

**MEASURING THE RESULTS OF TRAINING**  
**among Selected Partners of USAID/South Africa's**  
**Housing (SO6) and Private Sector (SO5) Programs**

**Report of a Consultancy**

**Final Report**

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## ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organization
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
GIMT	Graduate Institute of Management and Technology
HDP	Historically Disadvantaged Person
ICDA	Interfaith Community Development Association
ICMA	International City/County Management Association
IFESH	International Foundation for Education and Self-Help
ILGM	Institute for Local Government Managers
INSA	Institute for a New South Africa
IP3	Institute for Public-Private-Partnership
KWANALOGA	Kwazulu-Natal Local Government Association
MSPs	Municipal Service Partnerships
NGO	Non-governmental Association
PME Project	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Project
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SMEs	Small and medium enterprises
SO5	Strategic Objective 5: increased access to financial markets for the historically disadvantaged population
SO6	Strategic Objective 6: improved access to environmentally sustainable housing and urban services for the historically disadvantaged population
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/SA	USAID/South Africa
WESSA	Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa

## TERMINOLOGY

In this document, the term ‘TRAINING’ refers to short-term training, in-country training, or in-country long-term training – either part- or full-time -- whether degree or otherwise. Long-term overseas degree training is not included as a part of this study (because this type of training was not a feature of the organizations included in the sample). Thus, the term “training” herein does not refer to such activities.

## **TEAM MEMBERS**

### **Mary Pat Selvaggio** – Team Leader

Ms. Selvaggio is a former USAID foreign service officer with more than 13 years experience in designing, managing and evaluating USAID health/population/nutrition programs, particularly in southern Africa. She also worked for two years as an independent consultant in South Africa where she designed and implemented several NGO training and research projects. Ms. Selvaggio holds a Master's degree in Public Health from the University of Minnesota, and has lived and worked in southern Africa and South East Asia since 1980. In addition to consulting, Ms. Selvaggio also works part-time as the Director of Research and Health Services at Khulisa Management Services in Johannesburg, South Africa.

### **Richard Martin** – Housing/Urban Development Specialist

Mr. Martin worked in housing and urban development for USAID's regional office in Nairobi for eleven years. He was Chief of Party for USAID's Community and Urban Services Support Project from 1993-1996. He has been involved in the evaluation of many USAID programs. He is currently a director of Sigodi Marah Martin Development Consultants in Johannesburg, South Africa.

### **Oda van der Kemp** – Evaluation Specialist

Ms. van der Kemp combines a strong academic background in rural development and participatory planning with 14 years work experience in monitoring and evaluation of international development programs. Her professional experience has been gained by working for international organizations such as ILO, FAO and the European Commission, bilateral organizations (Dutch Technical Co-operation) and NGOs (CONCERN; NOVIB) in her capacity as associate expert, project officer or consultant. At present she works as Evaluation Specialist with the Macro International USAID/SA Performance and Evaluation project (PME), providing logistical and technical assistance to performance evaluations undertaken for USAID/South Africa.

### **Ms. Rebecca Thamaga** – Research Assistant

Ms. Thamaga is trained as an educator, and has spent the last 6 years working with NGOs in training and development programs. Much of her NGO work focused on training in the housing and urban development sector. Ms. Thamaga is presently a freelance consultant in Pretoria, South Africa.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study aimed to measure the results of training in two USAID/South Africa program areas: Strategic Objective 5 which focuses on private sector development and Strategic Objective 6 which focuses on urban development. The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the training objectives of the grantees?
2. How much training has been provided to date?
3. What indicators do the grantees use to report on training?
4. Do the grantees measure the results of training? And, if so, how?
5. What indicators should or could be used by SO5/SO6 and their grantees to measure the results of training?
6. How can monitoring, evaluating, and reporting of training results be improved?
7. To what extent do the grantees' training methodologies achieve the four levels shown in the figure below?

### Methodology

The G/HCD/HETS Principles for Best Practices for Strategic Training was used as the framework for assessing and analyzing the results of training. The model, shown below, divides training into four levels and assumes that lower levels must be fulfilled before results at the next level can be achieved.

LEVEL 1	Satisfaction:	Were trainees satisfied with the quality of their training?
LEVEL 2	Learning:	Did trainees learn, or acquire the knowledge, skills, or attitudes the training was intended to convey?
LEVEL 3	Application:	If they learned, did the trainees apply to their jobs, or at their workplace, the new knowledge, skills, or attitudes?
LEVEL 4	Organizational Performance:	If knowledge, skills, or attitudes were applied, did that make a measurable difference to the performance of the organization concerned?

Source: USAID/G/HCD/HETS, Monitoring Training for Results. AMEX International, Incl., Creative Associates International, Inc. August 1996.

The seven grantees included in the study were:

- The International Foundation for Self Help (IFESH)
- The Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA)
- The KwaZulu-Natal Municipal Association (Kwanaloga)
- The Interfaith Community Development Association (ICDA)
- The Institute for a New South Africa (INSA)
- The University of the Witwatersrand, Harvard University Executive Development Program
- The International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

## **Data Collection Methods**

Given the primary objective of the study, i.e. to determine the results of training, it was decided to focus on performance at the individual and organizational levels.

The focus on data at levels 3 and 4 presented numerous problems. Only one organization was required by USAID to report on level 3 and 4 changes, i.e. INSA. In no other case did training program objectives aim at achieving performance changes at levels 3 and 4.

With the exception of IFESH, USAID/SA and the grantees had not carried out a needs assessment prior to the design of the training.

The lack of specificity on job skills and organizational functions to be effected by training meant that the team had to retroactively define the skills and organizational changes which could potentially be improved by the training. Defining these skills was problematical because many key informants could not articulate the details of the performance and organizational functions to be improved. However, the team was able to define approximately twenty-five job skills for the SO6 training programs and six skills for SO5/IFESH which were the focus of those programs and, consequently, the focus of the research.

The team undertook three types of data collection: (1) interviews with key informants from USAID/SA and the grantees; (2) administration of a “training needs” questionnaire to a select group of SO6 local government officials; and (3) administration of a “training results” questionnaire to all grantee representatives and a sub-sample of trainees and their supervisors/mentors (where they could be identified).

The team selected a representative sample of trainees, mentors, and supervisors for the “training results” questionnaire. However, given that many of the trainees lived in remote areas, the limited time and resources available for this study made it impossible to visit them to conduct face-to-face interviews on their courses. Instead, a “mail-in” approach, where respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaires and fax them back, was utilized. The response rate was approximately 50% of the intended sample.

Several other problems were experienced in conducting the study. First, the timing of the study, particularly data collection (late-November to mid-December) proved difficult as many grantees had finished their training for the year and were closing for the holidays. Secondly, the team did not have time or funds to pre-test the instruments. As a result, some of the questions may not have been adequately understood by the respondents and this may have affected response rates and the quality of the data. Last, since the bulk of the data presented herein is self-reported, there are some limits to its validity and reliability. Nevertheless, the team is confident that the results presented in this report will provide USAID/SA with a valid and useful sense of the impact of training on job and organizational performance.

## **Findings**

The results from SO5 show that most IFESH respondents believe that training has more impact on individual job performance than on organizational performance. When asked which general areas of performance were most affected by training, better communications was the single most important job skill noted by nearly all respondents. In terms of changes in organizational performance, higher productivity and efficiency were noted by supervisors and trainees. Interestingly, although the IFESH project ultimately aims to contribute to improved “marketing” of bank services to HDPs, marketing was ranked at the bottom of improved organizational functions.

Supervisors/mentors of IFESH participants reported much lower scores on the results of training in financial and marketing skills than the participants. Although the number of respondents is small, this is a consistent pattern which may indicate that the supervisors/mentors don't recognize or don't utilize the newly-developed financial and marketing skills which their subordinates have gained through training.

When IFESH respondents were asked to state the biggest constraints to servicing historically-disadvantaged Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), 40 % mentioned operational shortcomings, i.e. lack of proper marketing, loan analyses, support to SMEs, items which would appear to be amenable to improvement by training. However, one third of the respondents stated the biggest constraint was their bank's reluctance to extend credit to SMEs.

### **SO6 Findings and Discussion**

Six SO6 partners were examined. Because the majority of those focus on building capacity among local-government managers, this became the study's main target group for measuring improvements in job and organizational performance. The findings, therefore, focus on the impact of SO6-financed training on local government managers and the changes in their job and organizational performance resulting from training.

The team used the interviews to identify the intended higher-order results of the SO6 training, however, very few grantee representatives were able to articulate how the training would improve job or organizational performance except for vague statements such as "build capacity to do their jobs", "become more effective in their work", etc.

These vague links between learning and individual and organizational performance do not mean that there have not been individual or organizational performance improvements. On the contrary, the findings show that many respondents report positive impacts on their jobs and organizations due to the training provided.

Two types of formal data collection were undertaken with SO6 grantees. One occurred early on in the study when a two-day ICMA workshop was taking place in Rustenburg. The workshop was considered a useful opportunity to better document participants' training needs, and to be able to judge whether SO6 training was necessary and on track.

SO6 respondents to this questionnaire perceived a considerable gap between the importance of various skills and their ability to successfully perform them. This indicates that there exists a role for training in bridging job performance gaps.

The data also demonstrates that the SO6 respondents viewed certain skills as relatively more important than others, specifically: planning, finance, applying ethics regulations, using monitoring and evaluation information, and personnel management.

When asked about their confidence in using these skills, the respondents appear to be most confident in those areas where they had received previous training, i.e. strategic planning, general management for local government managers, ethics, and financial management. Indeed, these areas account for more than half of all types of previous training noted by the respondents. Where there has been less training, respondents' mean confidence scores are generally lower, particularly in areas related to Municipal Service Partnerships and the environment, relatively recent subjects for training provided by SO6. This general correlation between higher confidence scores with previous training suggests that training has had a positive effect on increasing individuals' confidence levels to undertake important job skills. It does not prove that improvements in performance have indeed

occurred. Rather, the trainees report improvements in performance as an unplanned result of training.

SO6 respondents also provided substantial input to the “training results” survey. One notable result from the survey is the difference between the grantee responses and those from trainees and supervisors/mentors. It appears that a number of grantee representatives don’t know the impact of their training on the individuals’ work or on the organization.

More SO6 trainees and supervisors believe the training improved individual performance more than organizational performance. This is to be expected since most respondents probably view the training as a means to improve the individual’s performance directly, and not that of the organization. Nevertheless, many respondents report that the training contributed to significant improvements or efficiencies in the functioning of the organization.

Twenty-five job skills typical to local-government managers were highlighted for special inquiry for SO6 participants. Most SO6 respondents reported that some job skills, particularly the more traditional planning and management skills, have been positively affected by training, while others have not been well addressed, particularly the “newer” activities related to Municipal Service Partnerships (MSPs) and private financing of urban development activities.

The consistency between these results and the results of the Rustenburg data set is encouraging. What emerges is a general pattern of positive self-reported data on improved job skills resulting from training. In areas where training has not had as much emphasis, there is less confidence noted. This consistency strengthens the validity of the finding that training has had a (self-reported) positive impact on job performance.

## **Conclusions**

One of the most salient conclusions of the study is that the basic concepts and importance of the strategic training model are not well understood.

However, despite difficulties in establishing and measuring impact of training on performance, there is evidence that positive effects are occurring. Training appears to be associated with increased confidence and reportedly better functional skills in the areas addressed by training. This appears to validate the usefulness of training, assuming that the training is addressing key individual and organizational performance gaps required to achieve the USAID Strategic Objective.

Another conclusion is that the integrity of the linkages between improvements in job skills and changes in organizational performance and the Strategic Objective must be ensured at the design stage. Screening of participating institutions’ intentions vis-a-vis servicing must, therefore, precede selection of trainees if the program is to maximize its contribution towards achieving Strategic Objective(s). If a sound link between all levels is not ensured in advance, the training will not lead to the desired result.

A useful method for ensuring the integrity of these linkages is to develop performance indicators at the design stage. The basic denominator should be “job skills” targeted by the training which must result in desirable organizational changes which ultimately contribute to delivery of services. The results of this study confirm findings from earlier work done by Macro/PME on training which found that USAID/SA’s monitoring of training needs to be strengthened.

Most grantees are presently reporting only on input indicators, e.g. numbers of trainees per course, gender information, etc., and satisfaction data (level 1 data). Aside from IFESH’s reporting on

learning, very little data on other levels of the model are presently being reported by any USAID SO6 grantees.

