

CONCEPT PAPER
Building on OSY Training for Enhanced Job Security and
Professionalization in the Construction Sector

1. Background

The EEA project nearing completion by ALTERPLAN in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Philippines, **Civil Trades Training in Conflict Affected Areas in Mindanao**, has generated significant interest from various development groups. Including the ILO-sponsored replication of the training program for oil spill-affected municipalities in the Visayas island of Guimaras, the results of the first year of the project are as follows:

- **305 disadvantaged youth have completed training** in various combinations of the modules on occupational safety and health, workplace values, culture of peace, skills for conventional building systems, skills for non-conventional building systems used by Habitat, and introduction to entrepreneurship.
- 267 have been assisted to take the TESDA trade tests and **265 have obtained qualifications** ranging from Certificates of Competency, to NC-1 General Masonry to NC-2 General Masonry. (20 finishers in Mindanao will take the tests in the next few weeks; 16 were trained in non-conventional building systems for which there are as yet no trade tests given; 2 from Guimaras did not show up for the tests; 2 from Mindanao failed the NC-1 tests)
- **More than 100 graduates of the program have been given employment** in various Habitat and Habitat-affiliated projects after finishing training.
- An initial group of **11 recruits from the ranks of existing Habitat workers have been trained to assist in training.**
- Provincial, municipal and barangay **local governments have provided various forms of support** in terms of training facilities, infrastructure support, provision of work gear, facilitating parent involvement
- **Private sector construction companies** have provided resources for training in steel frame building systems and employment for a small initial number of training graduates.
- The **Association of Construction and Informal Workers** and the **Polytechnic University of the Philippines** have provided resources for module development.
- The **UN Act for Peace Programme** has provided additional funding for food, starter tools and personal protective equipment, and travel support for the deployment of training graduates to their workplaces.
- The **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** has provided additional funding for training operations in General Santos City, module development and trainers training for entrepreneurship, and training for out-of-school youth from Guimaras province.

Aside therefore from generating the training output of youth with certified skills and the basic construction skills training program, the project is in the process of realizing an opportunity to structure longer-term collaboration among groups with interests converging in youth training and employment. The **Building and Wood Workers International (BWI)** and its local formation, the **National Union of Building and Construction Workers (NUBCW)** are also very much interested in partnering to provide support to the construction workforce. In January 2007, BWI sponsored an assembly of HABILAT workers, including a number of OSY graduates of the civil trades training, to stimulate the formation of a primary organization of HABILAT workers. The initial organizational acronym NAHHB was agreed on in that assembly.

2. Strategies for the next phase

In ongoing discussions of ALTERPLAN, HABILAT, Consuelo Foundation and International Youth Foundation representatives with the above mentioned organizations, the emerging **strategies** for addressing the stakeholders' goals are:

- **Support for the organizing of building industry workers nationwide.**

The workers organization is seen as the formation that will advance job security and greater socio-economic benefit for its members. Through membership in the workers organization,

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the project's training graduates are linked to a potentially more long-term grouping that will operate various mechanisms for seeking employment and entrepreneurial activities for members. Workplace safety, workers insurance and continuing education and certification of workers will be among the organization's concerns.

Organizing may be done by firm, by industry, or by community.

- **Cooperation towards the creation of a training center for building industry workers.**

The envisioned training center will formalize through a consortium the links of institutions with an interest in continuously upgrading the building industry work force. Eventually, the members of the consortium working for the creation of a training center for the building industry should include potential employers or networks of employers, training or academic institutions, workers organizations, youth development advocates, workers development advocates, and workers certification agencies.

To contribute to addressing the sustainability of a training center, the center should be geared to respond to the broad base of construction industry workers (currently numbering roughly 1.7 million in the Philippines) who will have various types and levels of training needs. Young workers who are entering the work force for the first time are expected to be a big part of the clientele of the training center. However, the training center should also be able to respond to employers' needs for upgrading currently employed workers for greater competitiveness in their services.

3. Components

In turn, the following **components** are expected to contribute to the above strategies:

- Skills training, certification and upgrading of skills – to allow increasing numbers of workers to join the ranks of organized industry; to professionalize the industry and contribute to job security
- Activities for seeking employment and entrepreneurship activities – linking and working with firms and industry groups that have an interest in hiring trained and certified workers
- Organizing of workers – to promote workers' interests in the long term and structure placement and entrepreneurial activities among the workers
- Groundwork for a training alliance – to build a wider base of stakeholders and advocates who can support the work of training the OSY and integrating them in the ranks of the productive sectors

These components will be expressed or implemented in various ways in the different regions of the Philippines. This proposal to EEA through Consuelo Foundation is being submitted principally for the work in Mindanao, although for some activities like alliance building, the impact will be on a national level.

