sample of trainees reveals that they had been receiving an average of about US\$ 10 to 20 per month from all sources of earned income during the months just before commencing the program. A majority of the trainees had been earning no income prior to entering the training program.

Of those employed upon completion of the skills training, our sample data indicates that average income stood at approximately US\$ 140 per month in St. Lucia, US\$ 230 per month in Barbados, and US\$ 80 per month in Dominica. Thus, keeping in mind that substantial fractions of the trained youth do not obtain employment, the effect of passing through the program is to increase the successfully-placed youths' income by a factor of four to eight or more. For those who are not placed, however, the short-term training impact on income is close to nil. For

those who achieve some measure of significant self-employment, their income is certainly above their pre-training income, but we estimate that the average is considerably below that of the trainees who find regular employment.

According to nearly all of the employers whom we interviewed, the performance of the trained youth is strong, and as a group their performance significantly exceeds that of entry-level youth without comparable training. Indeed, many of the employers would not hire the youth were it not for the pre-employment training they had received. If the Skills Training Project did not exist, they would have had to organize and manage their own in-plant skills training program. As with any broad stroke, there are important exceptions, perhaps most notably in the case of one St. Lucia employer who observed that he could and would train entry level workers just as well as the Skills Training Program. He confessed that the only reason for participating in the program is that it saved him from having to provide the trainees a stipend during their learning period.

An important element in the successful performance of placed trainees in St. Lucia and Dominica is the attitude toward work that they bring to the job. This is a product of two project elements -- the screening of applicants according to their motivation for work, and the social skills training provided most of those who are accepted. Both projects place work motivation as the chief criterion in selecting trainees. Several instructors report that their only regret about the training experience is that there was not even better screening for good work attitudes, since this appeared to be the best single predictor of which trainees were most readily placed upon program completion. Employers corroborate the instructors' impressions, reporting that favorable work attitudes were among the most important contributions of the STP selection and training process.

V. ECONOMICS OF THE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM: THE COSTS AND BENEFITS

Evaluation of the overall economic contribution of the Skills Training Project requires comparison of program costs and benefits. Costs include direct program and administrative expenses in operating the project, and indirect expenses to the participating individuals and employers involved in on-the-job training. Project benefits consist of returns to the trainees in the form of increased income, returns to employers in the form of increased productivity, and returns to the community and nation in the form of improved development.

Program direct costs include staff salaries, tools and supplies, instructor salaries, vehicle and travel expenses, and trainee stipends. Aggregate totals of these costs, broken down by general source and country, are presented in Table 4. For the initial two years of the project, direct costs totalled US\$ 1,833,000 (line 1 in Table 4).

The primary indirect cost to the individual trainees is in the income that they forego during the training period. From our trainee sample data, using conservative procedures we estimate that total foregone income is approximately US\$ 410,000 (line 3 in Table 4). The main indirect cost to employers is the expense of providing facilities and training assistance when the training is conducted on the employers' premises. We have no specific estimate for this cost, but we infer its magnitude is very modest. Corroborating evidence is found in the fact that employers were generally readily forthcoming in response to requests to utilize their facilities for training.

The principal direct individual benefit of the Skills Training Project was the placement of more than 1,000 young people in remunerative employment. We estimate that the net present value of this benefit, discounted at 15 percent over 10 years, is approximately US\$ 3.3 million (line 4 in Table 4). This calculation takes into account direct costs, direct benefits, and income foregone during the training period.

The average direct project cost per trainee stood at US\$ 679 in Barbados, US\$ 878 in St. Lucia, and US\$ 1,005 in Dominica (line 2 in Table 4). The costs per employed trainee are US\$ 2,379 in Barbados, US\$ 1,169 in St. Lucia, and US\$ 1,774 in Dominica. The overall project cost per trainee was US\$ 912, and per placed trainee it was US\$ 1,724. The payback period -- the length of time in which the average trainee's net earnings equal the cost of training -- is 3 months in Barbados, 8 months in St. Lucia, and 16 months in Dominica (line 4 in Table 4).

Table 4. Costs and Benefits of the Skills Training Project in Barbados, Dominica, and St. Lucia (US\$)

Cost or Benefit	Barbados	Dominica	St. Lucia	Total
1. Direct program costs (1,000s)				
Country program	\$176	\$326	\$190	\$692
Regional support	89	355	194	638
Local gov't contribution	375	96	32	503
Total direct costs	640	777	416	1,833
2. Program costs per trainee*				
Cost per trainee	\$679	\$1,005	\$878	\$912
Cost per employed trainee	2,379	1,774	1,169	1,724
3. Indirect program costs (1,000s)				
Foregone trainee income**	\$155	\$158	\$97	\$410
4. Direct program benefits (1,000s)				
Total trainee income***	\$592	\$302	\$406	\$1,300
Monthly income per employed trainee	230	80	132	138
Net present value@ (1,000s)	\$1,878	\$55	\$1,365	\$3,330
Payback period (months)#	3	16	8	8

* The figures for Barbados are based on both trainees and those in apprenticeships.

** Total foregone income is the number of trainees times an estimated foregone income of \$17 per month over a period of twelve months.

*** Estimated on the assumption that part-time employees are working approximately half-time.

@ The net present value is calculated as total trainee income minus total trainee foregone income, minus total project costs, discounted for ten years at 15 percent.

The payback period is calculated as the total cost per trainee divided by monthly trainee income.

The principal direct benefit to employers was the increase in production attributable to the availability of pre-trained entry-level workers. A secondary benefit was the savings to employers from the presence of a low or no-cost training program.