Although collecting information at higher levels of the model is more difficult and expensive, higher level data are the most valuable and powerful information for assessing results. Therefore, existing grantees should be required, at a minimum, to monitor and report on training being done at level 2. This means that all grantees would be required to measure pre-training and post-training knowledge levels. To achieve these improvements in monitoring, we recommend grant agreements be revised to require grantees to define the functions to be addressed by training and to define the indicators to be used.

USAID/SA should demand from all new grantees that they monitor and report levels 3 and 4 data. This requirement will, if it does not involve a full needs analysis, at least necessitate reflection on the specific performance gaps which are to be addressed and the type of changes which USAID/SA and grantees are seeking to bring about.

Finally, USAID/SA should note that higher-order measures which capture the results of training should not be collected merely to document changes which have taken place but also to measure the “pay-off” of training.

Certain training models would seem to be more conducive to achieving individual and organizational performance changes than others. E.g. part-time, short-term training programs structured in modules and/or programs tend to have mentoring, oversight and supervision for utilizing new skills built in their programs. As these programs provide the participants with opportunities to practice what they have learned at the workplace they would seem to hold greater potential for effecting changes in performance. In contrast, one would expect that two or three day-long (one-off) workshops and seminars would be less effective in promoting the building and enhancement of skills.

To test these assumptions, we analyzed the responses of participants from on-going short-term courses against the responses of participants in one-off workshops on their scores for individual and organizational performance changes. Contrary to our expectations, there was no statistically significant difference in views on the degree of change in job performance. Regarding organizational improvement, participants from one-off workshops report that their training resulted in greater improvement on the functioning of their organization than participants from on-going courses. This is the opposite of what we would have expected. One explanation, may be the small sample size. Another is that the participants from on-going courses may not realize the organizational effects of their training until the training is completed and more time elapses in applying their skills.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Detailed analyses of performance gaps (either individual or organizational) are critical in determining whether training is the appropriate intervention for improving performance.
- Each stage of the training must be designed to contribute to individual and organizational performance changes.
- For each training program, the person responsible for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on the data for each of the four levels of the model must be identified.
- It is difficult to accurately measure the results of training if these have not been specified in advance. Monitoring and evaluation of results must be factored into the design of the program.

There are many stages in the training cycle where the application of evaluative measures and activities is appropriate.

### **Recommendations**

- Conduct organizational performance assessments before designing training programs. This will allow for training to be more readily focused on those individual and organizational performance gaps which can be remedied by training.
- Incorporate process evaluation-type activities throughout the training cycle and include specific follow-on activities (e.g. mentoring, exercises to apply what has been learned, structured report-back sessions) in the design of training programs.
- Incorporate into all new USAID/SA contracts, grants, and agreements a requirement that data collection takes place at all four levels and that reporting to USAID/SA covers the results achieved at levels 3 and 4 of the training model.
- Provide grantees with assistance to establish monitoring systems and to perform in-depth studies of the results of training programs.
- Disseminate the Best Practices Series on training to all relevant parties.
- Organize workshops for participants to understand the value of the model and to ensure transfer of skills in developing appropriate instruments and indicators for measuring level 3 and 4 training information and data.
- Development and dissemination of a generic “toolkit” to facilitate measurement of the results of training is to be considered by USAID/SA.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Two USAID/South Africa Strategic Objectives Teams (Strategic Objective 5 (SO5) and Strategic Objective 6 (SO6)) requested the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Project to assist in capturing the results of their training programs and in identifying the contribution of training activities in achieving their respective Results Frameworks. Both SO teams were experiencing problems in measuring the results of their training investments, due to weaknesses in grantee reporting, inadequacy of indicators, absence of tools to measure the results of training, and/or undefined linkages between training and the achievement of organizational or SO goals.

This study is a follow-up to a Macro/PME training study entitled “Review of USAID/SA-supported and financed Training Activities, Training Indicators & Tools for Measuring the Results of Training” (July 1998), which inventoried USAID/SA-supported training across its six SOs, and identified the training indicators in the Results Framework. That study noted the need for institutionalizing the re-engineered training function in USAID/SA and for enhancing monitoring and evaluation of training.

As indicated in the Scope of Work (see Annex A), the primary objective of this study is to generate performance data on the results of selected SO5 and SO6 training activities. This information can then be included in the mission’s annual Results Review and Resource Request report which is submitted to USAID/Washington. A secondary objective is to strengthen the capacity of SO6 and SO5 grantees to monitor future results of their USAID-financed training programs.

## 2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As indicated above, USAID/SA requested Macro/PME to launch a study into the results of the various USAID-supported training programs mainly to determine the extent to which training contributes to the achievement of the Results Framework. While the original Scope of Work for the study (Annex A) did not explicitly list research questions to be answered by the study, several such questions are implied:

1. *What are the grantees’ training objectives?*
2. *How much training has been provided thus far?*
3. *What indicators do the grantees use to report on their training?*
4. *Do the grantees measure the results of training? If so, how?*
5. *What indicators should (or could) be used by SO5/SO6 and their grantees to measure the results of training?*
6. *How can monitoring/evaluating/reporting of training be generally improved?*
7. *To what extent do the grantees’ training methodologies achieve the four levels (as shown in Figure 1) of the USAID strategic training model?*

These questions are the focus of the analysis and report of findings found in section 4, *Findings*, and Section 5, *Conclusions*, below.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Study approach

Prior to any interviews with the grantees themselves, the team agreed to use the G/HCD/HETS Principles for Best Practices for Strategic Training<sup>1</sup> (also known as *performance-based training* or *strategic training*) as the general framework for assessing and analyzing the results of training among the grantees. This decision was based on several factors. First, given that the Strategic Training Model is promoted by G/HCD in USAID/Washington, and referred to in the Supplementary References to the ADS Chapter 253 on Training for Development Impact, the team assumed it tacitly serves as guidance and policy for the Agency and therefore serves as the best basis for judging results of SO5/SO6 training. Second, USAID/South Africa's mission order on Training<sup>2</sup> uses the Strategic Training Model as a framework for its own in-house policy. Third, a special workshop on *Performance Based Training* was organized by USAID/South Africa on January 26-27, 1998 to introduce the concept of strategic training to USAID staff and partners<sup>3</sup>. Given all these factors, the team believes assessment of training results against the Strategic Training model is justified for the purposes of this study.

The basic elements of the Best Practices for Monitoring Training for Results (advocated by G/HCD/HETS) are depicted in Figure 1 below. These are based on the assumption that "the function of training is to transfer knowledge, skills, and attitudes and that the purpose of training is to change actual or potential behavior. In strategic or results-oriented training, changing behavior usually means performing a job better or differently"<sup>4</sup>.

**Figure 1. Summary of 4-level Kirkpatrick Training Model.**

LEVEL 1	Satisfaction:	Were trainees satisfied with the quality of their training?
LEVEL 2	Learning:	Did trainees learn, or acquire the knowledge, skills, or attitudes the training was intended to convey?
LEVEL 3	Application:	If they learned, did the trainees apply to their jobs, or at their workplace, the new knowledge, skills, or attitudes?
LEVEL 4	Organizational Performance:	If knowledge, skills, or attitudes were applied, did that make a measurable difference to the performance of the organization concerned?

Source: USAID/G/HCD/HETS, *Monitoring Training for Results*. AMEX International, Incl., Creative Associates International, Inc. August 1996.

The model also assumes that lower levels must be fulfilled before achieving the results of the next level (i.e. learning cannot be achieved if there is no satisfaction, and job performance changes will only occur if there is learning, etc.).

<sup>1</sup> USAID, G/HCD/HETS, Human Resources Development Assistance Project. *Best Practices Series: The Principles and Application of Best Practices for Strategic Training: A Resource Manual for Strategic Objective Teams and Activity Managers*. AMEX International, Inc. (Washington, DC). January 1997.

<sup>2</sup> *Mission Policy on Participant Training*, Order Number 604, dated June 23, 1998,

<sup>3</sup> Several of the grantees included in this study attended that workshop: IFESH, WESSA, ICMA, ICDA, and INSA.

<sup>4</sup> USAID, G/HCD/HETS, Human Resources Development Assistance Project. *Ibid*.

### 3.2 Grantees identified for study

The Scope of Work called for a review of 10 organizations identified by USAID, although, for the reasons given in Table below, only 7 were ultimately included in the study of training results.

**Table 1. USAID-grantees identified for study**

<i>USAID Program</i>	<i>Grantee in Sample</i>	<i>Reason for exclusion from sample (where relevant)</i>
SO5	IFESH	
SO6	WESSA Kwanaloga	
	Chemonics/IP3	<i>Included for interview but not for “training results” questionnaire because the training was taking place during the consultancy and it was too early to measure results at level 3 and level 4 of the model.</i>
	ICDA	
	Urban Environmental Training Initiative (at UCT)	<i>Not included because a formal relationship between USAID and UCT is not yet in place. Grant not yet issued at the time of the study and no training yet implemented with USAID-funding.</i>
	IEE	<i>Not included because it serves only as a “pass through” for funding to other training organizations. IEE plays a financial role, not a technical role in training.</i>
	INSA	
	University of the Witswatersrand, Harvard University Executive Development Program	
ICMA		

### 3.3 Data collection methods

Given that the primary objective of the study was to determine *the results of training*, the team decided to focus the study on measures of performance (individual -level 3, and organizational -level 4 of the model described above). Review of data at levels 1 and 2 was not excluded – but the team believed that only level 3 and 4 data would satisfy the data and information needs of USAID/SA for preparing their annual performance report to Washington.

The focus on Level 3 and 4 data presented the team with numerous problems. First, in reviewing the existing reports and agreements for each organization, it was clear that only one organization was required by USAID to report on level 3 or 4 changes, namely INSA. In no case did any training program objectives (as articulated in grant agreements, training materials, or reports) explicitly aim to achieve performance changes at levels 3 or 4. Such changes might have been implied in the training programs, but the documents contained no specificity regarding which job skills or organizational functions would be targeted by the training<sup>5</sup>.

Secondly, much of the documentation provided to the team lacked information regarding how training needs were defined and how these needs were linked to the performance changes desired.

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, as will be shown later in this report, many of the grantees as well as the USAID program managers were unable to specifically define the job skills or organizational changes which were desired from the training. Vague statements like “overall capacity building” were frequently used with little definition.

With the exception of IFESH, neither USAID/SA, nor the grantees had carried out a needs assessment prior to the design of the training.

The lack of specificity on job skills and/or organizational functions to be changed by training meant that the team itself had to retrospectively define the skills or organizational changes which would possibly be improved by the training. Defining these was problematic because many of the study's key informants themselves could not articulate the details of the performance or the organizational functions to be improved. However, through the expertise of Mr. Martin and Ms. Thamaga, along with the interviews with NGOs and USAID staff, the team was able to define approximately 25 job skills for the SO6 training programs and 6 skills for SO5/IFESH, which were the focus of training in those programs.

In order to answer the research questions, and given the above constraints, the team undertook three types of data collection: (1) interviews with key informants from USAID and the grantees; (2) administration of a "training needs" questionnaire to a select group of local government officials attending a ICMA/SALGA workshop in Rustenburg in November 1998, and (3) administration of a "training results" questionnaire to all grantee representatives, and a sub-sample of trainees and their supervisors/mentors (where they could be identified). The instruments used for each of these data collection efforts can be found in Annex B.

The team attempted to obtain a representative sample of trainees, mentors, and supervisors for the "training results" questionnaire (see Table 2 below), considering the time and funding limitations for collecting the data. Given that many of the trainees (for SO6 particularly) lived in remote rural areas, limited time and funding for this study made it impossible to visit them personally to conduct face-to-face interviews for feedback on the courses. Consequently, the team utilized a "mail-in" approach, where respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaires and fax them back. Although this method of data collection typically has very low response rates, the average response rate was approximately 50% of the intended sample (see Table 2). This is discussed further in Section 4.

**Table 2. Intended sample for administration of "Training Results" questionnaires by grantee (with total numbers trained for reference)**

	Trainees	Supervisors/ Mentors	NGO Reps	Total		Total Numbers Actually Trained
WESSA	18	10	1	29		380
Kwanaloga	20	10	1	31		500
ICMA	13	7	1	21		539
U. Witswatersrand	10	--	1	11		33
ICDA	10	--	1	11		Not available
INSA	10	3	1	14		62
IFESH	13	5	1	19		33
<b>TOTAL</b>	94	8	7	136		1,569

### 3.4 Problems experienced / issues with data collection

In addition to some of the difficulties described above, several other problems were experienced in conducting the study. First, the timing of the study effort, and particularly the data collection (from late November to mid-December) proved to be difficult as many grantees had finished their training for the year and were closing down for the holidays. While it was comparatively easy to arrange meetings with the grantee representatives themselves, it was quite difficult to reach their training

participants. Also, partly because it had not been possible to consult the grantees during the design phase of the study, some grantees were somewhat reluctant to go out of their way to facilitate the study or assist in contacting trainees or in coordinating trainee interviews<sup>6</sup>.

