

Standard Summary Project Fiche – IPA centralised programmes
(Regional / Horizontal programmes; centralised National programmes)

1. Basic information

- 1.1 CRIS Number: 2007/19322**
- 1.2 Title: Further development of the education function of Tax Administration through initial training of employees**
- 1.3 ELARG Statistical code: 01.16**
- 1.4 Location: Serbia**

Implementing arrangements:

- 1.5 Contracting Authority (EC) European Commission**
- 1.6 Implementing Agency: N/A**
- 1.7 Beneficiary (including details of project manager):**
Tax Administration, Ministry of Finance

Financing:

- 1.8 Overall cost: 2 Million Euros**
- 1.9 EU contribution: 1 Million Euros**
- 1.10 Final date for contracting: 3 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement**
- 1.11 Final date for execution of contracts: 5 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement**
- 1.12 Final date for disbursements: 6 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement**

2. Overall Objective and Project Purpose

2.1 Overall Objective:

Contribute to the establishment of the client oriented an efficient Tax Administration, while maintaining and increasing the level of tax collection

2.2 Project purpose:

1. Institution building of human resources in the Tax Administration in accordance with EU best practice;
2. Increasing administrative capacities for implementation of the Tax Law, fight against corruption, cross-border crime and evasion of payment of tax obligations;
3. Improve and develop audit and collection functions within the Tax Administration of the Republic of Serbia.

2.3 Link with AP/NPAA / EP/ SAA

The activities under this fiche are directed by the demands of the European Partnership and SAA on strengthening the administrative capacity of public administration, as elaborated through the National Strategy of Public Administration Reform.

2.4 Link with MIPD

The MIPD lists the following as possible areas of intervention in the field of Public Administration reform: “Improving budget and fiscal management, enhancing control and collection capacity of the tax and customs administration, contribute to consolidating revenue collection for Serbia’s consolidated budget, make tax policy coherent at central and local levels and improve the management of expenditures.” (section 2.2.1.1., pages 15-16)

2.5 Link with National Development Plan (where applicable)

N/A

2.6 Link with national/ sectoral investment plans(where applicable)

N/A

3. Description of project

3.1 Background and justification:

The Thessaloniki Agenda, which urges countries in the region to promote the principles of transparency, accountability and sound public sector management, provides the overall strategic direction for the proposed programme in the area of general public administration reform and reform of the public finance. This is consistent with the demands of the Copenhagen Criteria, which highlights the need for an efficient and well functioning civil service and the MIP objective of developing an accountable public administration in line with EU standards. The SAP underlines the need to address civil service pay system reforms and related human resource development measures while the Country Strategy Paper calls for creation of an independent and efficient civil service.

This project proposal contains strategic direction contained in the European Partnership on strengthening of administrative capacity of public administration, elaborated through the national Strategy of Public Administration Reform. Naturally, principles of organization and functioning of public administration in EU Member States represent the main starting point and the ultimate goal the planned reform aims to achieve, so further development of education within the Tax Administration is founded on the European trend of improving the level of expertise and responsibility of the employees, starting with objective and unbiased criteria for selection of new employees based on capabilities, through permanent in-service improvement and creation of environment which is stimulating the employees’ motivation. All this is aimed at establishing the process of “knowledge management” in the Tax Administration.

In the Annual Report on the Progress of the Republic of Serbia in 2006 on the Realization of Priorities Defined by the European Partnership, in item 4.1.4., related to customs and taxes, it was stated that administrative capacities in the Tax Administration are weak, especially those in charge of collection and audit of VAT and excise duties. This reality is mainly a consequence of misbalance between the number of employees in the basic functions of tax administration and great number of tax administration activities. These problems in the area of human resources are reflected in insufficient number of high-quality and trained personnel in the head Office of the Tax Administration, as well as in insufficient number of trained and capable personnel in the affiliates and branches of the Tax Administration.

At present, current profiles of graduates from higher education institutions do not make it possible for direct inclusion of graduate economists and lawyers in performing administrative taxation functions. Therefore, there is a need for increased and improved training and instruction. The aim of this project is to provide efficient realization of the employment policy in the Tax Administration. The training must be highly specialized and organized as there is a need for shortening of the time necessary for training of the trainees for the jobs for assessing and collection of public revenues, having in mind the complexity of required knowledge and skills.