Employers were well aware of these benefits. For example, the resident manager of St. Lucia's Marstan Mills observed that the skills training program contributed significantly to his plant's success in achieving a 65 to 85 percent efficiency standard, a criterion that the local production must meet to remain sufficiently profitable to justify further expansion. The efficiency criterion is an international standard calculated by the firm's New York office. Since 80 to 85 percent of Marstan Mills' employees had never worked before, without the Skills Training Program, reports the resident manager, "it would have been much harder to reach our production goals in the time we set to attain them." The resident manager had pointed to STP in justifying further expansion of the St. Lucia operation to the New York office. With some 80 employees in mid-1984, Marstan Mills expects to employ 200 by mid-1985.

A similar benefit accrued to Hortex Garments Factory Ltd., a recently opened St. Lucia operation of a Hong Kong company. Hortex initially brought in its own Hong Kong trainers, but the linguistic and cultural barriers were formidable, and the parent company nearly closed the St. Lucia plant. The closing was averted in part because of the intervention of the Skills Training Program. It provided formal training to 56 trainees, 46 of whom joined payroll, and another 18 trainees were undergoing training at the time of the evaluation. The program also provided an informal cultural orientation for the firm's off-island management. With its new-found confidence, Hortex intends to open another factory in St. Lucia in 1985 with a labor force of 100.

In Dominica, the experience of a U.S.-owned firm, Dominica Gloves Ltd., is illustrative of the direct company benefits received there. Nineteen graduates of STP were already employed by the company at the time of the evaluation, and another 43 were undergoing training, with all expected to soon enter production as well. The availability of the skills training was an important ingredient in Dominica Gloves' ability to launch initially its production in Dominica and a subsequent decision to more than double its labor force in 1985.

The direct project benefits to the trainees and off-island employers will last only so long as the companies do not depart at the end of their tax holidays. Since the grace periods are generally ten to fifteen years in length, and since many of the plants have recently been established, the project is likely to see most of its direct benefits fully realized long before the major off-island employers move on to greener pastures.

In addition to direct program benefits, the Skills Training Project indirectly enhanced the general development of the

participating countries. Three of the leading indirect effects are improved community development, secondary training, and foreign exchange benefits.

Community development. The Skills Training Project has an indirect effect on the lives of individuals located in areas where training is conducted and trainees and instructors reside. This effect is particularly notable in regions where unemployment is especially high, such as Dominica's east coast. The experience of trainees become exemplary for other youths in the area, who in turn seek entry into STP as a means of entering the labor market (see case profile 5 in Appendix 3).

Secondary training. STP trainees often pass along their new-found skills to family members and friends. This is most frequently the case for those completing training modules in agriculture, sewing, and home assistance. Trainees who completed an agriculture module in St. Lucia, for instance, subsequently helped improve the farming techniques of their families with whom they still resided. Trainees completing an electrical wiring module in Dominica were sharing their new skills with friends and neighbors.

Foreign exchange. The project also contributed to the retention of scarce foreign exchange. STP trainees, for example, were enabling an auto repair company in St. Lucia to more effectively salvage or repair automobile parts. As the business develops, more car owners will be able fix their auto problems locally rather than through the costly import of parts from abroad (case profile 4 in Appendix 3).

VI. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM

Institutionalization of the Skills Training Program can be defined as the creation of a capacity in the host countries to continue the skills training effort after AID and OAS funding and OAS technical assistance are terminated. Institutionalization refers to both organizational and financial independence. It is a process of building the organizational and internal financial means to sustain the project after the external financing comes to an end.

A. Organizational Institutionalization without Financial Independence

The Barbados project has achieved both organizational and financial independence. The National Training Board furnishes the necessary administrative structure. The Government of Barbados provides the requisite financing. It does this from both general tax revenues and from a special wage levy of 0.25 percent. Employers and the public in Barbados have learned to accept the modest tax burden for the support of youth skills training.

The Dominica and St. Lucia projects are well along their way toward organizational independence. The national staffs and supporting ministries have acquired the knowledge and experience required for operating the programs largely on their own if suddenly forced to do so, though continued assistance from OAS during the coming two years will make this capacity even stronger. Moreover, they have created the necessary networks of contacts for recruiting trainees, assessing national employment and self-employment opportunities, executing training modules, and placing the young people which complete them. Improvements in all could be made, but the networks are already strong enough to carry the program organizationally if OAS were to suddenly withdraw. The threshold of organizational survival has been crossed.

The same cannot be said, however, for the financial independence of the St. Lucia and Dominica programs. Neither is evolving toward monetary self-reliance, nor are there signs that either is likely to achieve such during the coming two years. The threshold of financial survival is not in sight.

This conclusion emerges from several considerations. If we assume that the assistance rendered by the regional and Washington staff of OAS will no longer be available at the end of two additional years, there will of course be considerable reduction in operating costs. The national project costs to which OAS and AID funding currently contribute, however, cannot be reduced by much. These local expenses include instructor salaries, trainee stipends, equipment purchases, training materials and vehicle operation. The national staffs consider

these to be minimum expenditures without which program operation would be virtually impossible. The OAS and AID financial contributions to the national operations during the final months of the project have been averaging US\$ 6,000 per month in St. Lucia and US\$ 10,600 per month in Dominica. Institutionalization of the two programs would thus require underwriting of at least this amount, and almost surely more. A substantial portion of the accounting, managerial, placement and other work that the regional and Washington OAS offices currently provide would also have to be absorbed locally, bolstering these minimal figures substantially.

B. The Problematic Options for Achieving Financial Independence

The governments of St. Lucia and the Dominica already make large financial contributions to the projects in the form of facilities and national staffs, and it might be argued that they could and should be expected to enlarge their funding to absorb total program costs at the moment when OAS and AID exit finally exit. There is no evidence to suggest, however, that this is likely to happen.

Neither country has a large tax base at present, and the economic trends in both nations give little reason for optimism about any growth in future tax revenues. Moreover, present government expenditures are already severely constrained, and government decision-making is more a matter of deciding which essential services to meet or neglect than deciding what programs to expand.