Secondly, as discussed in detail above, because many of the grantees had difficulty in specifically defining the individual and organizational performance changes which were desired, the team itself had to define job skills and organizational functions which would be measured as part of the study. This was not an easy task and required more time than was originally anticipated.

Thirdly, the organizations identified for examination in this study were all in very different stages of their project life cycles (see Table 3.). This posed numerous problems particularly for those grants/contracts which were relatively “new”, since results of training can only be measured some time after the training activity has been completed. For the “older” grants/contracts, the study had little obvious value, as they were not in a position to benefit from the findings. Moreover, the nature of “training” provided by these organizations was highly varied, ranging from general awareness-raising (WESSA), to imparting skills at a very basic level (Kwanaloga/IFESH) to a focus on teaching highly specialized skills (Wits/Harvard). The limited time and resources available did not allow the team to fine-tune its methodology or instruments to the specific nature of the performance gaps and the type of training provided.

**Table 3.**

“New” Grants/Contracts	- IFESH - UCT - Chemonics/IP3
On-going Grants/Contracts	- U. Witswatersrand/Harvard University - WESSA - KWANALOGA
Ending Grants/Contracts	- ICDA - INSA - ICMA

Fourthly, because many of the grantees “mix” their funding for the training courses, isolating USAID-financed efforts from other-financed efforts was impossible in many cases. Where this occurred, the team just generally evaluated the training session(s) which received USAID funding, irrespective of other funding which might have been applied to that same training program.

Fifthly, the team did not have the time or funds to pretest the instruments indicated above. As a result, some of the questions may not have been adequately understood by the respondents and this may have affected response rates as well as the quality of the data.

Finally, given that the vast majority of data presented herein is self-reported, there are some limits to its validity and reliability. That is not to say that the results are invalid or unreliable. Rather that more valid and reliable data (e.g. organizational-based performance data, pre- and post- training – such as decreases in customer service complaints, or improvements in quantity and quality of services delivered) were not being collected by USAID, or any of the grantees, and this type of data

<sup>6</sup> This was a somewhat awkward assignment for the PME project, because it did not have the authority to require stakeholder participation, and none of the grantees were consulted by USAID/SA with regard to the study ahead of time. Many of the grantees did not understand the importance of strategic training or this study. And there was the confusion between this study and an end-of-project evaluation taking place with one of the grantees at the same time. This ultimately meant that the team received very little assistance from the grantees in identifying participants for interviewing or in contacting them.

was thus not available for analysis. Time and funding constraints for conducting this study did not permit the team to develop and collect these more objective measures of job and organizational performance.

Nevertheless, the team is confident that the results presented in this report will provide USAID/South Africa with a first sense of the impact of training on job and organizational performance.

## 4. FINDINGS

The information obtained from the key informant interviews (with USAID and grantee representatives) is woven throughout the presentation of findings. The results of the “training needs” questionnaire are presented in the discussion on SO6 (section 4.3). The results of the “training results” questionnaire are also woven through the presentation of findings. Following a discussion of the general respondent characteristics (in section 4.1) the results of SO5 and SO6 (answers to research questions 1-4) are presented separately below (in sections 4.2 and 4.3). Section 4.4 follows with an analysis of the commonalities between the two data sets.

Discussion on research questions 5-8 are found in section 5, *Conclusions*.

### 4.1 Respondent characteristics in “Training Results” questionnaire (both SO5 and SO6)

Seventy-four persons responded to the “training results” questionnaire – a 54 % response rate from the intended sample (see Table 4 below). The vast majority of these were training participants themselves (71 percent), or mentor/supervisors of the trainees (15 percent). The remainder of the respondents were representatives of USAID grantees. The highest response rates were found with ICDA and IFESH respondents because most of their trainees are located in Gauteng, and these organizations assisted in contacting trainees<sup>7</sup>. In addition, for ICDA, the team was able to interview higher than expected numbers of trainees because the team was able to observe an ICDA trainee report-back session where the consultants took the opportunity to administer the training results-questionnaire.

**Table 4. Actual sample for administration of “Training Results” questionnaires (compared to the Intended sample indicated in Table 2).**

	Trainees		Supervisors/ Mentors		Grantees		Total		% Response rate
	Intended	Actual	Intended	Actual	Intended	Actual	Intended	Actual	
WESSA	18	8	10	0	1	1	29	9	31
Kwanaloga	20	9	10	2	1	1	31	12	38
ICMA	13	6	7	2	1	1	21	9	42
Wits/Harvard	10	4	--	0	1	1	11	5	45
ICDA	10	15	--	2	1	4	11	21	190
INSA	10	2	3	1	1	1	14	4	28
IFESH	13	9	5	4	1	1	19	14	73
<b>TOTAL</b>	94	53	8	11	7	10	136	74	54

<sup>7</sup> Response rates for SO6 were very low, given that so many participants SO6 work in remote municipalities and were too far and difficult to reach for face-to-face meetings. The team also had great difficulty getting them to participate in telephone interviews or in faxing the questionnaire back.

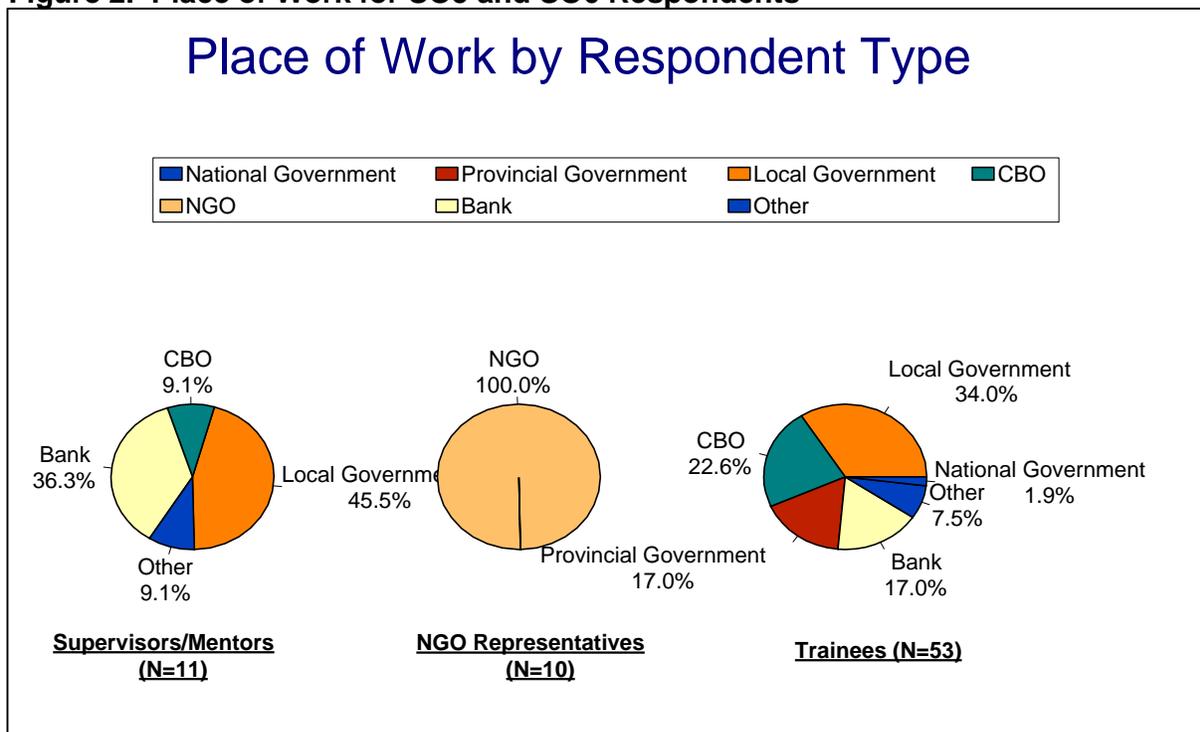
The vast majority of the respondents were male (70 percent), most likely due to the fact that most USAID training in SO5 and SO6 is directed toward government officials or banking staff, most of whom are men.

17.6 percent of all respondents were from SO5’s IFESH training program while the remainder were from SO6-related programs.

As shown in Figure 2 and 3 most of the trainees and their supervisors/mentors work in Local Government or in Community Based Organizations<sup>8</sup>. As would be expected, the trainees in the sample tend to have a wider range of job positions (ranging from top level managers to administrative officers), as well as a wider range of job locations than grantee representatives or their supervisors/mentors.

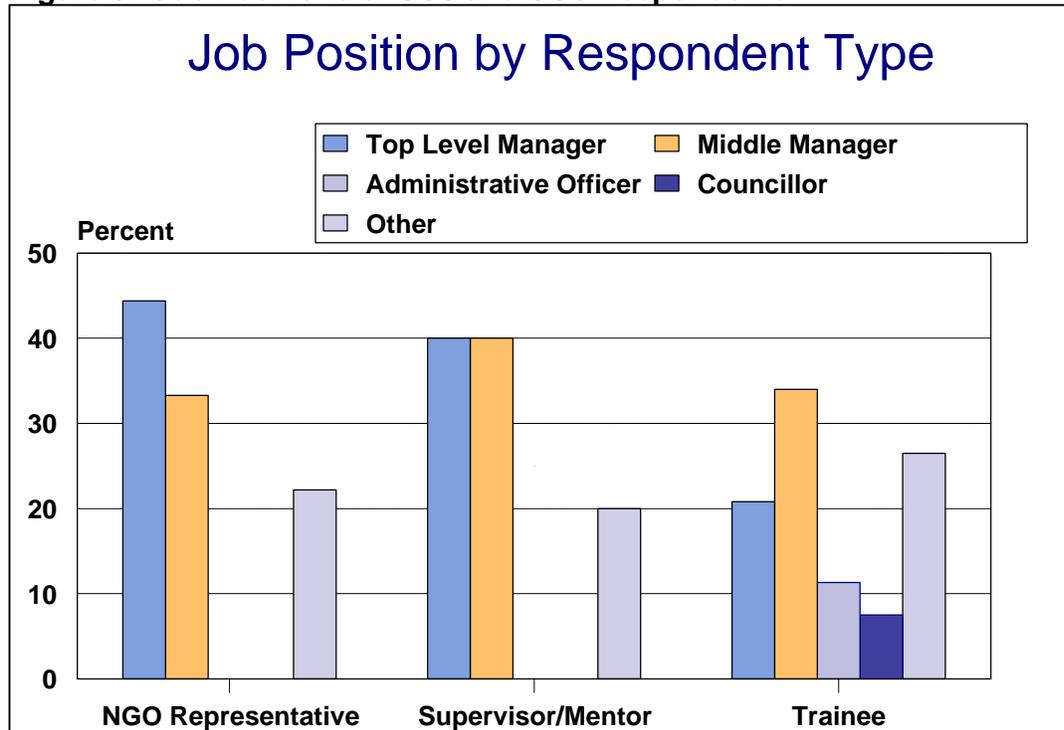
Most respondents (69 percent) had attended only one USAID-financed training activity in the last two years, although this figure is likely to be much higher, given that nearly 23 % of the respondents checked all three ICDA training programs instead of just one<sup>9</sup>. If these are removed from the data base, it is clear that very few individuals have attended more than one USAID-sponsored training activity in the last 2 years. Thus, duplication in terms of targeting participants does not seem to be an issue.

**Figure 2. Place of Work for SO5 and SO6 Respondents**



<sup>8</sup> Reflecting the bias in the overall sample toward respondents from ICDA and from SO6 local government capacity building programs.

<sup>9</sup> This was due to confusion regarding the correct titles for the ICDA courses. As a result, the course titles in the “training results” questionnaires do not provide accurate titles for ICDA courses and most respondents just checked all three.

**Figure 3. Job Positions of SO5 and SO6 Respondents**

## 4.2 SO5 findings and discussion

IFESH was the only SO5 grantee surveyed as part of this study. IFESH implements a Bank and Financial Services Training Program “to develop and enhance banking skills of historically disadvantaged junior bankers to increase their skills and knowledge of banking and their ability to create access to financial markets to entrepreneurs in their local communities”. In addition, IFESH will be initiating a training program for mid-level bankers in 1999.