The target category of newly employed has to be trained in required skills and knowledge related to the tax material and process law, so as to be able to be included in basic functions of audit and collection.

This project will enable introduction of this category of employees into current business processes in a much shorter time, and secure systematically completed required expertise. Due to specific character of the necessary and required knowledge it is expected that, after 6 months, the newly employed in the Tax Administration will, through receiving necessary information on the tax system and procedures in the Republic of Serbia, as well as through transfer of best practices of the European tax administrations, be qualified for independent execution of tasks. In effect, this project is addressing skill gaps in a key category of the tax administration system. The target group for training will be 120 staff members.

During the initial training, the work of the participants shall be monitored by mentors in their organizational unit. After this time, participants will be qualified to work on their own. The process of organizing and realization of initial training is carried out every year, after the trainees have been employed. In this way, systematic upgrading of institutional capacities of the Tax Administration will be obtained.

The Tax Administration office has its own premises for implementation of these activities, a number of lecturers and a clear concept of the subject and contents of the training. One of the strategic aims of Tax Administration of the Republic of Serbia is to have a client-oriented administration designed as per the European standards. Therefore, it is necessary, by engaging Tax and training experts both from EU countries and Serbia, to obtain exchange of the best practice in tax related training.

3.2 Assessment of project impact, catalytic effect, sustainability and cross border impact (where applicable)

National Strategy of Serbia for Accession to the EU, Action Plan for Implementation of Priorities from the European Partnership, as well as Strategy for the Reform of Public Administration in the Republic of Serbia, are the basic national documents defining further development in the area related to Tax Administration and its employees. Primary goals the Republic of Serbia tries to achieve by reforming public administration include building of a democratic state based on the rule of law, responsibility, transparency, cost-effectiveness and efficiency, as well as building of public administration focused towards the citizens, capable of rendering high level of services. The basic principles of the reform are:

- Decentralization principle;
- Depolitisation principle;
- Professionalisation principle;

- Rationalization principle;
- Modernization principle.

Professionalisation principle implies creation of a well-trained, responsible and efficient administration and is directly linked to the depolitisation principle. In order to fulfil this principle, it is necessary to secure permanent training of personnel during their entire service, with the possibility to provide the opportunity to get additional knowledge and skills, for example on the specific rights of civil servants.

With regard to that, training and improvement of the employees aim at by-passing the differences between the current and the desired state of professional level of competence, together with continuous upgrading of the general level of administration and creation of conditions for the current position to be performed as efficiently as possible.

Public Administration Reform ultimate goal is to provide Serbia with an “instrument” to make and implement policies and reforms and to provide public services to citizens.

Tax Administration Reform in reinforcing its capacities and in ensuring tax collection contributes to the achievement of Public Finance Reforms in optimising the allocation of public resources, leading to economic development and reduction of poverty.

In 2003 Tax Administration has introduced for the first time the Communication and Education Department. In 2005 and 2006 TA has introduced positions of full time training coordinators and trainers respectively.

Furthermore, the four TA Training Centres have since 2004 hosted over 12.000 trainees and data on these trainings has been managed and processed through the TA Training Management Information System (TRMS).

TA plans to, immediately after designing the Strategy for development of TA (planned for the end 2007), proceed to preparation of Strategy for Training of its employees, which would then determine the training budget for several years.

3.3 Results and measurable indicators:

Results and measurable indicators in relation with activity 1

1. Prepared annual Training Plan and Programme
2. Prepared and printed training material
3. Prepared tests
4. Trainers trained
5. 120+ new tax personnel trained according to EU standards
6. Prepared questionnaires for the evaluation
7. Prepared Evaluation reports containing recommendations on redesign of training plan and materials
8. Fully independent inclusion of training participants into the basic tax administration functions
9. Tax inspectors qualified to independently and in a legally prescribed manner perform jobs from the competences of Tax Administration, fully respecting the taxpayers' rights.