The implications of the severe constraints on government revenues are evident to all, participants and observers alike. The Minister of Community Development in St. Lucia and the Minister of Education in Dominica have both clearly stated in discussions with us that their countries will be unable to absorb the costs of continuing the program, either now or two years from now. Well placed observers in both countries consistently confirm the accuracy of the Ministers' candid observations. As the ranking official of another ministry in Dominica put it, "We want to retain the Skills Training Program at all costs. But we don't know at this time how much we can put into it." He went on to answer his own implicit question by suggesting that there would be very little additional funding.

There are several alternative means of financing the programs once the OAS and AID assistance is terminated. Perhaps the most immediately appealing option, because of its success in Barbados, is a wage levy. Set at a quarter of one percent of employees' income, the Barbados wage levy generates approximately B\$ 1 million per year for skills training. The Dominica and St. Lucian economies are much smaller and such a tax would yield far less revenue. But the amounts could nonetheless be substantial. In Dominica, for example, the salaries and wages of the work

force except for government workers stood at EC\$ 40 million in 1983. A wage levy of 0.25 percent for training could thus yield EC\$ 100,000; an assessment of 1.0 percent could generate EC\$ 400,000. Somewhat higher totals could be generated in St. Lucia, where the wage and salary labor force is somewhat larger.

Our discussions with ministry officials, employers, the St. Lucia National Development Corporation, and the Dominica Industrial Development Corporation reveal, however, that the imposition of such a tax in both countries would face widespread resistance. Unlike Barbados, St. Lucia and Dominica have no tradition of using special levies to raise revenues for earmarked purposes other than social security (in addition to training, Barbados has special levies for health, transport, and education). Employers and others feel that present taxes are already too burdensome, and any new taxation would meet stiff opposition, particularly if it is perceived that the benefits would not be shared by most contributors. Officials responsible for national economic development also expressed the view that although skills training programs have been very helpful in attracting new industry to the islands, any new tax burdens imposed to support skills training would probably more than offset the program's incentive value in attracting new investment.

Any government's introduction of new taxes is fraught with political implications, and senior government officials expressed the view that popular opposition to a wage levy would also be widespread unless the circumstances were most propitious. One top ministry official in Dominica identified such circumstances as a period with "a high rate of job expansion" since it would engender a sense that the training is urgent and certain to lead to employment. He could not foresee, however, the emergence of a sufficiently expansionary period during the two years ahead.

Other financing options for skills training that have been suggested are met with similarly negative forecasts. If employers were asked to pay directly for the training benefits they receive, for example, observers argue that most would not take advantage of the program. Some current STP users would simply arrange for their own in-plant training; others would forego training altogether. Moreover, training for self-employment, particularly in agriculture, and future employment opportunities, such as data entry and electronics assembly, would find no support.

The only other means of financial continuation would be through continued backing from international donors -- if not AID, then perhaps the Canadian International Development Agency, British Development Division, or some other national or international organization. While this option can be contemplated, it seems unlikely that a new donor is likely to step in to fill in a vacuum created by the termination of AID's support in two years. It appears equally unlikely that the Organization of American States would be prepared to expand its funding to make up for the shortfall. Its proportion of the

total funding under the two-year project continuation amendment, if it is approved, will be less than 10 percent.

C. Steps Toward Full Institutionalization

Despite considerable progress toward organizational institutionalization of the skills training program in St. Lucia and Dominica, then, there is little movement toward financial independence. While the picture is a pessimistic one, it should not deter, however, continued project efforts to secure a sound financial footing for its mission. Finding full funding for the programs upon the exit of AID and perhaps OAS from their underwriting functions appears extremely remote. But the likelihood of locating partial sources of alternative funding should not be ruled out. Several steps would facilitate this outcome.

1. Program Expansion and Responsiveness. First and foremost, the projects should continue to expand their training services and to act as responsively as possible to the needs of unemployed youth, government ministries, and employers. In both St. Lucia and Dominica, the programs have achieved high visibility and excellent reputations among government officials, business leaders, and large sectors of the public. This was expressed to the evaluators by virtually all individuals with whom they had opportunity to discuss the program. It is also evident in the highly favorable press coverage received by the programs, and in the pride expressed in the programs by senior government officials on numerous public occasions.

The Skills Training Project's public reputation is illustrated by a recent article appearing in Dominica's newspaper, The New Chronicle, which heralded STP's achievements under the headline of "Service to Youth". The public learned that "not only did the programme train close to 550 young people, but about 70% of those who have been trained have been placed in full or part time employment or in apprenticeship" (November 30, 1984). Similarly, the St. Lucia public learned from The Weekend Voice that the "OAS-USAID Skills Training Project [has met] its primary objective - that of training 200 young people and securing jobs for them.... In fact, the 200 target has been surpassed, thanks to project officials who work at administrative level and the tremendous response from the private sector" (August 24, 1984). Another St. Lucia newspaper editorialized for even stronger national support: "Someone has to get out there to organize training for our youngsters and place them in jobs. The OAS and USAID project has provided the right formula; it's up to us to use it to the national advantage."

By making the skills training even more invaluable to the islands, the programs are creating a stronger condition for financial institutionalization than can be achieved through any

other form of action. If employers, government, development agencies, and the populace feel that the programs play an indispensable role in the nations' growth, key actors will be under pressure to find some acceptable means of financial continuation. Commitment and compromise are often the fruit of necessity.

2. Active Dialogue on Financial Options. The discussion of financial options, as problematic as they all seem, has to date been conducted in largely hypothetical terms. All parties anticipate that AID and OAS funding will continue for two more years. None have yet had to face the hard choice of either forging an independent means of financing the skills training program or going without it.