### 4.2.1 SO5: General information to answer research questions 1-4:

#### Training Objectives

The IFESH program has two main learning (level 2) objectives:

- foundational competence: demonstrated understanding of the nature and core business of banking in South Africa, and the credit function;
- practical competence: technical skills to understanding finance and the skills to market and sell a bank’s products and services.

While IFESH’s grant agreement does not presently specify performance changes which the training program aims to achieve, it is clear from interviews with IFESH representatives that level 3 and 4 changes are sought by the program – specifically, increased capacity of junior HDP banking staff trainees to “grow” historically disadvantaged customers.

Type and volume of training provided through December 1998

As of December 1998, IFESH had completed two training courses reaching a total of 33 junior bankers in Gauteng Province, the Northern Province, and the Eastern Cape. Each trainee completed 25 days of training.

Indicators used to report on training

IFESH has extensive reports by the Graduate Institute of Management and Technology (GIMT) on the degree to which trainees are satisfied with the course (level 1 data) and are learning from it (level 2). These reports are sent to USAID/SA for information. Indicators of higher order changes haven't yet been developed, but IFESH is one of the only grantees in this study to be in the process of formulating these. One of their possible indicators of individual or organizational performance is "the increase in the numbers of HDP applications (for loans or credit)".

Grantee measurement of training results:

No measures of results have yet been collected by IFESH, although the MAS Consultant to the program had suggested that participant surveys be conducted upon completion of each module, to test the impact and applicability of their newly acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes. However, IFESH has not implemented this recommendation, and rather intends to collect level 3 and level 4 information in the course of 1999 through a special survey of trainees and their supervisors/mentors. In addition, some of the participating banking institutions will also conduct their own assessments of the results of the IFESH-training.

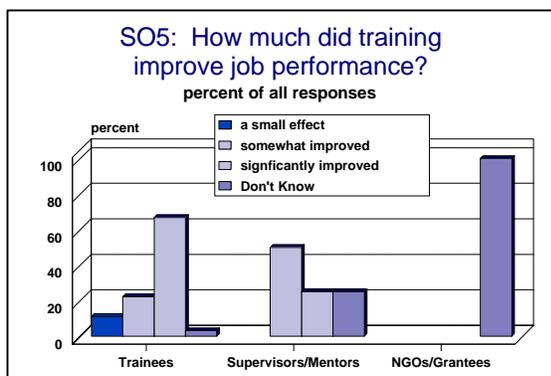
**4.2.2 SO5: Findings from the "Training Results" survey**

Fourteen individuals responded to the "training results" survey from IFESH - 1 representative of IFESH itself, 4 supervisors/mentors, and 9 trainees.

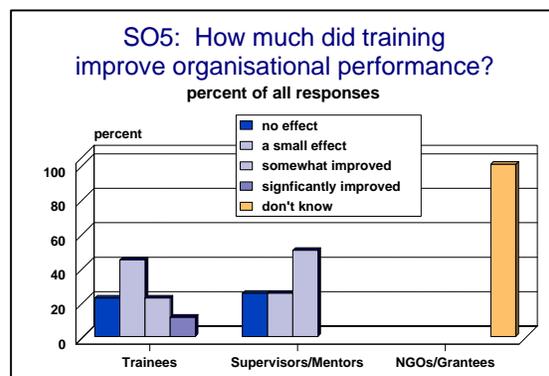
Effect of training on individual or organizational performance

Figure 4 and 5 show the views of the respondents on the degree to which USAID-sponsored training impacted on individual and organizational performance. While there are no significant differences between the trainee and the supervisor/mentor responses, most respondents believe there is more impact on individual job performance than on organizational performance (as would be expected).

**Figure 4**

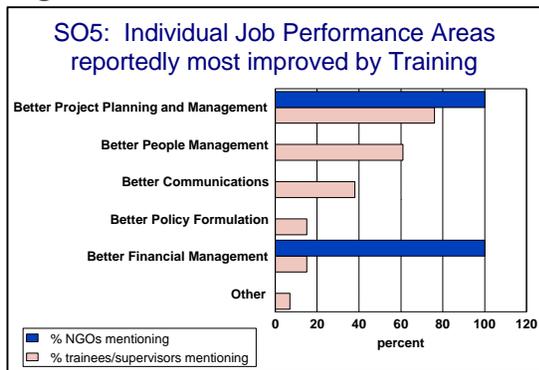


**Figure 5**



When asked which areas of performance were most affected by the training, “better communications” was the single most important job skill noted by nearly all the respondents (see Figure 6). In terms of the changes in organizational performance, higher productivity and efficiency were noted by supervisors and trainees. Interestingly, although the project ultimately aims to contribute to improved “marketing” of bank services to HDPs, marketing was ranked at the bottom of the list compared to other organizational functions (see Figure 7)<sup>10</sup>.

**Figure 6**



**Figure 7**



Training participant performance details

Six job skills specifically addressed by the training were highlighted for special inquiry (see questions 34 – 39 in the “training results” questionnaire). The rationale for looking at these in more depth was to try to measure more precise job functions which may have improved as a result of training (as compared to the general functions listed in Figure 6 and 7 above). Figure 8 below shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that the trainee’s skills had improved in these areas.

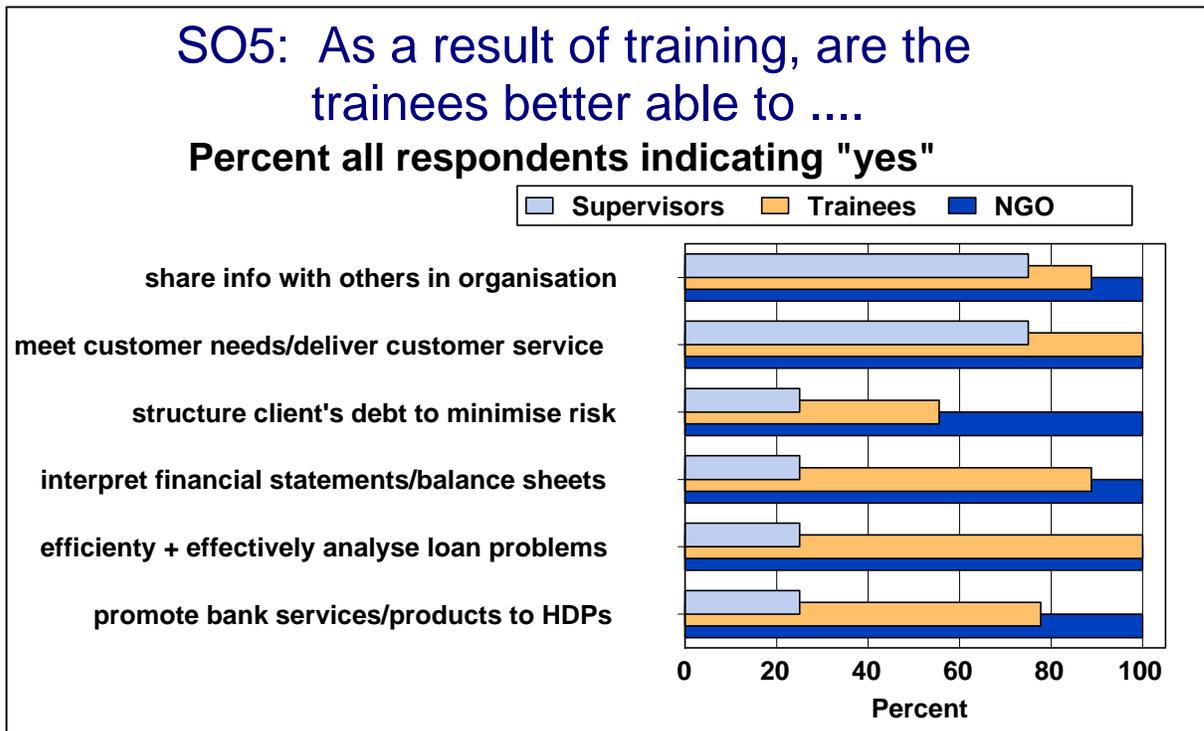
What is most notable about the data, is the much lower scores by supervisors/mentors on the results of training in the financial and marketing skills areas. Although the number of respondents is small, it is a consistent pattern, and may indicate that the supervisors/mentors don’t recognise or don’t utilize the newly developed financial and marketing skills which their subordinates have gained through the training. Indeed, during the interviews, both trainees and trainers commented on the limited opportunities which some of the trainees have for applying newly developed skills.

When respondents were asked about their perspectives on the most critical constraints to effectively servicing historically disadvantaged SMEs (small-medium enterprises), 40 percent of respondents

<sup>10</sup> One SO5 team member noted that because marketing of bank services has not been a big priority of banks in South Africa (“the market was there for the taking”), it is not surprising that marketing was ranked at the bottom of the list.

mentioned operational shortcomings (such as lack of proper marketing, loan analyzes, support to SMEs) in their applications which appear to be more amenable to improvement by training. However, one third of the respondents said it was due to the bank’s reluctance to extend credit to SMEs, because of the high administrative costs involved, the risk, etc. This raises the issue as to whether training alone will remedy the organizational performance gap targeted by this program, or whether other measures are required to provide incentives to banks to reach out to SMEs, the majority of which are owned by HDPs.

Figure 8



### 4.3 SO6 Findings And Discussion

Six SO6 organizations were examined for this study. Because the majority of them focus on building capacity among local government managers, this became the study’s main target group for measuring job and organizational performance improvements. However, one organization, WESSA, also utilizes USAID financing to (a) train primary school teachers in environmental awareness (so that they can build these issues into their curriculum) and (b) educate parliamentarians on environmental legislation. The team decided not to include the WESSA school program in the study since the job and organizational improvements for this group were quite removed from the provision of urban development services which is the primary focus of SO6. With respect to the parliamentarians, the Eastern Cape Legislature (from which the trainees had been selected) was out of session at the time of the study, and the team was not able to reach the

partner organization to obtain the necessary assistance with reaching the parliamentarians in their home locations.

The following discussion therefore focuses on the impact of SO6-financed training on local government managers and the changes in their job/organizational performance resulting from training.

#### **4.3.1 SO6: General information to answer research questions 1- 4**

##### Training objectives

While many of the grant agreements for SO6 are quite vague on the objectives of the training, the team extracted more specific objectives during the interviews with grantee representatives and from project related materials. Table 5, summarizing these, shows that all the training objectives articulated by the SO6 grantees, or noted in their documents, focus on learning - level 2.

While the team used the interviews to identify the intended higher-order results of this learning, very few grantee representatives were able to articulate how the learning would improve job or organizational performance (levels 3 and 4) aside from vague statements like “build capacity to do their jobs”, “become more effective in their work”, etc. Indeed, one SO6 grantee stated that beyond the responsibility of conducting the training, “they had no contractual obligation to ensure any results from the training” (paraphrased from the original statement).

These universally vague links between learning and individual/organizational performance do not mean that there have been no individual or organizational performance improvements. On the contrary, the following discussion will show that many respondents report positive impacts on their jobs and organizations from the training provided.

It does, however, demonstrate the absence of focused needs assessments during the planning phase of the training and a lack of conceptualization of what it is that the training is seeking to change. While most grantees have gone through some type of situation-analysis assessment before designing their training courses, more specific foci on performance improvements were not a part of most training designs. This is mostly because strategic training is a relatively new approach to training and most grantees received their USAID funding prior to the Agency’s and mission’s introduction of the model. To date, the basic concept of strategic training and the importance assigned to it remain insufficiently disclosed and enforced, both within SO6 and among its partners.

##### Type and volume of USAID-funded training provided through December 1998

Table 6 below summarizes the total numbers of participants receiving SO6-financed training to date. 1,536 persons (excluding ICDA) have been reached through SO6 training. As stated earlier, most of the individuals reached by the training (and subsequently contacted for this survey) are located in local government institutions, although WESSA environmental awareness courses have been targeted at teachers and parliamentarians.