10. Recommendations established during evaluation of the project will be included in future Annual Training Plans.

3.4 Activities:

Activity 1

- Sub-activity 1: Preparation of an Annual Training Plan and Programme for initial training, which shall have defined budget based on the expressed needs in the Tax Administration as a whole. This Annual Training Plan and Programme shall serve as standard to be rolled out by the Training and Communication Department of TA. This activity can be further broken down in the following components:
 - Preparation of needs assessment related to the training requirements in the field of initial training
 - Definition of target groups within the Tax administration
 - Definition of the training period
 - Preparation of the training programme
 - Preparation of the training plan

- Sub-activity 2: Drawing up of training material and tests and preparation of a curriculum of topical training that shall be in accordance with the standards implemented by modern tax administrations in the field of training of new employees. The curriculum of topical training shall address the place and role of tax administration, review of the tax system of Serbia, dealing with material regulations for direct and indirect taxes (VAT Law, property tax, corporate income and personal income tax) with special focus on separate tax institutes, subject of taxation, taxpayer, rate, exemptions and incentives, dealing with procedural law (the Law on tax procedure and tax administration, Law on general administrative procedure, Law on administrative lawsuit) with special emphasis on taxpayers' rights and obligations, the institute of desk and field audit and collection, measures and means of enforced collection, offences and tax crimes. Special focus would be put on elaboration of the Code of corporate taxation, by securing the best EU practice. This sub-activity shall consist of preparation of the following training modules and training material:
 - Preparation of state administration system training module
 - Preparation of tax system training module
 - Preparation of taxation forms training module
 - Preparation of tax procedures and Tax Administration Law training module (tax procedures, Tax Administration organisation, Tax Administration responsibilities, Tax Administration functions, tax offences and tax crime)
 - Preparation of administrative dispute training module
 - Preparation of Ethics Code training module
 - Preparation of Train the Trainer training module
 - Preparation of set of tests on the complete curriculum

- Sub-activity 3: Training implementation – which shall be carried out on three levels and in accordance with the schedule defined in the Annual Training Plan.
Training of TA Trainers (TOT) – up to 20 trainers, shall be carried out in TA Education Centre in Belgrade. At TOT completion, the Pilot training shall be carried out in TA Education Centres.

Finally, full-blown training shall be realized in the Tax Administration's Education Centres in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac and Niš (30 participants per group, i.e. 120 participants per course). This sub-activity can be broken down in the following components:

- Training of trainers
 - Pilot training
 - Full blown training
- Sub-activity 4: Evaluation of the training activities and results accompanied by recommendations and potential redesign of the training programme and material. This will include evaluation after receiving the course and after a period of 6 months. The sub-activity can be further broken down in the following components:
 - Warm evaluation – after conclusion of each course, in accordance with the standards, evaluation of both the course and the lecturers is done;
 - Cold evaluation – after a period of 6 months, the knowledge acquired during the training shall be checked in everyday work of the employees. This shall be done by using the set of evaluation questionnaires prepared under this project;
 - Preparation of Evaluation report;
 - Preparation of relevant recommendations in relation to conclusions of the Evaluation Report;
 - Potential redesign of Training Programme, Training Plan and training material in relation to the recommendations from the above.

This activity will be implemented by 1 institution building service contract of 1 Million Euros financed by EU, while National public contribution will cover trainee's accommodation, per diems and other general training related running costs.

3.5 Conditionality and sequencing:

The success of the project largely depends on the Tax Administration commitment i.e. by timely provision of specialist staff, adequate office space and ensuring inter-department cooperation during its implementation. Also, it is necessary to continue activities on amendments of the Regulation on organisation and internal job classification in the Tax Administration, in order to secure a critical mass of permanent lecturers. At the current level, with 4 permanent lecturers, realization of the project proposal would be directly undermined.

There need to be adequate organisation, selection and (gender balanced) appointment of members of working groups, training sessions, seminars and study visits by the beneficiaries as per project work plan

These conditions will be detailed in specific Memoranda of Understanding prior to the launch of project.