As the hard reality of this choice becomes more evident during the 24 months ahead, participating governments, employers, and agencies are likely to begin to make their own hard choices. The willingness to compromise and absorb some of the costs should grow as well. To move this dialogue toward early resolution, the skills training projects would do well to shape and facilitate it. The regional and national directors, and the employment promotion specialists, could, for instance, develop a position paper outlining the costs and benefits of the various options for independent financing. The Dominica project has already prepared a preliminary document in November concerning these issues ("Background Paper: The Further Development and Institutionalization of the Skills Training Programme"), and with appropriate expansion and refinement, it might serve as a vehicle for initiating discussion there and a model for starting the St. Lucia dialogue as well.

The regional and national offices could also take the initiative for arranging meetings among ministry officials, employers, employers associations, national development corporations, employee unions, and other interested parties. The primary agenda of such meeting would be to forge a consensus on the most appropriate means for securing the monetary independence of the national programs. A related agenda would be to create agreement on the most appropriate final organizational vehicle, perhaps a permanent body akin to Barbados' National Training Board.

3. Progressive Reduction of Donor Funding and Expansion of Government Funding. A final step for facilitating financial independence would be to progressively reduce OAS and AID funding and expand government support. This would minimize the shock of the termination of outside funding at the end the second year. It should also help maximize the final level of government support since the increase would be only gradually felt.

A formula for moving the funding in this direction could initially focus on essential expenses such as trainee stipends

(EC\$ 25 per week per trainee) and instructor salaries (approximately EC\$ 1,000 per module). Currently born entirely by OAS and AID, the formula might call for 100 percent OAS/AID support for these costs during the first half-year, 75 percent during the second half-year, 50 percent during the third half-year, and 25 percent in the final period. If the project is to have any hope of permanency, the St. Lucian and Dominican governments will have to eventually absorb most of these expenses, for a training program without them would be a faint shadow of the current effort. A gradual streaming-in of the financial burden of carrying trainee stipends and instructors salaries would make the process more palatable. It would also put early fire under the effort to set up a special training fund or other means of government support.

4. A Public-Private Partnership. Both the organizational and financial viability of skills training and placement depends on close cooperation between government and the private sector. As a government operated program, STP relies for much of its success upon the willingness of the private sector to participate in the training process and, above all, to hire its graduates. As a government financed program, it may eventually have to rely upon the private sector for its active support of a wage levy or some other means of partially private financing.

The government and private sector are often at odds on issues of public spending, including employment training, and St. Lucia and Dominica are no exception. The concept of the public-private partnership has increasingly been used elsewhere as an organizational bridge between the two sectors, and it may be useful vehicle to consider in these countries as well. The key element is to involve both government officials and employers in the administration of the skills training program. The involvement of labor unions is often a useful element as well.

One possible means of joint administration would be to establish a tripartite national training board whose membership is one-third appointed by government, one-third by the main employers association, and one-third by the major unions. The board would have final responsibility for approving all skills training modules and decisions. While the government loses some control over the program, other advantages usually more than make up for the loss. The business community has a direct voice in the skills training and is thus more likely to support its financing; employers are partially responsible for the program's success and are more committed to hiring its graduates; the labor movement becomes committed to supporting rather than resisting the program; and government, business, and labor gain valuable experience in working together on a common endeavor.

VII. SKILLS TRAINING ISSUES REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

Continuation of the Skills Training Program in two countries and its probable expansion to four others can be facilitated by reflection on its experience to date. The evaluation report concludes by identifying salient lessons of the past that deserve special attention. We first consider issues related to training and placement then turn to organizational questions.

A. Securing Placement for Trainees

The Skills Training Program has created what it set out to do, a system of youth training and placement. In economies with national unemployment rates near 25 percent and youth unemployment considerably higher, this is no small achievement. It is also large when the number of placed trainees are put in the context of the size of the labor force. The active working population in Dominica is estimated to number approximately 20,000. The 352 trained and placed young people thus represent a nearly 2 percent increase in the size of the active labor force. Similarly, the 281 trained and placed youth in St. Lucia represent a 1 percent or greater increase in the size of the more active labor force. If this were the United States, a 1 to 2 percent increase would have meant that more than 2 million young people had been trained for successful entry into the employment market.

For both the launching and expansion of a skills training program, these programs can be viewed as demonstration efforts whose strengths can be emulated and mistakes avoided. Major lessons on securing placement for youthful trainees include the following.

1. Employment versus self-employment. For immediate placement, training for employment is the preferable avenue. Self-employment is particularly problematic because of the relative youth and inexperience of the trainees, and because credit is scant. Whenever employment opportunities can be identified, and when short-term earnings are the goal, program resources are best invested in training for assured employment openings.

2. Technical versus attitudinal training. In contrast to much adult education, youth training must stress the development of effective work habits and attitudes along with the technical content of the particular skills area. The Dominica and St. Lucia programs have well learned that employers look to their programs in major part for the kind of youth they recruit and work attitudes they engender.

Attitudinal training is important to the achievement of not

only high placement and retention rates, but also the long-run employment experience of the young people. For lack of previous work, few come to the program with any experience in meeting the social and behavioral demands of a structured work place, such as promptness and the verbalization of production problems. Upon finishing the program and finding placement, the young people will have acquired the kind of outlook on work that they must have if they are to enter and remain in the labor market.

3. Training On-Site. On-site and in-plant skills training is preferable whenever possible. The curriculum is more focused on the skills required for commencing entry-level work; equipment and instruction time is frequently provided by the site or plant; the employer is already committed to hiring a substantial number of the trainees; and the employer will often use his or her networks to place the other trainees with other employers.

4. Recruiting Employers. The skills training program should actively solicit employer commitment to place trainees. Vigorous promotion of the program may even lead employers to expand their labor force beyond what they otherwise would have anticipated. A case in point is Marstan Mills: its resident manager has used the existence of the Skills Training Program as an arguing element in successfully winning a commitment to more than double his St. Lucia work force.