**Table 5.**

GRANTEE	TRAINING OBJECTIVES	RESULTS LEVEL
WESSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop awareness of environmental issues among teachers, learners, parents, community leaders, etc.</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informing Members of Parliament of environmental legislation</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance degree training in environmental education for ?? students.</li> </ul>	??
Kwanaloga	To train Local Government Officials in	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategic planning,</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general management,</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conflict management,</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• change management,</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• project management,</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local government financing,</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• human resources development,</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management/development of housing/shelter and urban services delivery</li> <li>• CSO management</li> </ul>	2
Chemonics/IP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To introduce NGO representatives, academics from tertiary institutions, or other service providers to the rationale and concept of Municipal Service Partnerships (MSPs), including fundamental financial concepts.</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To build skills in :               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Selecting appropriate projects for MSPs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Contracting mechanisms for MSPs</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Tendering and Procurement Techniques</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Delivering further training in MSPs to other S. African individuals/entities</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interactive training methodologies</li> </ul>	2
ICDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community organizing</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundraising</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Empowerment</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Dissemination</li> </ul>	2

INSA	<p>To provide South African municipal officials’ access to US expertise in housing, community/urban development and municipal administration. During their internship, participants are given the opportunity to observe how US municipalities work in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing</li> <li>• Technological advances in economic development</li> <li>• Community participation</li> <li>• Policy development</li> </ul>	2
U. Witswatersrand	<p>USAID funding used for support to courses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political Economy of Infrastructure Development and Public Investment</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and Strategic Management for Local Government</li> </ul>	2
ICMA	<p>Capacity building for local SA professional organizations (e.g. Institute for Local Government Management) in areas of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic planning</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training Needs Assessments (!)</li> </ul>	2
	<p>Also sponsored training in conjunction with ILGM on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategic planning, financial management, networking</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking</li> </ul>	2

**Table 6. SO6: Numbers of persons reached with USAID-funded training**

	WESSA	KWANALOGA	ICMA	WITS/ Harvard	ICDA	INSA	CHEMONICS/ IP3
Short courses (one-off)	53		116		N/A		22 <sup>11</sup>
Short courses (series)	230	396	267		N/A		
Long-term degree	30			33			
Other long-term training	50	104					
Mentoring	10						
Exchange program	7		138			62	
Study tours	--		18				
<b>TOTAL</b>	380	500	539	33	N/A	62	22

N/A = not available

### Indicators used to report on training

No SO6 grantee representatives answered the question on what training indicators they were presently reporting on. Based on the key informant interviews, however, it appears that input related information (i.e. numbers of participants by gender and course) and level 1 “satisfaction” information are the key indicators used in reporting to USAID. While some training providers, particularly the more academic programs at Wits and Kwanaloga, have level 2 “learning” information available in their management information systems, it does not appear that this information is shared with the mission on a systematic basis, or used as a means of monitoring provider performance.

### Grantee measurement of training results

None of the SO6 grantees measure the results of training at levels 3 or 4, although a few grantees indicated during key informant interviews how much they would like to investigate this issue in order to strengthen their training programs. INSA has sent post-training questionnaires to their participants, but item analysis of these instruments shows clearly that only level 1 and 2 feedback is sought. ICDA conducts post-training discussions with their participants (two team members had the opportunity to observe such a discussion), and although these are less structured, they do tend to concentrate on how successfully the participant practices the skills learned in the training (level 3 feedback). Unfortunately, none of this information is systematically captured and analyzed for reporting to USAID.

#### **4.3.2 SO6: Findings from Rustenburg data: participant’s perceived training needs and job gaps**

As mentioned in section 3, *Methodology*, two types of formal data collection were undertaken with selected SO6 grantees. The first occurred quite early in the study (before the team had reached consensus on how to retrospectively measure results of training), when a two-day USAID-financed workshop (sponsored by ICMA) was taking place in Rustenburg for local government officials (the main target population for SO6 capacity building activities). Because the team did not have any training-needs-analysis documents (aside from grant agreements) for analysis, it decided to take advantage of this situation by conducting a quick assessment of the participants’ perceived needs

<sup>11</sup> Training of Trainers – Chemonics/IP3 plan to conduct training of 120 councillors and local government managers in the near future.

for training, and their perceptions on their own performance gaps. It was considered useful for both the study and USAID to better document participants' training needs, and to be able to judge whether SO6 training was necessary and generally on track.

In order to obtain this information, a questionnaire was designed to examine the trainees' perspectives on the importance of certain skills which are the focus of much SO6 training. In addition, trainees were asked how confident they were in conducting these skills.

Forty-seven (47) individuals responded to this needs assessment questionnaire. They were largely senior or upper level managers working in local government (Town Clerks, Town Secretaries, Town Treasurers, CEOs, etc).

Two-thirds of the respondents had attended other training courses in the last two years. Nearly all the respondents (92%) who attended previous training reported that the training had helped them in their work, mostly by giving them more confidence, understanding, or means to do their jobs better. When asked if the training they (or their colleagues) had received had helped their organization to perform better, 78% reported yes.

As can be seen from the figures on the following pages, respondents perceive a considerable gap between the importance of various specified skills and their ability to successfully perform these. This discrepancy between perceptions regarding the importance of certain job skills and confidence in carrying them out indicates that there is a role for training in bridging job performance gaps.

The data also demonstrates that the respondents viewed certain skills as relatively more important than others – specifically:

- planning,
- finance,
- applying ethics regulations,
- using monitoring/evaluation information, and
- personnel management.

When asked about their confidence in using these skills, the respondents appear to be most confident in those areas where they had received previous training – such as strategic planning, general management for local government managers, ethics, and financial management – indeed these areas account for more than half of all types of previous training noted by the respondents. Where there has been less training, respondents' mean confidence scores are generally lower -- particularly in those areas related to:

- Municipal Service Partnerships (accessing private/public financing, managing competitive bidding, administering contracts, and carrying out risk analyzes); and
- the environment (promoting environmental awareness, and evaluating environmental impact assessments),

which are relatively recent subjects for training provided by SO6. This general correlation between higher confidence scores with previous training suggests that training has had a positive effect on increasing the individual's confidence levels to undertake important job skills.

It does not, however, prove that performance improvements have indeed occurred. Nevertheless, despite the fact that few SO6 grantees could themselves articulate the performance gaps to be addressed by training, the trainees themselves report improvements in performance as an unplanned

Figure 9

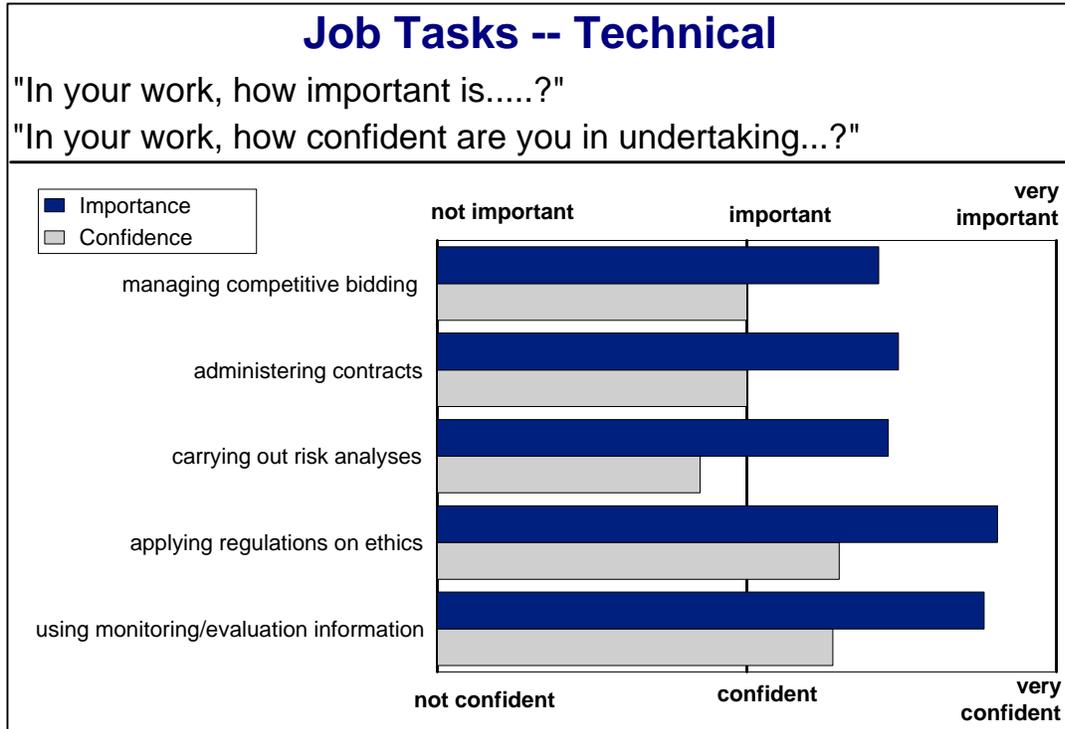


Figure 10

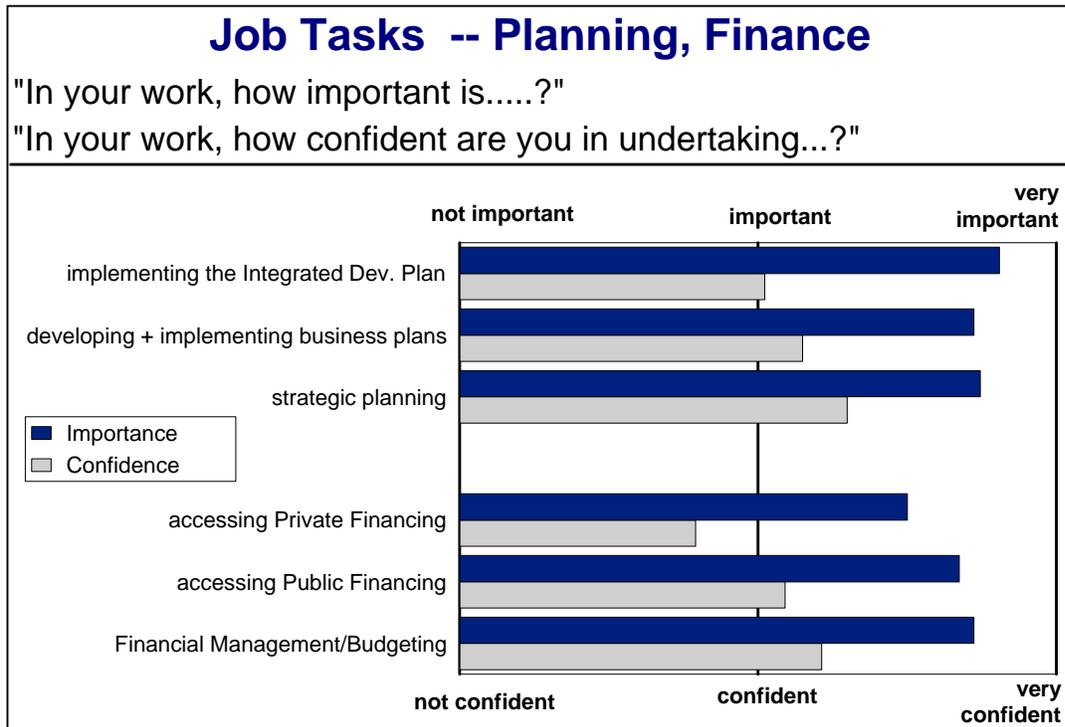
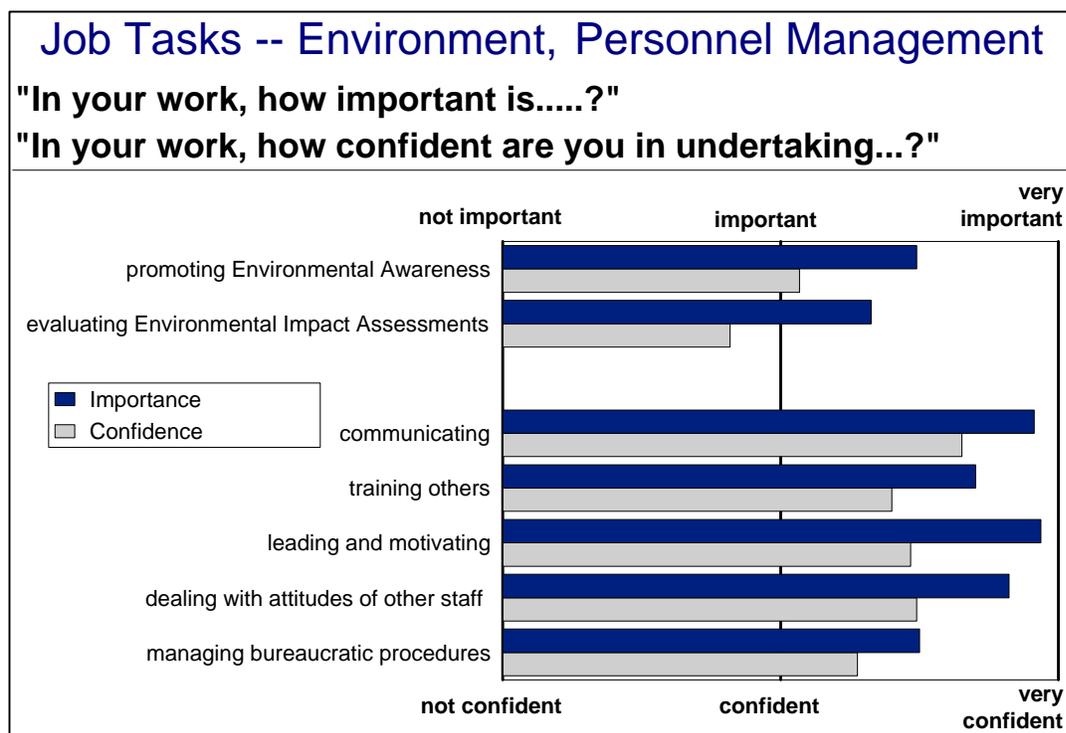


Figure 11



result of training. This further suggests that more targeted and specific training could have an even greater pay-off in terms of gains in job and organizational performance.