4. Objectives

A one-year extension of the engagement with Education and Employment Alliance (EEA) is being proposed to consolidate the gains of the current project and refine the instruments and methodologies that were used in the first year of OSY training in the civil trades. In the projected comprehensive collaboration with other groups briefly discussed above, ALTERPLAN-HABITAT-Consuelo is still seen to provide the training backbone, while other collaborators add to the other necessary complementing components.

Specifically, an extension with EEA is expected to achieve the following:

- Widen the reach of the training program by:

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- Serving other regions in the conflict affected and vulnerable areas of Mindanao
- Serving youth workers in HABITAT's project areas nationwide who have some work experience but no training
- Other training expansion areas like training for women, training in areas outside of the EEA priority regions, and training for HABITAT workers outside of the youth age bracket, are projected to be taken up by other stakeholders.
- Contribute to workers' job security by:
 - Designing a ladderized program for workers' continuing education
 - Creating opportunities for training and certification of higher-skilled workers (i.e, lead men, foremen) who could provide guidance and supervision to the basic skills graduates. (Higher skilled workers would be those already gainfully employed, but lacking in formal training and certification. The potential for dissonance in the workplace is large with a combination of schooled but inexperienced workers, and experienced but unschooled foremen. Ensuring at least some common values and vocabulary for them will help the new workers adjust better and learn more easily at the workplace.)
 - Forging partnerships for training design, OJT and employment with industry groups other than HABITAT

5. Activities of proposed one-year extension period

The next one-year period requires effort and progress to be made in the various components listed above. For the first three components where the training organizations have the principal role to play, the projected major activities for the year are:

Training and certification

Review/enhancement of current modules and design of additional modules – outline the possible training track(s) for a construction worker all the way up to construction management and determine up to what level is not currently addressed by other institutions like the Construction Management Development Foundation and technical schools; enhance the integration of life skills, culture of peace, Habitat philosophy and values, and living out workplace values in the curriculum; enhance the basic skills training program for participants with some work experience but no training; design at least the next program level for lead men; design an appropriate module for women and determine suitable workplace conditions for women in the building industry

Conduct of training and assistance for TESDA test-taking - replicate the basic skills training program in priority areas identified by the stakeholders with enhanced implementation of on-the-job training and apprenticeship arrangements with employers; provide access to TESDA certification at least at NC 1 level for OSY with previously no knowledge of the civil; prepare as many HABITAT workers as possible for certification; provide access to TESDA certification up to NC 2 levels for HABITAT workers with adequate experience and knowledge; implement gender-responsive training for female OSY participants

Entrepreneurship and employment-seeking activities

Data banking of members of the workers pool (including mass trade testing) – to track the graduates and members of the pool in general and monitor their training status, employment and socio-economic conditions. The system will be developed by the project for eventual turn-over to the workers organization. The workers organization will maintain the databank as a roster of members of the work pool who can be deployed for job orders, as well as participate in entrepreneurial activities like fabrication of blocks, pre-cast door and window jambs, and other building elements.

Dialogs with prospective employers – present the workers pool to industry groups as a viable solution to their needs for a skilled and stable workforce; assist the pool in negotiating fair,

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mutually beneficial and sustainable work conditions; efforts will be made to identify industry groups in the area or region of the participants' origin, so as not to exacerbate migration and the social problems it may cause. The dialogs will seek to: 1) involve industry partners in curriculum design to ensure the appropriateness of skills training to employers' needs; 2) involve industry partners in targeting and matching training sites/participants with eventual employers and places of work before the start of training. Partners to be sought in these dialogs will include national networks like the Philippine Constructors Association, key institutions in Mindanao like the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCO), and private sector corporations.

Organizing of workers

Orientation of workers regarding NUBCW and NAHHB – NUBCW and HABITAT will be primarily responsible in presenting the formations and its objectives to the workers.

Training of worker-leaders for organizational development – While NUBCW, HABITAT and BWI will again be primarily responsible for this component, ALTERPLAN may provide technical support in designing and implementing a leadership training program suitable for workers organizations in the building trades.