5. Promoting Placement. The allocation of substantial staff time to the placement of trainees is essential. Youth have few personal contacts for seeking employment, and placement services are all but non-existent on the islands. The work of the job development officer is critical, as is the continuing role of instructors after the training is completed in finding positions for their graduates or helping them develop self-employment.

One of the most impressive features of the St. Lucia and Dominica programs is the commitment expressed by the dozen instructors whom we interviewed to continue working with their trainees long after the training is completed. A Dominican instructor in bee-keeping, for instance, maintains frequent contact with his trainees more than a year after the course to assist cultivation of their hives. Though receiving no further monetary compensation, the instructors continue to invest both time and personal resources to find employment for their trainees. To enhance the instructors' ability to best serve the concerns of their trainees, it would be useful to include career and personal counseling in their pre-module training.

6. Training Flexibility. Another essential feature of the success of skills training is flexibility in the selection and mounting of modules. In contrast to the curriculum of the technical colleges, and, to a lesser degree the program of the

National Training Board in Barbados, the St. Lucia and Dominica programs have developed programs capable of rapid change. The main features are (1) the selection of training modules only after employment opportunities have been surveyed; (2) a capacity to design and quickly mount modules in response to employer requests; (3) the recruitment of instructors for each module as needed and the maintenance of no permanent teaching staff; and (4) the offering of training modules in locations close to where trainees live. Such flexibility is an important ingredient for any short-term skills training program.

7. Emergent Training Needs. Skills training programs require a capacity to respond to emergent training needs that go beyond the design of specific training modules for entry-level jobs. Among the needs that have come to the fore in the course of the project are three which will not directly benefit unemployed youth but which can stimulate more openings for them:

(1) training for employed young people in the skills that they require for job upgrading;

(2) training for employed young people in low-level supervisory skills;

(3) cultural orientation for off-island employers who are opening plants on the special measures to be taken in training and incorporating young people into their work force. Unless associated problems can be quickly be overcome, new employment opportunities for island youth may be lost as a new plant falters or folds.

While the bulk of program resources must be directed at the training and placement of out-of-work youth, the development of a comprehensive skills training program requires that the program be able to devote a fraction of its resources to efforts in these areas. This is particularly important as the program moves toward institutionalization.

8. Emergent National Development Needs. Skills training programs can become an important asset in stimulating foreign investment. It is useful for a program to prepare factual and attractive statements of its capacities for circulation through the national development office to prospective investors. It is also important for the national staff to meet directly with investors to help fashion a training program that serves as an incentive to settle.

Attracting new jobs to the islands is not a purpose of a skills training program, but it certainly is a way of achieving its purpose. The best single determinant of whether a skills training program can place its graduates is the extent to which entry-level jobs are expanding in number.

B. Building an Organization for Skills Training

The Skills Training Program has also created an organization to execute its purpose. It has recruited experienced and able individuals to operate its regional and national offices, and it has built an effective network of cooperative ties and understandings with government ministries, employers, and other key players. In its efforts are lessons for new efforts.

1. Reducing the Costs of Compiling Information. Tracking program trainees is important but costly, and provisions to do so should be explicitly built into the program. Moreover, assistance should be provided for developing instruments that can obtain critical pieces of information at relatively low cost.

The Dominica staff estimates that a tracer study of all trainees who had finished the program in December, 1984, required one to two person-months by the national job developer and regional employment specialist to complete. Though the data compiled is invaluable for end-of-project assessment, its utility for on-going project decisions is more limited. In any case, the payoffs must be weighed against the loss of staff time to employment development and placement efforts. And there are simple ways of considerably reducing the staff time required. A sample survey of module completers rather a complete census, for example, could cut costs considerably without jeopardizing the quality of the data. This approach would become particularly advantageous as the numbers of module graduates begins to exceed several hundred.

2. Organizational versus Financial Institutionalization. Major strides toward organizational independence for a skills training program can be achieved within two years, but financial independence requires far longer. It is possible that it simply cannot be fully achieved in the near term.

We have seen that neither the Dominica nor the St. Lucia programs are presently approaching fiscal institutionalization. The prospects for achieving full autonomy by the end of 1986 are better, but still dim. The Barbados program has done so, but it also the case that the Barbados program has had donor assistance for six years already -- and that the Barbados economy is far stronger than those of the other two islands. The annual per capita income in Barbados is estimated to be near \$3,000, while it is still only near \$500 in the neighboring Eastern Caribbean countries, including those four to which the program is to be expanded.

Still, efforts to achieve greater financial self-reliance for youth skills training on the less developed islands deserve special attention. For the four new programs, the most immediate concerns will of necessity focus primarily on organization building. Financial institutionalization should be viewed as a

goal whose realization will almost certainly require more than the coming two years. For the two on-going programs, the financial question should occupy much greater attention, with energies focused on initiation of a dialogue among interested local parties in finding a way of supporting continuation of the training program, perhaps as a kind of public-private partnership.

3. Regional Coordination. National programs can learn much from each other. While the implications of the Barbados experience is only of limited value for the St. Lucia and Dominica programs, the latter's experience will be directly applicable to the four new countries since their economies and relative inexperience with youth employment training are more analogous.

Regional cooperation would be facilitated by the inclusion of the national staffs of all six countries in the periodic meetings of the regional coordinating committee. So too would the circulation of a newsletter on youth skills training in the Eastern Caribbean, and the creation of working ties with the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity, the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce, and other organizations devoted to skills and employment training in the region.

C. Recommendations for Action

We conclude with sixteen recommendations for action. These are formulated as a product of the evaluation of the three existing skills training programs, and in anticipation of the likely continuation of two of the national programs and the opening of four others.

1. Continue the Skills Training Project in St. Lucia and Dominica. The national projects have met their training and placement goals, and they have created strong organizations to carry forward the training. The St. Lucia national office has already received requests for training for more than 500 employment positions, and the Dominica office for more than 600 openings. STP has become a pillar of national development in both countries, and it is strongly supported by the respective governments.