**4.3.3 SO6: Findings from the “Training Results” survey**

Sixty individuals responded to the “training results” survey from SO6 programs – 9 grantee representatives, 7 supervisors, and 44 trainees. More than one-third of these were from ICDA, with the remainder divided between the remaining groups (see Table 7). Because the numbers of respondents associated with individual organizations was so small, it was not statistically significant to undertake analysis of responses by course or organization. However, the aggregated results do reveal some general patterns which should be of use to USAID in its programming.

**Table 7. SO6: Breakdown of respondents by grantee**

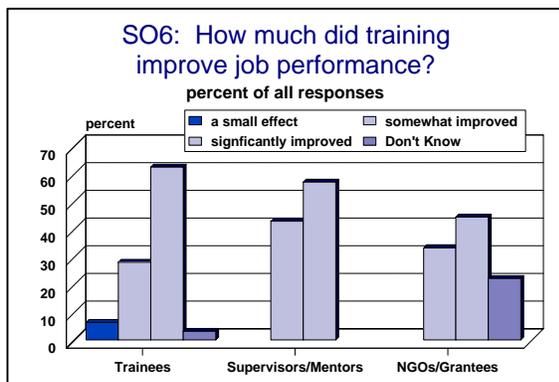
	NGO Representatives	Supervisors	Trainees	TOTAL
U. Witwatersrand	1	0	4	5
Kwanaloga	1	2	9	12
INSA	1	1	2	4
ICMA	1	2	6	9
WESSA	1	0	8	9
ICDA	4	2	15	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	9	7	44	60

Effect of training on individual or organizational performance

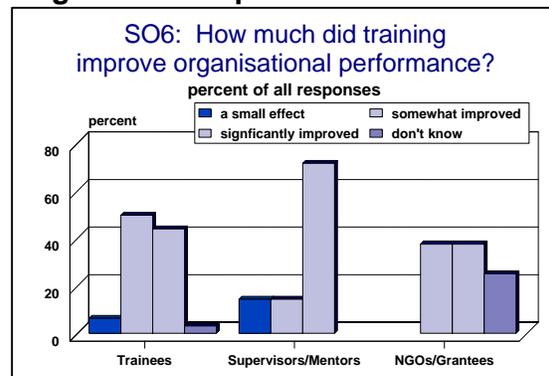
Figure 12 and 13 show the respondents’ views on the degree to which USAID-sponsored training generally impacted on individual and organizational performance. What is most notable about the two sets of results is how different the NGO responses are from the trainee and supervisor/mentor responses. It appears that many NGO representatives just don’t know the real impact of their training on the individuals’ work or organization. This is consistent with data presented in section 4.3.1 above on grantees’ reporting of training results – because there are no results reported, NGOs have no clear understanding of the true results at job and organizational level.

The figures also show that more trainees and supervisors believe the training improved individual performance than organizational performance. This would be expected, given that most respondents probably view the training as a means to improve the individual’s performance directly, and not the organizational performance. Nevertheless, many respondents indeed report that the training contributed to significant improvements or efficiencies in the functioning of the (parent) organization.

**Figure 12. SO6 – Effect of training on job performance**



**Figure 13. SO6 – Effect of training on organizational performance**



The above figures also indicate that a considerable number of respondents assess the degree of change attributed to training as only “somewhat improved”. This more guarded response would seem to indicate that there are other factors which determine and impact on individual and organizational performance levels. This in turn suggests that training is not necessarily the (only) solution for addressing all performance gaps. Other interventions (e.g. career development, performance incentives, change in management style) may also be relevant to addressing the individual/organizational performance gap(s).

For each performance level (both individual and organizational) the team clustered the various specific skills into performance areas which are highlighted in Figure 14 and Figure 15 below. When asked on which areas of performance the training had the greatest effect, grantees tended to indicate higher rates (i.e. greater impact) for both job and organizational improvement than trainees or supervisors although these differences are not statistically significant. Grantee representatives may believe that their courses are having a quantitatively greater impact than they actually have, perhaps because they are not as close to the work of the trainees and are not quite clear or sure of the magnitude of the impact their training is having on performance.

Regarding the areas of improvement, there is close agreement between the grantees and trainees/supervisors on the rank order of the areas which have been most and least affected by training. The only area of true difference is found in Figure 14 where grantees ranked ‘improved communications’ much higher than the trainees/supervisors.

Training participant performance details

Twenty five job skills typical to local government managers were highlighted for special enquiry (see questions 8 – 33 in the “training results” questionnaire). The rationale for looking at these in more depth was to try to measure exact job functions which may have improved as a result of training (rather than the general functions listed in Figure 14 and Figure 15 below).

**Figure 14**



**Figure 15**



Figure 16 through Figure 19 show that most respondents report that some job skills (particularly the more traditional planning and management skills) have been positively affected by training, while others have not been well addressed (particularly the “newer” activities related to MSPs and private financing of urban development activities).

The consistency between these results and the results of the Rustenburg data set is encouraging. What emerges is a general pattern of positive self-reported data on improved job skills which have resulted from training. In those areas where training has not had as much emphasis, such as MSPs, etc., there is less confidence noted in the Rustenburg data and less self-reporting of improvements in the main questionnaire. This consistency strengthens the validity of the finding that training has had a (self-reported) positive impact on job performance.

Interestingly, in contrast to the pattern of responses obtained in Figure 14 and Figure 15 above, Figure 16 through Figure 19 show fewer grantee representatives than supervisors/trainees reporting that key SO6 skills had improved as a result of training. This is the reverse of the pattern in the tables where grantees were almost twice as likely to claim that their training had improved job performance and organizational performance. A possible explanation is that some grantee representatives did not complete section 3 of the “training results” questionnaire (where the job task details were noted) and therefore the frequency of “yes” for the group is much lower.