3.6 Linked activities

Since August 2002, through the European Agency for Reconstruction and other donors, EU has supported development of education within the project “Modernization of the Tax Administration of the Republic of Serbia”, through:

- Establishment of 4 Tax Administration Education Centres in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac and Niš
- Training of TA Training Coordinators in preparation of training material
- Carrying out IT trainings
- Training of trainers
- Providing of software for management of education

Tax Administration project proposal, development of initial training, would be a natural continuation of a part of the project “Modernization of Tax Administration”, because it would be a systematic completion of education function in the tax administration. This would maximize the effect of overall reform activities in this field.

3.7 Lessons learned

A recent EAR evaluation report of the EU’s tax administration programme pointed out that future programming should focus more on key institutional reforms rather than provision of equipment. The report also recommended that the Agency makes greater use of institutional assessments and implementation blueprints to minimize delays in start of implementation. These lessons further stress the need to focus support towards fundamental areas of public administration reform including civil service, human resource development (training, career development), policy making/inter-ministerial and donor coordination, budget process/budget implementation and public financial control. Assistance has to be tailored to the beneficiary’s absorption capacity.

4. Indicative Budget (amounts in million €)

Activities	TOTAL COST	SOURCES OF FUNDING										
		EU CONTRIBUTION				NATIONAL PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION					PRIVATE	
		Total	% *	IB	INV	Total	% *	Central	Regional	IFIs	Total	% *
Activity 1												
contract 1.1	1.0	1.0	100	1		1		1				
contract 1.2												
Activity 2												
contract 2.1												
contract 2.2												
.....												
TOTAL	1.0	1.0	100									

* expressed in % of the Total Cost

5. Indicative Implementation Schedule (periods broken down per quarter)

Contracts	Start of Tendering	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Contract 1.1	T+1Q	T+2Q	T+9Q

All projects should in principle be ready for tendering in the 1ST Quarter following the signature of the FA

6. Cross cutting issues (where applicable)

Development Policy Joint Statement by the Council and the European Commission of 10 November 2000 establishes that a number of Cross-cutting Issues shall be mainstreamed into EC development co-operation and assistance.

Cross-cutting issues will be addressed in the project so as to comply with the best EU standards and practice in that area and in a way which demonstrates how they will be dealt with within the project's framework, its activities and outputs.

Cross-cutting issues will be addressed in a proactive manner, and will present a specific component of projects (at all levels of projects' development, starting from the project identification stage). Synergies between the projects and the objectives of will be identified and developed. Also, the projects' objectives and activities need to be screened in order to ensure they won't impact negatively on gender equality, minorities' inclusion and environment.

Finally, the beneficiary will make sure its objectives, policies and interventions have a positive impact on and are in line with the main principles of gender equality, minorities' inclusion and environment.

6.1 Equal Opportunity

Training of tax administration staff, as part of the overall reform and modernisation of the civil service will aim at providing equal opportunities for women in terms of access to employment, promotion, equal wages, and social benefits. Equal treatment and opportunities for women should be realised through provisions that take into account the working capacities and family obligations. In particular, curricula and delivery mechanism (place and time schedule) of training programmes for civil servants should be thought of so as to favour women's participation.

6.2 Environment N/A

6.3 Minorities

As one of the aims of the project is to promote client oriented tax administration, the training could also include information on how to improve and ensure fair access to tax related services for men and women, ethnic minorities and people with special needs. Many vulnerable categories (Roma, IDPs, Refugees, etc.) do not have access to services they are entitled to due to a lack of information on rights/entitlements, inability to deal with application procedures, etc. (which, in turn, reflects and reinforces their stigma as marginal groups).

