Final Report

Partner

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Summary of completed activities

	Title of Activity	Location	Start date	End date
1	International Trade Centre (ITC) SOFT SKILLS TRAINING IN GAMBIA	GTTI Julangel, Upper River Region (URR)	20th	24th December, 2021
2		Gaye Njorro Skills Academy Farafenni, North Bank Division (NBR)	27th	31st December, 2021
3		Njawara Agricultural Training Centre (NATC), North Bank Division (NBR)	27th	31st December, 2021

Results

Activity 1: Roll out of training programme in GTTI Julangel, Upper River Region (URR)	GBA	WCR	CRR	LRR	NBR	URR	Total
Women						**4**	**4**
Men						**21**	**21**
Women returnees							
Men returnees							

Activity 2: Roll out of training programme in	GBA	WCR	CRR	LRR	NBR	URR	Total

Njawara Agricultural Training Centre (NATC), North Bank Region (NBR)							
Women					10		10
Men					13		13
Women returnees							
Men returnees							

Activity 3: Roll out of training programme in Gaye Njorro Skills Academy Farafenni, North Bank Region (NBR)	GBA	WCR	CRR	LRR	NBR	URR	Total
Women					20		20
Men					5		5
Women returnees							
Men returnees							

Narrative

Introduction

With funding from the International Trade Center (ITC), Smart Technologies conducted soft skills training for a total of seventy-five (75) skilled youth in the North Bank Region (NBR) and Upper River region (URR) from the 20th to 30th December 2021. A total of twenty-five skilled youth was trained in each of the following named training centers: Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) Julangel Annex in URR, Njawara Agricultural Training Centre (NATC) and Gaye Njorro Skills Academy Farafenni Annex in NBR. NATC registered less trainees than the initial target. The training aimed at equipping candidates with soft skills that would enable them to handle various business situations with confidence. Sixteen sessions of Essential Business Skills plus Project Planning were delivered in five (5) days in each of the locations. Each of the sessions was 2 hours long including presentation, individual and group work, question and answer session and discussion. The first day of each training session began with an official opening ceremony witnessed by the staff of Smart Technologies and its professional college, head of the training center, a reporter, and the trainers. Deliberations in each of the ceremonies centered on the training objectives, its relevance to the professional growth of the trainees, and a short introduction of the funding agency, the training provider-SMART Technologies, its professional college and those of the trainers.

Day One

Session 1*: INTRODUCTION AND SKILLS AUDIT

Session one introduced learners to the Essential Business Skills training course and it is divided into five (5) different series. In **Serial 1, the trainer** sets the scene for the course where learners completed two skills audits followed by a personal SWOT analysis. In **Serial 2,** the relationship between the course content and the requirement to develop transferable skills and competences was explicitly explained. **Serial 3,** Appraisal for this session was done via observation by the trainer of learner performance throughout the session. The observation is based on engagement in activities, attitude and motivation towards others, ethical behavior, and communication skills. The final testing was done on a reflective statement using the skills analyses from Session 1 and 16 and a personal development plan. In Serial 4, the trainer outlined what was expected from each learner during this session. Each trainee was asked to identify transferable skills and competences to different jobs or to different personal activities. This activity was initially done individually and later in groups which allowed trainees to exchange ideas and better interact throughout the session. **In Serial 5, the trainer took learners** through series of activities both individually and in groups to make them understand the essence of learning by doing. Simplified and interactive learning materials were provided to ensure learners practicalize their knowledge.

Session 2: TIME MANAGEMENT

This session focused on providing trainees with the tools and techniques which they can use to improve their time management. The session is divided into 5 series and appraised via observation only. In *Serial 1*, the trainer explained the session outcomes and iterated what is meant by 'time management' and why effective time management is important in the trainees' various professions. Time management tools were used as exercises to help learners become better at managing their time. In **Serial 2, began with an activity where** learners were asked to identify their individual time wasters to help them improve on their time management. In this activity learners identified and shared their time wasters with the class. The trainer helped learners to understand the objective of the exercise. In **Serial 3, the trainer took** trainees through the different barriers to effective time management. Series of activities were conducted to help learners identify barriers to managing their time effectively. In **Serial 4,** learners were grouped to come up with the best way they believe can help them manage their time effectively. Each group later presented their findings on the effective ways of managing one's time and the importance of these in a person's life. In **Serial 5,** handouts on effective time management was distributed among learners followed by an explanation by the trainer on how they can manage time in their daily activities. This was followed by an explanation of Effective Time Management processes. To consolidate their understanding learners were given individual and group activities to put to practice the process of effective time management. The session was capped by a plenary discussion, where ideas were shared between learners and the trainer.