2. Avoid delay in initiating the new phase of the St. Lucia and Dominica programs. The effective mounting of new modules for which demand has been expressed and ambitious plans are already underway depends on continuation of project momentum. A significant hiatus between the end of the present phase and start of the new one could seriously impair the momentum.

3. Use the St. Lucia and Dominica models to fashion national skills training programs in Grenada, St. Vincent, Antigua, and St. Kitts. These experiences, rather than the Barbados model, are

the most appropriate for the new settings. They are proven models that should be followed with suitable local adaptations.

4. Emphasize placement. The key to successful training is successful placement, and vigorous emphasis on finding and facilitating placement from the outset in the new projects will hasten early realization of their employment goals.

5. Build training flexibility. The ability of the St. Lucia and Dominica projects to respond to short-term and often highly specific training needs is one of the programs' great assets. Retaining and building this capacity is essential.

6. Enhance project information. Data on trainees' post-module work experience, on the total and per-capita costs of specific modules, general budgetary data, and other project features is needed more quickly and in a form more useful to making decisions in the national offices.

7. Strengthen management training for self-employment. For modules directed at self-employment, the curriculum should include greater emphasis on the skills required for successful self-management, including how to purchase supplies, evaluate markets, set prices, sell products, and organize small-scale enterprises and cooperatives.

8. Facilitate access to start-up capital. Self-employment in many areas requires at least modest amounts of start-up capital. Young people have little access to such funds, and self-employment would be significantly facilitated to the extent the projects can provide or facilitate local access to credit.

9. Use part-time instructors. The use of part-time instructors, rather than permanent staff instructors, permits maximum flexibility in the identification and staffing of training modules.

10. Evaluate cost-effectiveness of training modules. As training experience accumulates, financial and tracer data can permit systematic evaluation of the costs and benefits of specific training modules. This information should be used in the process of deciding the composition of new cycles of training modules.

11. Experiment with fee-for-service training. Limited experimentation in charging employers for training services would provide useful information on the willingness of employers to bear some of the program's direct costs. This could facilitate movement toward financial independence.

12. Draw labor into the training program. Effective contacts have been established with employers, but unions are little involved in helping to shape STP's training agenda. By drawing labor unions more actively into collaboration with the training, the programs would more effectively hear the concerns of the

labor movement and would achieve greater legitimacy.

13. Train women in non-traditional occupations. The training of women in non-traditional subjects would enhance their access to better paying and more stable employment.

14. Establish a regional training newsletter. A regional newsletter would stimulate inter-island cooperation and cross-fertilization. Particularly important would be the circulation of information on how skills training programs can most effectively advance toward financial independence.

15. Stress organizational autonomy. Institutionalization depends on the creation of viable national training teams, and as much autonomy as possible should be granted the teams, particularly in St. Lucia and Dominica, to prepare for day when they will have to take full control of the training effort.

16. Press for financial autonomy. Final institutionalization will depend on solution of the most difficult problem of all, securing a permanent source of financing for skills training. The four new national should be viewed as efforts that will require at least four years to approach this stage. The two on-going projects will require the investment of considerable staff time to approach financial autonomy within the two years that remain.

APPENDIX 1

Organizations With Which, and Individuals With Whom, Discussions and Interviews Were Conducted for the Evaluation

Organization of American States

Tomas O. Rosenborg, Chief, OAS Manpower and Employment
Norene A. Halvonik, Senior Specialist, Department of Social Affairs
Arthur I. Henry, Regional Project Director
Kevin Kane, Employment Promotion Specialist

U.S. Agency for International Development Regional Development Office/Caribbean

Ambrosio Ortega, Human Resource Development Officer
Stafford Griffith, Senior Education Project Manager
Elizabeth Warfield, Capital Projects Officer
Darwin Clark, Evaluation Officer
Cecilia Karch, SSPS/PRG
Robin Phillips, Economist
Spike Stephens, Capital Projects Officer

St. Lucia

Ministry of Community Development,
Social Affairs, Youth, Sports and
Information
Hon. Romanus Lansiquot, Minister
Aldith Isaacs, Permanent Secretary
Elizabeth Laurent, Assistant Secretary

Skills Training Program

Gertrude St. Helene, National Director

Martial Francis, Job Development Officer

Daphne James, Instructor Trainer/Job Analyst

Instructors:

Dominic M. Laurent (Electronics); E.T.C.

Keith E. Nichols (Fish Farming); Fisheries Biologist, Ministry
of Agriculture Fisheries

Victoria Reid (Restaurant/Home Assistance); retired school
principal

Edgitha Blanchard (Social Skills); primary school teacher

Martin Fevrier (Fish Handling and Processing); Assistant
Manager, St. Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation

Andrew Rigobert (Crops and Livestock Production); Livestock
Extension Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

St. Lucia Employers' Federation Represents 100 major employers

Godfrey James, Director

St. Lucia Tourist Board 8 trained; all hired

Cynthia Warner, Secretary/Manager

Dunster Fontenelle, Public Relations Officer and
Member, STP National Advisory Board