Figure 16

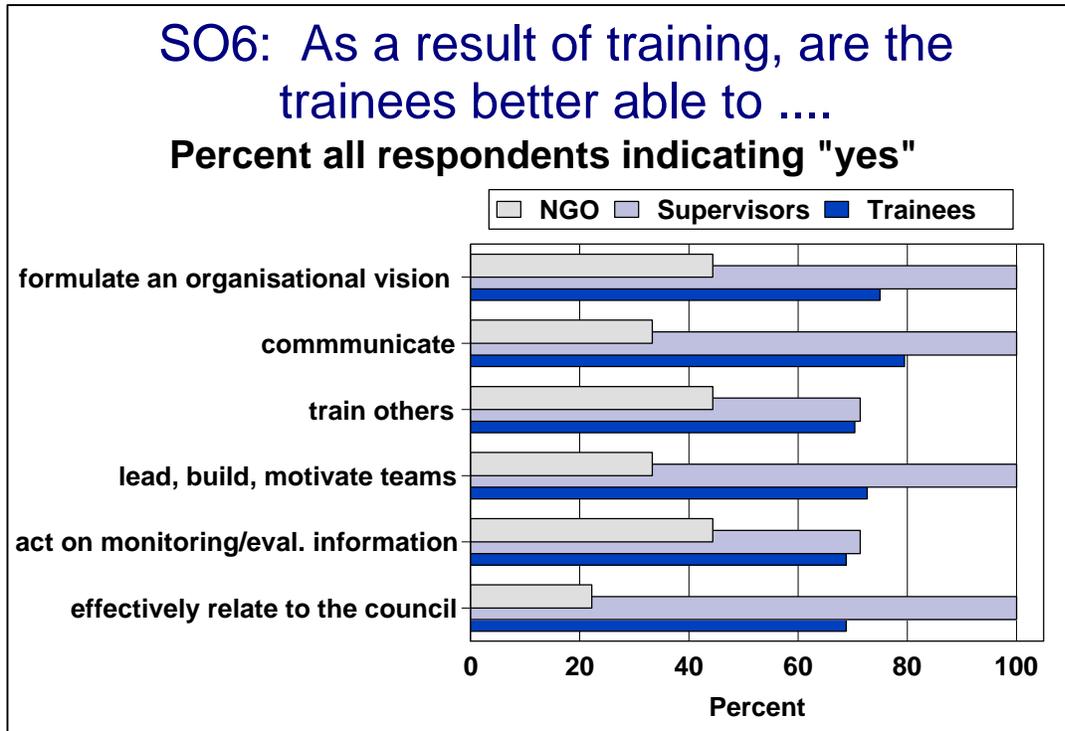


Figure 17

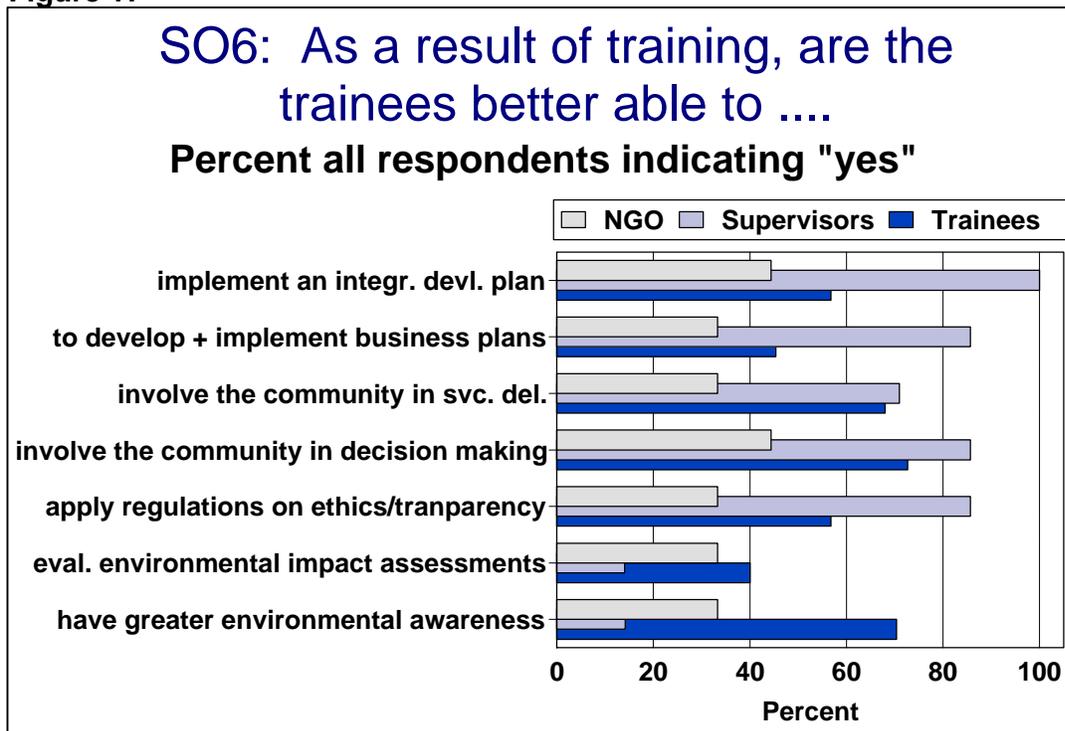


Figure 18

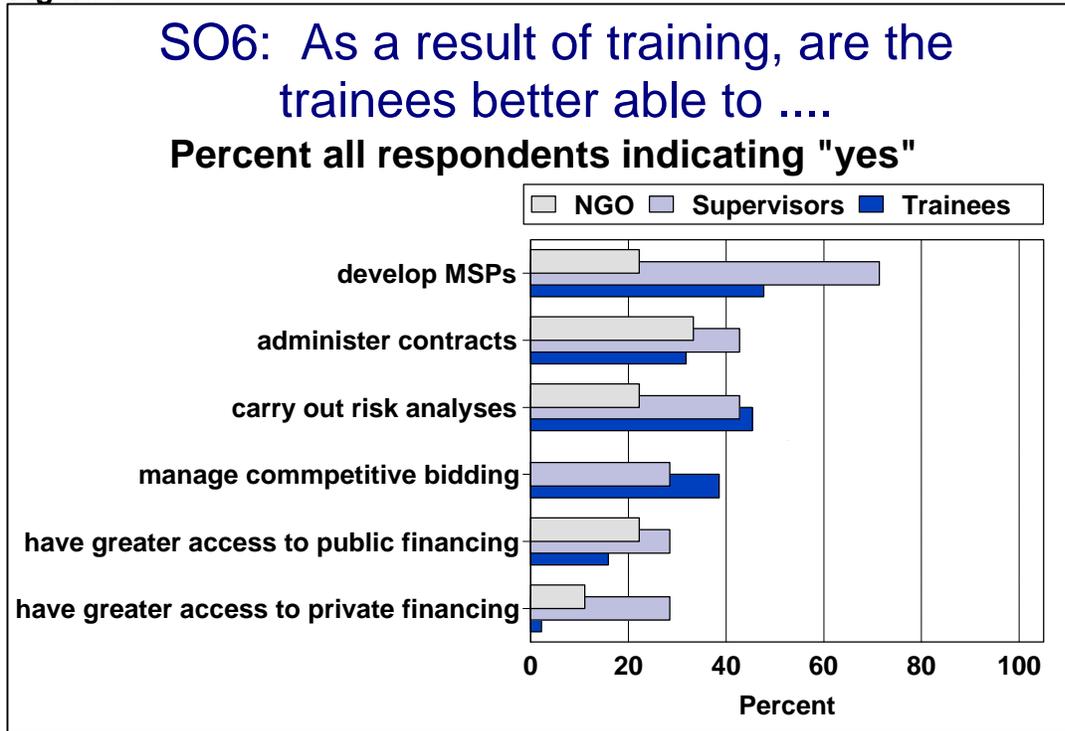
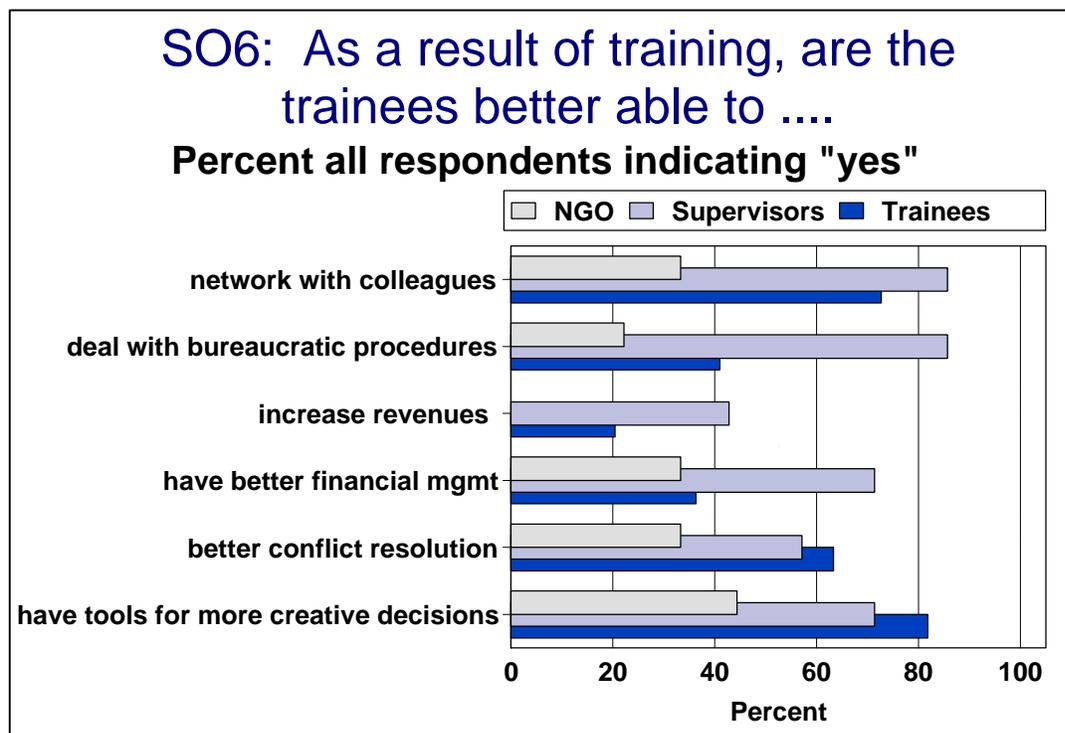


Figure 19



Another notable pattern in the data is the fact that more supervisors than trainees were likely to say “yes” to the improvement in most job skills. The team has not been able to identify a reason for this particular pattern of answers.

#### 4.4 Overall patterns seen in both data sets

- By and large, most of the grantees found it quite difficult to articulate their training objectives in terms of the individual and organizational performance changes that they were pursuing. They could easily describe the learning (level 2) objectives of the program, but at levels 3 and 4, no grantee aside from IFESH was able to describe the true individual and organizational performance gaps to be addressed (aside from general descriptions such as “capacity building” or “empowerment” or “building confidence”<sup>12</sup>). This is largely due to lack of a formal and critical needs assessment to identify individual and organizational performance gaps prior to designing the training program or authorizing the grant award.
- Even though the NGO representatives can’t articulate what they are trying to achieve, there is feedback from the trainees themselves (and some of their supervisors/mentors) that certain level 3 and level 4 functions are being positively affected by the training.
- Supervisors and mentors are not always aware of the skills which trainees have gained through training, and this may mean that these skills will not be put to full use at the individual or organizational level.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

One of the most salient conclusions of this study is that the basic concepts and importance of the strategic training model are not well understood, most likely because the concepts have been insufficiently disseminated both within USAID and among its partners. This is evident by the lack of awareness of what might constitute relevant performance objectives and performance measures in the training programs examined in this study.

An equally salient conclusion is that it is extremely difficult to conduct after-the-fact analyzes to elucidate specific job or organizational results emanating from training where performance objectives are not defined from the very beginning. In the absence of reliable and valid performance indicators, analyzes of this kind rely mainly on self-reported or qualitative information which is difficult to validate.

Nevertheless, the above discussion of findings shows that despite the difficulties in establishing and measuring impact of training on performance, there is self-reported evidence that some positive effects are occurring. Training appears to be associated with increased confidence, and reportedly better functional skills in the areas addressed by training. The converse of this is also true – where there has been less training, there is less reported confidence and less reported improvement in functioning. These contrasting but related findings appear to validate the usefulness of training, assuming that the training is addressing the key individual and organizational performance gaps required to achieve the Strategic Objective. It is this assumption which could not be fully tested in

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<sup>12</sup> To be fair, most of the grantees included in this study began their USAID projects several years ago, before the strategic training model had been developed, and during a time when vague goals (such as “capacity building”) were quite acceptable.

this study, and which remains to be answered more fully by USAID itself and its partners (see discussion below on recommended indicators for SO5/SO6 programs).

The remaining discussion in this section will focus on answering research questions 5-7.

### ***5.1 What indicators should (or could) be used by SO5/SO6 and their grantees to measure the results of training?***

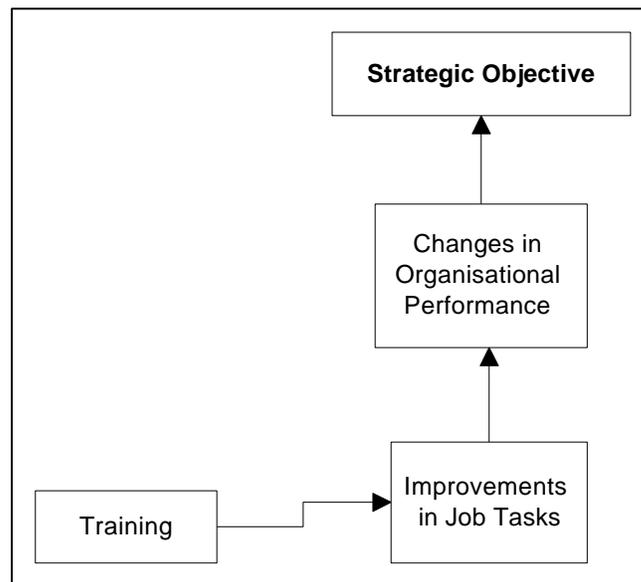
Figure 20 (page 25) depicts the relationship between training, the changes in individual/organizational performance and the Strategic Objective. The development of indicators at each level should be predicated on the performance changes desired and their link to the strategic objective. The basic denominator, however, should be defined “job skills” targeted by the training, which have to result in desirable organizational changes which ultimately contribute to enhanced delivery of services which is the focus of the SO. These job skills must thus be relevant to both the organizational performance gaps which are being addressed as well as to the SO itself – in other words, there is no point in USAID financing training if it doesn’t have a clear link to the SO, even if it leads to overall organizational improvement.

The integrity of the link between the organizational performance changes and the strategic objective can often be compromised if training design is not well thought out in advance. To illustrate, consider the case of one IFESH participating organisation which reportedly had no intention of initiating services to HDPs! In this example, the USAID-financed training will address key individual and organisational performance gaps, but will never lead to achievement of the SO because the organisation is not committed to the link to the SO – only to its own organisational development. For this organisation, indicator data at levels 1, 2, and 3 would possibly show success, but level 4 measures would never show improvement for this particular grantee – not because the training was inadequate, but because the organisation had no intention of serving HDPs. By not ensuring in advance that the link between each level is sound, the training does not lead to the desired result.

### ***5.2 How can monitoring/evaluating/reporting of training be generally improved?***

The results of this study confirm the findings from earlier work done by Macro/PME which found that USAID/SA’s monitoring of training is still in its infancy and that this monitoring function should be strengthened. (Macro/PME; 1998)

Most grantees are presently only reporting on input indicators (e.g. numbers of trainees per course, some gender information, etc), and satisfaction data (level 1 data). Aside from IFESH reporting on learning (level 2 data), very little data on the other levels of the model are presently being reported on by grantees.

**Figure 20 Relationship between Training, Performance Changes and achieving the SO**

As shown in Table 8 (on page 26), collecting information at higher levels of the model becomes more difficult and expensive, but higher level data are the most valuable and powerful information for assessing results. It is more difficult and expensive, therefore, for the grantees to monitor and report on higher levels of the model. Nevertheless, USAID/SA should (at a minimum) require from all *existing grantees* that monitoring and reporting of training be done at level 2 “learning” data. This means all grantees will have to measure pre-training and post-training knowledge levels. Such measures will enable both the grantee and USAID to better track the immediate impact of training. Some organizations already have this information and are reporting on it (e.g. IFESH), while others have the information but are not reporting on it (e.g. Kwanaloga and the University of the Witwatersrand). Still others don’t even define the precise learning to be achieved by the training.

Where feasible, and where performance changes can realistically be expected, measures of job performance changes should be collected by and demanded from existing grantees. Obviously, this will be easier and more appropriate for organizers of long-term, part-time courses or those courses with mentoring programs than for organizations who conduct one-off short-term workshops which are primarily geared to raising awareness.

To achieve these improvements, individual grant agreements will have to be revised to require grantees to first define the learning, job skills, and organizational functions to be addressed by training, and second, to define the indicators to be used at each of these levels for reporting on change. The workload associated with amending these grants may comprise a temporary “cost” to the mission, but it should have enormous benefits in terms of judging training provider performance and contributions to the achievement of the SO.

USAID/SA should demand from all *new grantees* that they monitor and report on levels 3 and 4 data. This requirement will, if it does not involve a full needs analysis, at least necessitate reflection on the specific performance gaps which are to be addressed and the type of changes which USAID/SA and grantees are seeking to bring about.