Session 3: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

This session enabled learners to gain a better understanding of their own levels of emotional intelligence (EI) and how their EI affects their behavior. Learners were given individual exercise to conduct an EI test. Appraisal for this session was via observation only. The session was divided into 3 series. In **Serial 1**, learners were made to understand that EI is a relatively new concept, thus, the trainer spent some time to ensure every learner understood the concept. In **Serial 2,** learners were asked about their knowledge of Intelligence Quotient (IQ), followed by a detailed discussion about IQ, its relations with EI as well as their distinctions. IQ was defined and explained by the trainer. The trainer also took time to define and explain the concept of Emotional Quotient (EQ), followed by different activities to help learners better understand the two concepts. In **Serial 3,** learners were divided into groups to discuss the benefits of good EI in their personal and professional lives. In the plenary discussion learners were helped to understand and to share ideas on ways to improve on their EI.

DAY TWO

Session 4: MOTIVATION- SELF AND OTHERS

This session introduced the concept of motivation and the distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. It explored the motivation levels of learners through a motivation based self-assessment. Learners were asked to

reflect on what motivates them and how to overcome barriers to getting things done. Learners were taken through an exercise to help understand the different ways to overcome barriers in motivating themselves and others which includes improving on their communication skills. During the presentation the trainer asked a series of thought-provoking questions to foster discussion and help learners understand the topic. Learners were given a task to fill-in a motivation test questionnaire to better understand their levels of motivation and to learn how to improve on it. In **Serial 1**, the trainer took learners through different motivators, and stated that there are different levels of motivation depending on what it is one wishes to achieve. Trainer explained to learners that motivation is a crucial factor in determining how we will behave and whether we behave within the law, behave with respect to others and whether we behave ethically. The trainer observed the way in which learners used the techniques to improve their critical thinking ability. **Serial 2** began with a discussion of the word motivation by learners followed by an explanation of the concept by the trainer with examples to aid understanding. In **Serial 3**, the trainer differentiates between "extrinsic" and "intrinsic" motivation, followed by a detailed discussion of the two concepts facilitated by the trainer. Each learner was asked to write down examples of extrinsic and intrinsic motivators and later shared with the wider group. **Serial 4** began with asking learners to do a self-motivation test after which they compared with those of their peers. Learners were tasked to gauge the extent to which their level of motivation is influenced by both their extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. At the end of the exercise, the trainer encouraged learners to think about the extent to which their level of self-motivation influences what they do in their personal and/or professional lives. In **Serial 5**, the trainer divided learners into groups to discuss and identify how they can motivate other people. In **Serial 6**, the trainer guided the learners to discuss the different barriers to motivation, how to overcome them and getting things done.

Session 5: **CRITICAL THINKING**

This session introduced learners to the concept of critical thinking and its techniques. The trainer engaged learners to do five critical thinking activities. The final two activities introduced learners to two critical thinking techniques. This session is divided into 3 series. In **Serial 1**, the trainer helped learners understand that in our everyday life each of us uses some form of critical thinking. Our critical thinking skills, according to the trainer, are usually exhibited when we ask questions or when we want to prove a point. In **Serial 2**, the trainer explained that thinking critically is about using things like evidence and logic to support an argument or prove a point. The trainer emphasized that critical thinking is a key component of both problem solving and decision making. Through different activities, the trainer observed the way in which learners use the different techniques to improve on their critical thinking ability. In **Serial 3**, the trainer divided learners into groups and assigned them an activity to help them understand the benefits of critical thinking. In this serial, the trainer introduced learners to the concept of **Mind Mapping** both individually and in groups.

Session 6: PROBLEM SOLVING.

This session focused on two problem solving techniques including: ***'Appreciation' and '5 Whys'***. With the aid of a series of exercises, learners spent some time using these techniques to solve different problems introduced by the trainer. At least 5 topics/scenarios were used to help learners apply the 'Appreciation' technique to solve different problems. A similar number of topics/scenarios were used to help learners to apply the '5 Whys' technique to identify the causes of a problem. This session was divided into 4 series. In **Serial 1**, the trainer explained that problem solving is something we all do daily, adding that some problems such as what to have for lunch, what outfit to wear for a night out or where to go on holiday are very small and do not require a great deal of thought, while some problems, such as buying a car or a house, which are big issues would require a little more thought. In **Serial 2**, the linkage between problem solving and decision making was illustrated. In **Serial 3**, the trainer took learners through the Appreciation Techniques using scenarios while in **Serial 4**, learners were introduced to the 5 WHY technique using different scenarios.