5 trained tour guides and supervisor interviewed in Soufriere

National Research Development Foundation

Didacus Jules, Coordinator for Reserach, Development,
and Training

Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture

Ines St. Martie, Executive Secretary

Project Development Assistance Program

Andrew Proctor, Advisor; Coopers & Lybrand

St. Lucia Government Printery 10 trained; 2 hired

Francis Chitolie, Assistant Superintendent

Courts (St. Lucia) Limited 3 trainees hired

Malcolm S. Burns, Managing Director

National Development Corporation

Leslie Clarke, Chairman

St. Lucia Labour Department

George Isaac, Labour Inspector

Cuthbert Forde, Senior Labour Inspector

National Workers' Union

George Goddard, General Secretary

Green Parrot Restaurant and Bar 2 trainees

The General Manager

Two trainees

Anchor Limited 6 trained; 2 hired

O. Frank Morris, Managing Director

Caribelle Batik 11 trained; 11 hired
5 trainees

F. Brendan McShane, Managing Director

National Commercial Bank

McDonald Dixon, Managing Director and
Chairman, STP National Advisory Committee

Ministry of Finance, Planning and
Statistics

Dwight Venner, Director of Financial Planning

Southern Caterers Ltd. 17 trainees; 10 to be hired

Emmanuel Kingsley Powlette, Manager

Dale Harris, Instructor in STP Module

Observed training session

Marstan Mills Ltd. 45 trainees; 12 employed
90 trained

Rafael Velazquez, Resident Manager

Edward James, Assistant Supervisor and Instructor, STP Module

Jude Biscette, Assistant Supervisor and Instructor, STP Module

30 trainees interviewed

Brabo Caribbean Ltd. 8 trained; 8 hired

Ieuan Michael Lewis, General Manager

2 trainees interviewed

Hortex (St. Lucia) Garments Factory Ltd. 56 trained; 46 hired
18 trainees

Hui Tak Sing, Operations Supervisor

3 trainees interviewed

Barbados

Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Sport

Sir Fred Rodgers, Permanent Secretary

National Training Board

Lawrence Green, Executive Director

Lomer Alleyne, Deputy Executive Director
Ingrid Estwick, Inspector

Demonstrators:

Erlene Holder, Sewing Demonstrator

Mitchell Murray, Auto Repair Demonstrator

Peter Clarke, Masonry Demonstrator

R. Hercules, Electrical Wiring Demonstrator

G. Macommie, Steelbending Demonstrator

Five training sessions observed and six trainees interviewed

Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce

Pat Thompson, Executive Director

Dr. Jeannine Comma, Programme Manager, Training

Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity

Rudolph Gibbons, Director-General

Caribbean Development Bank

Toni Shillingsford

M and M Construction Co. 20 trainees hired

Mr. Springer, Supervisor

Durahome Construction 20 trainees hired, 8 on this site

Winfield Wiggins, Manager

Growing Things 3 trainees hired

Mrs. Thomas, Manager

Dominica

Ministry of Education, Health, Youth and Social Affairs

Hon. Charles Maynard, Minister of Education

Hon., Hubert Charles, Permanent Secretary

James Henderson, Chief Education Officer

Skills Training Program

Elizabeth Alfred, National Director, and Chief Youth
Development Officer, Ministry of Education

Francis Severin, Instructor Trainer/Task Analyst, and
Ministry of Education

Davis Letang, Job Developer, and Ministry of Education

Instructors:

Isaline Delsol, Social Skills Instructor

Valerie Rock, Business Skills Instructor

Edmund Daniel, Crop Agriculture Instructor

Vivan Elwin, Auto Mechanics Instructor

Observed training and interviewed 8 trainees

Lewis Joseph, Electrical Wiring Instructor

Observed training and interviewed 10 trainees

Kenneth Williams, Refrigeration Repair Instructor

Interviewed two trainees

Ivenia Green, Smocking Instructor

Observed training

Esther Henderson, Smocking Instructor

Kelley Williams, Leather Craft Instructor

Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism

Hon. Charles Savarin, Minister

APPENDIX 2

Documents and Reports Reviewed for the Evaluation

U.S. Agency for International Development

Project Paper for Regional Non-Formal Skills Training (July, 1982)

Labor Market Analysis for Dominica as Related to the Proposed Caribbean Regional Skills Training Project, by Norene Halvonik, Allen Lebell, Toni Christiansen-Wagner, and Allan Broehl (1981)

AID Policy Paper on Institutional Development (March, 1983)

Organization of American States

Quarterly Financial Reports

Quarterly Narrative Reports

Monthly Employment Promotion Reports

Semi-Annual Coordinating Committee Meeting Reports

Mid-Term Evaluation (June, 1984)

Reports of Bryan V. Fluck, Regional Instructor Trainer Consultant

St. Lucia Skills Training Program

Quarterly Reports on St. Lucia Program

Monthly Module Status Reports

Monthly Employment Identification Reports

Project files on trainees and employers (including follow-up interviews with all trainees and employers)

Module curricular materials (syllabus, texts, examinations)

Newspaper reports on program

Report of the National Survey of Training Activities, National Research and Development Foundation (May, 1984)

St. Lucia Economic Review, 1983, prepared by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Statistics (March, 1984)

Dominica Skills Training Project

Reports on National Advisory Committee Meetings
Monthly Employment Identification Reports
Reports on Tracer Studies
Reports to Permanent Secretary/Education on Extension of Project
Report on Methods of Institutionalizing the Non-Formal Skills Training Program
Project files on labor market key informant survey
Background Paper on the Further Development and Institutionalization of the Skills Training Programme, November, 1984
Training module curricular material
Newspaper reports on program
Investor's Guide to Dominica, Industrial Development Corporation, 1984

Barbados Skills Training Program

National Training Board Annual Report, 1983-84
National Training Board Training curricular materials (course outlines, descriptions, trainee applications)
Project Summary Report on Dictionary of Occupational Classification for Barbados, by P. Adams Thomas, OAS Occupational Classification Advisor to Barbados (November, 1984)
Dictionary of Occupational Classification for Barbados, Interim Publication on Select Hotel Occupations, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Sport (1984)

APPENDIX 3

Case Profiles of Skills Training Project Participants

Case Profile 1. Eustice George, Auto Repair Trainee and Auto Repair Shop Owner, Dominica

Eustice George opened his garage repair shop in October, 1984 on the recently rebuilt highway on Dominica's remote east coast. He had worked in a garage in 1982, but that was destroyed by a hurricane which had devastated the island. He lost everything in the hurricane, and with no local means of livelihood he finally emmigrated to Guadeloupe where he did find work for a year.

