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**Aims and contents of educational offers, as well as
reflections on their identification, formulation and realisation**

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Vocational education and training (VET) is a sector where Swiss development cooperation in general and Swiss Institutions like Swisscontact and Helvetas have developed strong expertise in various countries worldwide. In the large majority of cases, these initiatives cater mostly to the needs of the urban areas or - at best - the population in the immediate catchments areas around more rural centers. Yet today, large parts of the rural population in many countries remain excluded from the VET services.

It is normally in rural areas where the poverty situation is at its worst. Since the UN Millennium Agenda 2010, poverty alleviation is one of the major issues on the agenda of development countries and agencies. For VET-sector programmes and projects, this implies that serious thought has to be given to possible ways to include rural areas in their service portfolio.

Providing training in rural areas is far from being an easy task. Just by offering training, the problem is not solved. The training, in order to change the living conditions of the rural population, needs to be of relevance and respond to their needs.

What are the aims and contents of VET offers for the rural areas?

A closer look into a few examples shows the following general aims of such offers. The major focus of promising offers is to

- maintain/increase productivity in actual activity/occupation
- provide skills to generate additional income
- provide skills to create self-employment or employment.

This finding is very general and not only valid for rural areas.

Regarding the contents the following conclusions can be made:

- First of all the skills provided by these offers have to be job or activity related and
- Second, offers that aim to provide skills to improve the livelihood of the beneficiaries by additional activities or self-employment have to include entrepreneurial skills and life skills (literacy, hygiene,).

How can educational offers for the rural areas be Identified, formulated and realised?

A closer look into a few examples shows two typical approaches:

- A top down approach, where a general need is defined (normally by the concerned authorities or by a donor agency). Afterwards a strategy or a program is developed and implemented.
- A bottom up approach, where needs are defined at the local level (normally by communities, local authorities or local NGOs). Afterwards a strategy or solution is developed and the respective program is implemented.

Both approaches have their advantages and disadvantages: A top down approach tends to be supply driven, but probably coordinated within an overall system. A bottom up approach often tends to reinvent the wheel and is normally loosely integrated in an overall system, but it derives its strengths from strong identification by the local communities.

A combination of these two approaches seems to most promising in order to develop and implement effective and efficient skills development programs and courses that can help to improve the economic situation of the rural population. A thoroughly conducted Training Needs Analysis is crucial component in the process of development of such offers. The methods applied in this process have to be tailored to the local situation (Participatory Rural Appraisal tools and techniques).

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Work Experience

Present	Project Manager Training Institute for Technical Instruction, Kathmandu, Nepal
1999 – 2000	Vice President Post Graduate Education Zürcher Hochschule Winterthur (University of applied sciences)
1997 – 1998	Dean Departement of Economics and Business Administration Fachhochschule beider Basel (University of applied sciences)
1994 –1997	Rector School of Economics and Business Administration Basel
1993 – 1994	Visiting Faculty Swiss- AIT-Vietnam Program in Ho Chi Minh City and Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok
1990 – 2002	Lecturer University of Basel (Information Management)
1985 – 1994	Director School of Business Informatics, SEBA Lucerne
1980 – 1985	Lecturer Marketing and Business Administration, SEBA Lucerne (part-time position) Director Post Graduate Education in Management for Engineers (part-time position)
1979 – 1989	Assistant Professor for Marketing and Business Administration University of Basel (part-time position)

Projects and Consulting Activities

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| 1985 – Present | Consulting Activities in Marketing, Organization and Management (Profit and Non Profit Organizations) |
| 1980 – 1982 | Audit Swiss National Science Foundation, Research Projects |
| 1979 –1982 | Research Project Labour Market Switzerland |

Education

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|------|---|
| 1979 | PhD, University of Basel (subject: Early Warning Systems in Business Planning) |
| 1975 | Graduation (lic. rer. pol.), Degree in Business Administration
University of Basel |
| 1966 | Chemical Assistant (J.R. Geigy Basel) |

Publications

About 30 Publications in Business Administration, Marketing, Research Policy and Information Management