Session 7: **DECISION MAKING**

This session introduced learners to the subject of decision making using the technique developed by Edward De Bono. The trainer spent some time with the trainees doing an activity based on De Bono's Six Thinking Hats. The session has 3 different series. In **Serial 1**, after introducing trainees to the concept of decision making, the trainer told the learners that each of them makes numerous decisions every day. While some of these decisions are small, such as deciding what to have for breakfast, others are bigger, like making a choice of the type of car to buy. Throughout the session learners were introduced to a series of activities to help establish their level of decision-making ability and to identify the barriers to effective decision making. In **Serial 2**, the trainer explained the different decision-making styles and learners completed questionnaires to help them identify their individual

decision-making style. In **Serial 3**, after introducing learners to the decision-making technique developed by Edward De Bono i.e., the Six Thinking Hats, the trainer emphasized that this technique can be applied to almost any situation/problem where a decision needs to be reached. The trainer stated that the basic principle of the Six Thinking Hats is that a decision is taken only when the situation/problem has been considered from different perspectives as each hat represents a different perspective.

DAY THREE

Session 8: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

This session began with an understanding of the concept of conflict. With the help of activities, the trainer helped learners to develop a better understanding of how conflict can be avoided and/or resolved when it breaks out. The session is divided into 3 different series. In **Serial 1**, the trainer explained the fact that we are different and come from diverse backgrounds with different values, belief systems, experiences and expectations; conflict exists in virtually everything we do. Learners completed four activities which helped them to develop a shared understanding of what is meant by conflict, how conflict can be avoided and when it exists, how we can resolve it. In **Serial 2**, learners shared their thoughts on their understanding of the word conflict. In **Serial 3**, learners were divided into groups and instructed to describe a conflicting situation they were involved in to their partners which they later shared with the rest of the group.

Session 9: TEAMWORK

This session explored the principles and practice of working in a team. The session began with a brief presentation/discussion to help learners understand the concepts of 'team' and 'team working'. This was followed by three activities where learners explored the benefits of and barriers to effective teamwork. The session was divided into 4 series. In **Serial 1**, the trainer asked learners to share their experiences of working in a team; whether formal such as a workplace, or informal, such as planning a night out with friends. The trainer explained that there are distinct roles in every team, and thus, asked learners to share with the group the role or roles they usually play when working in a team. Learners were divided into groups to complete an activity where they are expected to work as a team while being observed by the trainer. In **Serial 2**, the trainer informed the trainees that a team composed of individuals with the same skills often fail due to lack of balance in the team unlike a team with different skill sets. The purpose of a team, the trainer stated, is about working together in an organized way to achieve a common goal. In **Serial 3**, the trainer informed learners that effective team working relies on the cooperation of everyone in the team. For a team to be effective, every member should have respect for each other (personally and professionally) and that personal differences should be put aside or risk affecting the team spirit. The trainer informed the learners that the one aspect of teamwork often overlooked is the opportunity of learning practical, interpersonal and professional skills from colleagues. In **Serial 4**, the trainer engaged learners in a discussion where they explore the benefits and the barriers of working in a team.

Session 10: LEADERSHIP

This session introduced the subject of leadership. The session focused on facilitating learners' understanding of leadership. In the session learners were asked to identify their preferred leadership style and encouraged while completing the session's activities, to think about their behavior as a leader within their groups. In **Serial 1**, learners learnt that although leadership exists in workplaces, it also exists in other situations such as in a sports team, at home, schools etc. In **Serial 2**, the trainer informed learners that leaders display many characteristics. The trainer, with the aid of an activity, helped learners to recognize some leadership characteristics they possessed. In **Serial 3**, the trainer provided learners with a story to reflect on the role of a leader. In **Serial 4**, the trainer helped each learner to complete the leadership style questionnaire and survey to help each know their leadership style. After this, the trainer took learners through the different types of leadership.

Session 11: COACHING AND MENTORING

This session introduced the techniques of coaching and mentoring. The trainer informed the trainees that coaching is the contemporary way to support training and development after which the trainer divided learners into a group

of three and assigned each with a specific role as follows: 1) a coach, 2) a coachee and 3) an observer. The session is divided into 4 series. **Serial 1**, focused mainly on a coaching technique, although it also addressed the differences between coaching and mentoring. In **Serial 2**, the trainer delivered a presentation on coaching and mentoring with the aid of examples from his own experience as a certified coach and mentor. In **Serial 3**, the trainer delivered a thorough presentation on the GROW model of coaching while in **Serial 4**, the trainer asked learners to describe their experiences during their role play as a coach and coachee and as an observer.