When Mr. George returned to Dominica, he was initially unemployed. But he was encouraged by the local member of parliament to open a repair shop on a rustic site along the main road. The STP provided training in auto repair and Dominica's National Development Foundation provided a loan of EC\$ 19,000 (US\$ 7,300).

The shop had become viable, and Mr. George now offered instruction in his garage to sixteen STP trainees in auto-repair. On the day of the evaluation visit, one group of students was learning about the auto electrical system, another group was repairing an outboard motor for local fishermen, and a third was replacing a seal on a truck wheel bearing. When the training module is completed, Mr. George plans to hire five of the trainees and he plans to assist placement of the others elsewhere.

Case Profile 2. Peter Clarke, Instructor in Masonry, Barbados

Peter Clarke has been teaching masonry with the Barbados National Training Board since 1980. On the day of the evaluation visit, he was holding a class for ten men aged 16 to 20. They were all building a brick wall, though each of the trainees was proceeding at his own pace. Mr. Clarke estimates that 90 percent of the training time is spent in practical task experience, including visits to construction sites and a two-week internship at the end of the program. Of his last group of eight students, six are now employed.

The curriculum is broad based. "A mason in Barbados must be more versatile than in the US or Britain," observed Mr. Clarke. "When someone hires a mason here, they want you to do brick laying, cement work, and tiling."

Mr. Clarke reports that the training in instruction that he had received from the National Training Board has been invaluable. "I knew the practical work," he reported, "but the training gave me the breakdown of skills which I needed to be able to teach." Particularly useful was training in the methods of task analysis, and Mr. Clarke has identified 25 distinct skills which must be mastered by the trainees. He feels confident about his teaching abilities and knowledge, and if invited he would be prepared to train instructors elsewhere in the Caribbean.

Case Profile 3. Marstan Mills Ltd., Textile Factory, St. Lucia

Marstan Mills is a subsidiary of Best Form Foundation, a U.S. multinational textile producer with factories in St. Kitts, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. The St. Lucia plant opened in 1984 in rented factory space at the Vieux Fort industrial estate. Up from a labor force of 80 in mid-1984, it presently employs 150 in the sewing of women's underwear.

The Skills Training Project had completed training in industrial sewing at the plant for 90 young people, most of whom were subsequently employed by the company. At the time of the evaluation visit, another training cycle for 45 trainees was underway, and 12 members of this cohort had already reached a performance level allowing them to join the company's payroll. The payroll was not generous: new workers earn about EC\$ 50 per week, and after nine months their weekly salary can approach EC\$ 70 plus a production-based bonus. Compared to the previous absence of any income for most of the STP trainees, however, the income represented a relatively substantial amount -- and a steady one.

The quality of the work at the plant, reports resident manager Rafael Velazquez, was superior to that in some other plants he had previously managed. Much of the quality he attributed to the technical and social skills engendered by STP. He also credited the program with contributing to a reduction of the plant's quit rate from as high as 20 percent per month to the present monthly low of less than 8 percent. Without the Skills Training Project, Marstan Mills would have trained fewer workers, according to Mr. Velazquez, and training costs would have been higher.

The availability of STP services in St. Lucia was an important factor in a recent decision by Marstan Mills' U.S. parent to further expand the St. Lucia operation. With the rapid growth in its work force, Marstan Mills is now also seeking assistance for training of low-level supervisors.

Case Profile 4. Anchor Ltd., Auto Repair and Salvaging,
St. Lucia

Anchor is a small business located on the outskirts of Castries, St Lucia. Owned and managed by Frank Morris, a former transportation manager with a Rockefeller Foundation operation in St. Lucia, Anchor specializes in the repair of cars, trucks and ship containers, and the reconditioning of spare parts. An important part of Anchor's trade consists of purchasing wrecked and abandoned vehicles and insurance write-offs for reconditioning and resale. One wrecked vehicle, for instance, was recently purchased by Anchor for EC\$ 13,000; after a week's work, it was reconditioned and sold for EC\$ 18,000. A new import of the same type of vehicle would have cost EC\$ 26,000, with all of the funds leaving the country.

At the time of the evaluation visit, Frank Morris was serving as an STP instructor in auto repair and salvaging; his firm's premises were the classroom. Six trainees were learning subjects ranging diagnostics to body work and arc welding. He had informed two of the trainees that he will be hiring them at the end of the course, and was contacting other auto-repair shops on the island to place the others. He expects all to find work with initial weekly wages near EC\$ 70.

Case Profile 5. Philomena Wiltshire, Trainee in Electrical
Wiring, Dominica

Philomena Wiltshire, age 23, is a student in the Skills Training Project course in electrical wiring conducted in La Plaine, Dominica. The evaluation visit coincided with the last day of the class and Philomena was completing the wiring of the parish meeting hall where the course was conducted. Dominica plans to electrify the east coast region, including La Plaine, and demand for electrical skills is soon expected to increase substantially.

Ms. Wiltshire had last worked a year earlier, when she had been employed for a month as a clerk earning EC\$ 2.20 per hour. After leaving this job, she enrolled in a commercial school in Roseau to learn typing. Midway through the course she learned about the STP course in electrical wiring on the radio, and because it was nearer to her Castle Bruce home, and because she expected to find better employment opportunities as an electrician, she dropped the commercial course and enrolled in the STP module.

The only woman in the class, Ms. Wiltshire found nonetheless that her female friends expressed admiration for her decision to take the course and many inquired about how they could do so as well. "When I first started, I was afraid of getting shocked," she mused, but the early fears soon gave way to new knowledge and confidence. Friends and relatives now turn to her for assistance in wiring, and she expects to find a job soon as an electrician in her home town.