ANNEX I: Logical framework matrix in standard format

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche	Programme name and number	
Further development of the education function of Tax Administration through initial training of employees	Contracting period expires 5 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement	Disbursement period: expires 6 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement
	Total budget : 2 million EUR	IPA budget: 1 million EUR

Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	
Contribute to the establishment of the client oriented an efficient Tax Administration, while maintaining and increasing the level of tax collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of tax collection - New taxes dully collected - Increased available resources for productive economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State Budget - Yearly report on Tax Administration performance 	
Project purpose	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<p>Institutional building of human resources in the Tax Administration in accordance with EU best practice.</p> <p>Increasing of administrative capacities for implementation of tax law, fight against corruption, cross-border crime and evasion of payment of tax obligations.</p> <p>Improve and develop audit and collection functions within the Tax Administration of the Republic of Serbia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective realisation of the goals defined in the SAA Action Plan -Reduction of fraud, corruption and misappropriation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yearly Report on advancement in the SAA process - Reports on economic performance - Yearly report on Tax Administration performance 	<p>Political stability</p> <p>Government and MoFE in particular will maintain their commitments with regards to public finance reforms</p> <p>Government will accept Parliament control upon public finance and reinforced transparency</p>
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<p>Prepared annual Training Plan and Programme</p> <p>Prepared and printed training material</p> <p>Prepared tests</p> <p>Trainers trained</p> <p>120+ new tax personnel trained to EU standards</p> <p>Prepared questionnaires for the evaluation</p> <p>Prepared Evaluation report containing recommendations on redesign of training plan and materials</p> <p>Fully independent inclusion of training participants into the basic tax administration functions</p> <p>Tax inspectors qualified to independently and in a legally prescribed manner perform jobs from the competences of Tax Administration, fully respecting the taxpayers' rights.</p> <p>Recommendations established during evaluation of the Project will be included in the future Annual Training Plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant materials prepared and approved - Staff trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultant's reports, Steering Committee minutes , Evaluation Report - Protocols for evaluation of TA employees - Yearly report on Tax Administration performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive perception and attitude of civil servants towards change - Adequate and sufficient beneficiary resources allocated to the implementation of project - Low turnover of TA staff that has undergone training
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions
<p>Preparation of an Annual Training Plan and Programme for the Initial training</p> <p>Drawing up of training material and tests and Preparation of a curriculum of topical training</p> <p>Training implementation</p> <p>Evaluation of the training activities and results accompanied by recommendations and potential redesign of the training programme and material.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical assistance and TA staff 	<p>170.000</p> <p>410.000</p> <p>330.000</p> <p>80.000</p>	<p>Adequate and sufficient beneficiary resources allocated to the implementation of project</p> <p>Budget resources allocated to Tax Administration for training are sufficient and remain available for the project.</p>

Pre conditions

ANNEX II: amounts (M €) Contracted and disbursed by quarter for the project

Contracted	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Contract 1.1		1.0								
Contract 1.2										
Contract 1.3										
Contract 1.4										
.....										
Cumulated		1.0								
Disbursed										
Contract 1.1		170,000	205,000	205,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	60,000		
Contract 1.2										
Contract 1.3										
Contract 1.4										
.....										
Cumulated		170,000	375,000	580,000	700,000	820,000	940,000	1,000,000		

ANNEX III

Description of Institutional Framework

The Tax Administration is in charge of implementation and monitoring of this project. Tax Administration falls under the competence of the Ministry of Finance. The work, mandate and authorisations of the Ministry are regulated by the Law on Ministries (adopted on May 15, 2007 (Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia no. 48/07)) – i.e. Article 6. Organisational chart of the Ministry of Finance is given below.

Minister of Finance

State Secretaries

Secretariat

Independent executives

Independent Inspector
of Internal Control

Coordinator of Public
Administration Reforms

Departments

Tax
Administration

Public Debt
Administration

Treasury
Administration

Customs
Administration

Tobacco
Administration

Administration for
Money Laundering
Prevention

Gaming
Administration

Foreign Currency
Inspection

Free Zones
Administration

Macro-economic and Fiscal
Analysis Department

Budget Inspection and
Audit Department

Fiscal System Department

Department for Property
related Legal Affairs

Finance System Department

Customs System and
Policy Department

Chamber of Appeals for
Infractions Procedures

Department for International
Financial Relations

Project Management
Department

Public Procurement
System Group

ANNEX IV

Reference List of relevant Laws and regulations

Reference list of relevant laws and regulations in the area of training and tax administration

General:

- Constitution of the Republic of Serbia
- Law for the Implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia
- National Strategy for Serbia and Montenegro's Accession to the European Union
- Action Plan for the Implementation of the European Partnership