**Table 8. The Strategic Training Model for Monitoring Results**

<b>LEVELS</b>	<b>VALUE OF INFORMATION</b>	<b>POWER TO SHOW RESULTS</b>	<b>DIFFICULTY OF ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>HOW TO MONITOR</b>	<b>WHO SHOULD MONITOR</b>
1 – Satisfaction	Least valuable	Least power	Easy	Simple questions for all trainees	Training provider
2 – Learning				Test appropriate to knowledge, skills, attitudes being transferred. Majority of trainees should be tested.	Training provider, contractor, or third party.
3 – Application / Behavior Change				Will vary depending on types of application sought. Should be reliable and easy to collect. Not all trainees may be surveyed, but some monitoring should take place in the majority of workplaces affected.	Grantee, contractor, beneficiary, or third party
4 – Organizational Change	Most valuable	Most power	Difficult	Monitoring of organizational changes may also be required for other purposes. Multiple needs for this information will influence the type and level of monitoring planned.	Grantee, contractor, beneficiary, or third party

Adapted from Otero (1997) and USAID/G/HCD/HETS (1997).

*New grant agreements* will need to incorporate more specific instructions on the type of monitoring which is required. Moreover, USAID/SA may need to take appropriate action, if need be, to facilitate and/or enforce adequate monitoring of training results. Mobilizing technical assistance to help grantees develop relevant performance measures is just one example of what may be relevant support in this context.

Finally, the mission should note that higher-order measures which capture the results of training are not just collected to document the changes which have taken place, but also to measure the “pay-off” of training:

“By the time the evaluation process reaches this (highest) level, we can assume that the training was successful, the participants are applying what they have learned and an evaluator has identified and recorded the extent to which changes have taken place in the workplace. The aim of ... determining the evaluation payoff is then to assess the value that these changes have brought to the organization and whether this value was worth the effort given the time and resources expended” (Otero, 1997).

If this is the approach taken by the mission and its partners in monitoring and evaluation of training, it will assist all organizations in establishing even greater accountability for the program and its results in general, and for the role and contribution of USAID/SA-supported training in particular.

### **5.3 *To what extent do the grantees’ training methodologies achieve the four levels specified in the USAID strategic training model?***

It would appear that certain training models might be more conducive to achieving individual performance changes and organizational performance changes. Short-term training programs which are (i) structured in modules and are part-time, and/or (ii) have mentoring built into their programs are likely to have greater potential for achieving performance changes. These courses could be more successful because they either provide the participants with opportunities to practice what they’ve learned, and/or provide built-in oversight and supervision for utilizing new skills.

In contrast, one-off, two or three day workshops or seminars generally are less likely to promote true skills building. This would particularly seem true for the “networking” or “information-sharing” type of workshops conducted by some of the SO6 grantees. This is not to say that these workshops do not have value or could not achieve learning and performance changes if they were structured to do so. Rather, that they would less likely achieve job performance or organizational performance changes compared to other models. In fact, such activities should probably not be viewed as “training” per se, but rather as information-sharing seminars which do not have explicit skills building objectives.

To test these assumptions, we analyzed the responses of participants from on-going short-term courses against the responses of participants in one-off workshops on their scores for individual performance changes and organizational performance changes. Contrary to what we expected, there was no statistically significant difference in the views on the degree of change in job performance (question 4 in the “training needs” questionnaire) or, in the case of SO6 respondents, to their responses on the 25 job skill areas. Participants from one-off workshops had the same views on changes in individual performance as participants in on-going courses. One possible explanation for the lack of a statistically significant difference is the small sample size (N=38). Another may be that the differences in these responses may only emerge after the completion of the on-going short-term course.

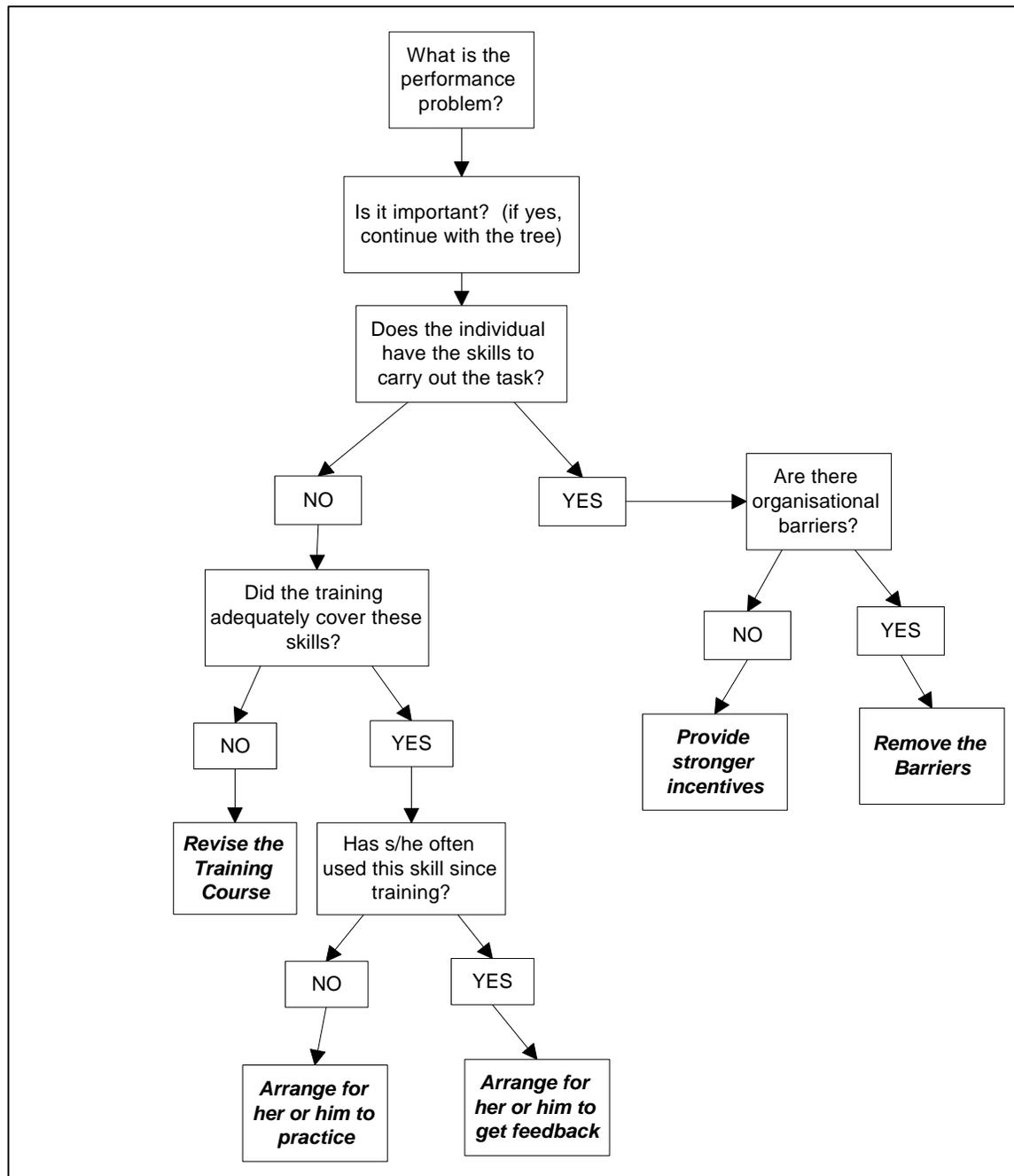
In the area of organizational improvement (question 5 in the “training needs” questionnaire), we find the opposite results than would be expected. Significant higher scores were given by participants from one-off workshops compared to participants from on-going short courses ( $p=.004$ ) for the impact of training on organizational functioning. This means that participants from one-off workshops report that their training had much greater improvements on the functioning of their organization than participants from on-going courses. This is the exact opposite of what we would have expected. One explanation is again the small sample size. Another is that the participants from on-going courses may not realize the organizational effects of their training until the training is completed and more time is given to applying their skills.

While these results need to be viewed with caution, we encourage further examination of this topic to determine if there is indeed a difference between the two models in their influence on job/organizational performance. Such data would be useful to the mission and other funders in determining the cost-effectiveness of various training models.

## 6. LESSONS LEARNED

- Detailed analyzes of performance gaps (either individual or organizational) are critical in determining if training is the appropriate intervention for improving performance.
- Each stage of the training must be designed to contribute to individual/organizational performance changes – from defining outcomes for each level to be achieved by training, to participant selection, to measuring achievement of each level of the model.
- Training programs financed by USAID must assure that their desired performance changes are linked to the training program and linked to the Strategic Objective under which they fall.
- For each training program, there should be clear indication of who is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on the data for each of the four levels of the model.
- It is difficult, if not impossible, to accurately measure the individual and organizational results of training if these have not been specified in advance. Monitoring and evaluation of results therefore has to be factored in at the time of designing the program.
- When retrospectively examining the impact of training on the performance of an individual, the decision tree indicated in Figure 21 (page 29) can be helpful in determining whether the training delivered was the best solution for addressing that particular performance problem. The tree can also be used for determining *a priori* whether provision of training to an individual is indeed the most relevant intervention to address her or his performance problems.
- There are many stages in the training cycle where the application of distinct evaluative measures is appropriate. Table 9 (page 30) lists various types of evaluative activities and their purpose.

**Figure 21: Decision Tree for Determining (the Potential) Impact of Training on Individual Performance.**



**Table 9: Evaluative Activities applicable during the Training Cycle, by Type, Purpose and Action**

Type of Evaluation	Purpose	Action
Needs assessment	To identify the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed for acceptable job performance	Design training program accordi
Baseline evaluation (pre-training test)	To determine the trainees' levels of KAS before training	Keep record to compare with res training
Input evaluation	To assess the elements associated with the training: costs, selection of trainers and trainees, curriculum plans, venue, materials	Keep track of all inputs so that tl can be used to determine the pay
Process evaluation	To conduct assessments periodically during the training	Adapt the schedule, content, or a accordingly
Outcome evaluation (post-training test)	To assess new or improved KAS after training	Determine whether trainees have per expectation. If not, find out v
Impact evaluation	To determine the effect of the training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Individual performance</li> <li>•Organizational performance</li> <li>•Program performance</li> </ul>	Determine whether the program achieving the desired results or v required or not
Determine Pay-off	Assess the pay-off from the training investment viz results achieved and determine whether this value was worth the effort given the time and resources expended.	Decide whether to discontinue, c the training intervention

Source: Adapted from the The Family Planning Manager. 1996

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct organizational performance assessments before designing and funding training programs. This will allow for the training to be more readily focused on those individual and organizational performance gaps which can be remedied by training (and presumably help to avoid wasting training efforts on problems which cannot be remedied by training) and which are directly related to achieving the Strategic Objective.
- Incorporate a requirement for reporting on performance indicators into all contracts/grants/agreements.
- Enforce monitoring, review the validity of the data collected on a regular basis and ensure that training programs are adjusted as required.
- Incorporating process evaluation-type activities in the design of training programs (e.g. mentoring, giving trainees exercises to apply what they have learned, conducting structured report-back sessions) enhances the chance that newly acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes will be applied. In addition, these mechanisms serve to signal any potential performance problems at any stage. In fact, the application of specific evaluative measures is appropriate throughout the training cycle.
- Given grantee interest in looking at this issue further, provide grantees with special funding and/or technical assistance to establish proper monitoring systems and do in-depth studies of the results of their individual training programs. Macro/PME would be well placed to provide this type of assistance. IFESH, Chemonics/IP3 and the UCT program are examples of grantees who are conducting training programs which could benefit from this type of assistance. Ntinga Micro-enterprises Support Project has also expressed an interest in assistance for setting up an internal M & E system.
- Disseminate the Best Practices Series within the Mission, and among those partners who are heavily involved in training.
- Organize training workshops with a strong practical focus to get participants to understand the value of the model as well as ensure a transfer of skills in developing appropriate indicators for measuring level 3 and 4 information.
- Support the development of a generic “toolkit” to measure the results of training. Such a “toolkit” should include examples of *instruments* for measuring training impact and examples of training impact *indicators*. The “toolkit” would assist both USAID, as well as its partners and training providers in evaluating achievement of their training against the four levels of the strategic training model.

## **ANNEX C – LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED**

### USAID:

Ms. Carleene Dei – SO6 Team Leader  
Mr. Russell Hawkins – SO6 Team Member  
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Mr. Jim Schill – SO5 Team Member  
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### Grantee Representatives:

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Ms. Monique van Stander, ABSA Human Resources Development Consultant  
Mr. Sam Tsima, ABSA Group Consultant: Constructive Employment and Development

**ANNEX E – LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED**

[N.B.: this list of documents does not include the individual grant agreements (and relevant amendments) between USAID and the grantees which were reviewed as a part of this study.]

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