Groundwork for a training consortium

Alliance building activities will seek to:

- Place the workers in an organizational framework that will provide them long-term socio-economic support and sustain their significant transformation from being OSY to being productive community members
- Support the initiative of various institutions to operationalize a consortium for training that will carry on the project's objectives in the long-term

Alliance events, meetings and planning sessions, presentations to private corporations and other stakeholders

Applications to TESDA for accreditation of modules – propose Training Regulations / certification guidelines to TESDA beyond NC-1 and NC-II; propose Training Regulations for non-conventional building systems used by HABITAT (steel framing, CIB, CEB)

Development of cadre of certified master trainers capable of providing quality, multi-level training in the civil trades – add to the number of trainers currently available and equipped to handle training in the building trades on different levels in both classroom and hands-on situations; prepare the trainers for certification. If for any reason trainers' certification is not possible to obtain within the one-year proposed extension, the project will ensure trade certification for the trainers at least at the NC2 level.

6. Target output

Training and certification

No. of training course finishers

For Mindanao/EEA	Total of 280 broken down as follows: 160 OSY (zero knowledge; male/female) 120 OSY (some knowledge/experience as existing HABITAT workers)
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For the Visayas and Luzon/NCR, the target is to at least match the number of beneficiaries in Mindanao with contributions from ILO, BWI and other institutions.

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Another group of target beneficiaries for the training is existing HABILITAT workers above the 17-24 years age range. HABILITAT is sourcing funds from a private group for this purpose. HABILITAT currently taps about 1,000 workers nationwide regularly for its projects. The target is to provide at least 10% of this number in the next year with access to training and TESDA certification.

In addition, HABILITAT has already started to roll out the Occupational Safety and Health module in its project areas, starting with its project in Bicol. This is part of Module 1 of the Civil Trades Training Course.

Percentage of TESDA passers – at least 75% of finishers

Entrepreneurship and employment-seeking activities

No. of finishers placed in apprenticeship – at least 50% of finishers

Initial agreements with employers other than HABILITAT to accept apprentices from OSY training – arrangements to involve other employers in training design and formulation of OJT/apprenticeship conditions

Systems developed in NUBCW/NAHNB for engaging in economic activities – documented set of institutional arrangements that will allow NUBCW/NAHNB to negotiate and initiate economic activities for members. BWI/NUBCW will take the lead in this, possibly with support from ILO.

Finishers linked to micro-enterprise/micro-finance opportunities – OSY NAHNB members who have benefited from NUBCW/NAHNB systems for engaging in economic activities. Financing from Act for Peace for possible implementation of this component in Mindanao will also be explored.

Organizing of workers

BWI/NUBCW will take the lead in ensuring the following:

No. of finishers organized in NUBCW/NAHNB

Core of functioning leaders in NAHNB

Participation of NAHNB in NUBCW/BWI initiatives

Formalization of NAHNB as a primary organization of workers

Groundwork for a training consortium

A Memorandum of Understanding signed by various stakeholders – for collaboration in the promotion of OSY education and employment; and for participation in a consortium for training in particular as an expression of the multi-stakeholder collaboration

Formation of an ad hoc governing body for the training consortium

A strategic plan for the formation and operationalization of the training consortium

Library of accredited/pilot-tested modules and related resources for civil trades training

In addition to the basic six-week course consisting of Modules 1 to 4, a target of this extension phase is to outline the design of a ladderized skills training program from basic building trade skills to construction project management, and to identify institutions that are already offering modules or courses within the ladderized program.

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The six-week course will also be reviewed and made suitable for the target beneficiaries with particular characteristics like OSY with some work experience, women, and workers who can be trained to act as lead men or mentors to training graduates in the apprenticeship stage.

Cadre of master trainers/mentors – at least 20 (male/female)

7. Timeframe

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Design and installation of workers database				
Design of ladderized program and development of new modules				
Application for accreditation of new modules w/ TESDA				
Master trainers training				
Conduct of training for more advanced modules				
Conduct of training for basic skills modules				
Dialogs with prospective industry partners for training design and employment				

8. Resource requirements for Mindanao-related activities

- Based on discussions with the stakeholders, possible resource contributions from organizations other than Consuelo are the following: Data banking
- Training for female OSY
- Training in priority regions/provinces of other funders

The proposal for an EEA extension seeks funding for:

- Design and application for certification of new modules
- Trainers training
- OSY training and certification activities
- Dialogs with employers
- Alliance building activities