Public Administration/Tax Administration:

- Law on State Administration
- Law on Civil Servants
- Civil Service Salary Law
- Civil Servants Classification Decree
- Civil Servants Performance Appraisal Decree
- Law on Tax Procedure and Tax Administration
- VAT Law
- Excise Tax Law
- Profit Tax Law
- Property Tax Law
- Law on Use, Maintenance and Possession of Goods Tax
- Individual Income Tax Law
- Regulation on Recording Transactions over fiscal cash registers with fiscal memory and dynamics of introduction of such cash registers
- Law on Lottery

In addition to the above-mentioned Legislation also important are the following strategies and documents:

- Strategy for Development of the State Administration
- European Partnership
- SAA

Reference to AP /NPAA / EP / SAA

The activities under this fiche are directed by the demands of the European Partnership and SAA on strengthening the administrative capacity of public administration, as elaborated through the National Strategy of Public Administration Reform.

Reference to MIPD

The MIPD lists the following as possible areas of intervention in the field of Public Administration reform: "Improving budget and fiscal management, enhancing control and collection capacity of the tax and customs administration, contribute to consolidating revenue

collection for Serbia's consolidated budget, make tax policy coherent at central and local levels and improve the management of expenditures." (section 2.2.1.1., pages 15-16)

Reference to National Development Plan

N/A

Reference to national / sectoral investment plans

N/A

ANNEX V

Details per EU funded contract (*) where applicable:

For *TA contracts*: account of tasks expected from the contractor

- Sub-activity 1: Preparation of an Annual Training Plan and Programme for initial training, which shall have defined budget based on the expressed needs in the Tax Administration as a whole. This Annual Training Plan and Programme shall serve as standard to be rolled out by the Training and Communication Department of TA. This activity can be further broken down in the following components:
 - Assistance in preparation of needs assessment related to training requirements in the field of initial training
 - Advice on definition of the training period
 - Preparation of the training programme
 - Preparation of the training plan
- Sub-activity 2: Drawing up of training material and tests and preparation of a curriculum of topical training that shall be in accordance with the standards implemented by modern tax administrations in the field of training of new employees. The curriculum of topical training shall address the place and role of tax administration, review of the tax system of Serbia, dealing with material regulations for direct and indirect taxes (VAT Law, property tax, corporate income and personal income tax) with special focus on separate tax institutes, subject of taxation, taxpayer, rate, exemptions and incentives, dealing with procedural law (the Law on tax procedure and tax administration, Law on general administrative procedure, Law on administrative lawsuit) with special emphasis on taxpayers' rights and obligations, the institute of desk and field audit and collection, measures and means of enforced collection, offences and tax crimes. Special focus would be put on elaboration of the Code of corporate taxation, by securing the best EU practice. This sub-activity shall consist of preparation of the following training modules and training material:
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 - Preparation of tax system training module
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 - Preparation of administrative dispute training module
 - Preparation of Ethics Code training module

- Preparation of Train the Trainer training module
- Preparation of set of tests on the complete curriculum
- Sub activity 3: Training implementation – which shall be carried out on three levels and in accordance with the schedule defined in the Annual Training Plan.
 Training of TA Trainers (TOT) – up to 20 trainers, shall be carried out in TA Education Centre in Belgrade. At TOT completion, the Pilot training shall be carried out in TA Education Centres.
 To conclude, the sub activity can be broken down in the following components:
 - Training of trainers
 - Pilot training
- Sub-activity 4: Evaluation of the training activities and results accompanied by recommendations and potential redesign of the training programme and material. This will include evaluation after receiving the course and after a period of 6 months. The sub-activity can be further broken down in the following components:
 - Preparation of Cold evaluation – after a period of 6 months, the knowledge acquired during the training shall be checked in everyday work of the employees. This shall be done by using the set of evaluation questionnaires prepared under this project
 - Preparation of Evaluation report
 - Preparation of relevant recommendations in relation to conclusions of the Evaluation Report
 - Potential redesign of Training Programme, Training Plan and training material in relation to the recommendations from the above.