DAY FOUR

Session 12: COPING WITH ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

This session introduced the subject of organizational change. The session explored the forces which drive change, the resistors of change and reasons for organizational change. The session ended with the explanation of a model which can help individuals to develop a coping strategy for change. The session is divided into 6 series. In **Serial 1**, the trainer informed learners that change is constant and that there are many internal and external factors that drive change in an organization. In **Serial 2**, The trainer presented and facilitated a discussion on the meaning of "organizational change". In **Serial 3**, trainer delivered a presentation on Field Force Analysis and the resistors/barriers to change. While **Serial 4**, focused on PESTLE analysis of organizational change, **Serial 5**, dealt with the importance of change to an organization. In **Serial 6**, the trainer explained the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, and its five models, concepts, or components. The trainer enhanced the discussion by using examples from his experiences.

Session 13: REPORT WRITING

This session introduced learners to formal report writing techniques. The session was divided into 4 series. In **Serial 1**, the trainer informed learners that report writing is one form of communication used in business and academia. In **Serial 2**, the trainer took time to ensure the trainees understand the two types of reporting including academic and commercial. The trainer ensured learners understand the importance of the activities involved in before and after writing a report compared to the writing of the report itself. In **Serial 3**, learners were equipped to identify a good report and the typical structure of a report. Trainer facilitated a discussion on the three main parts of a report which included: Introduction, Main body and Conclusions and recommendations. In **Serial 4**, the importance of creating evidence-based arguments, where logic and objectivity are key to stimulating action were emphasized as important aspects of an effective report.

Session 14: PRESENTATION SKILLS

This session focused on making and delivering effective presentations. The session was divided into 5 series. In **Serial 1**, the trainer emphasized that delivering a presentation is an important skill one needs to master. The trainer also highlighted the different uses of presentations. To ensure a successful presentation, the trainer explained a lot of planning needs to go into it. After presenting on the ingredients of a successful presentation, the trainer also equipped learners about the common mistakes in presentation that must be avoided. While **Serial 2**, dealt with quizzing learners on their views about delivering a presentation, in **Serial 3**, the trainer presented on the common presentation mistakes that should be avoided. In **Serial 4**, the discussion was centered on effective presentation techniques and structure including the importance of appearance, tone of voice and mannerisms etc. In **Serial 5**, the trainer divided learners into groups based on their areas of specialization and instructed them to prepare and structure a presentation using the discussed techniques. When the presentation was prepared, the group chose one person to present on their behalf while the others took note of the errors. Feedbacks were given by the lecturer after each presentation.

Session 15: NETWORKING

This session explored the various ways in which people network both in personal and professional situations. In **Serial 1**, the trainer explored the meaning of networking, the different forms, and situations of networking. Trainees were asked to share their networking experiences with the class. In **Serial 2**, the trainer asked the learners to share their understanding of the word network. In **Serial 3**, the trainer instructed learners to work in pairs and

think of how they connect with other people. In **Serial 4**, the trainer delivered a presentation on the link between interpersonal skills, ethics, and the benefits of networking. The trainer facilitated a discussion on the benefits of networking and encouraged learners to think about what they would hope to achieve by building networks both in their personal and professional lives.

DAY FIVE

Session 16: PROJECT PLANNING

In this session, the trainer took learners through the structure and technique of writing a project proposal. The trainer divided the learners into different groups that took care of the different components of the proposal. The trainer informed the learners about the importance of project writing, and the different types of projects (academics and business). The session is divided into 3 series. In **Serial 1**, the trainer dealt with the various components of a project proposal including the background, goal, objectives, activities, budget etc. In **Serial 2**, the discussion was centered on how to write a cover letter to accompany their proposal writeup. In **Serial 3**, the trainer emphasized the benefits and importance of project proposals in their various careers.

Session 17: **SKILLS AUDIT, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND REFLECTIVE STATEMENT**

This was the final session in the course, which focused on reflection and personal development planning. In this session, the trainer together with the learners reviewed the Skills Audits and SWOT Analysis done on the day one of the course. This session provided learners the opportunity to assess whether they have made progress throughout the course. Learners were tested through the completion of a reflective statement and a personal development plan collected at the end of the session for grading. The final session for the course focused on the extent to which each learner has developed skills and competences as planned. In **Serial 1**, the trainer issued blank versions of Skills Audit 1, Skills Audit 2 and Personal SWOT Analysis templates to learners for completion. The trainer instructed learners to compare the findings from the last analysis with those from Session 1 to know how much progress they have made in skills acquisition. In **Serial 2**, trainer facilitated the learners' delivery of a presentation on their reflective statements. In **Serial 3**, learners used the reflective statement template to capture thoughts and feelings. In **Serial 4**, learners presented on their personal development planning.

Challenges & Lessons Learnt
- The wider variations in the educational level of trainees posed a serious challenge during the training session as many don't understand the English language to follow the training as expected.

- The diversity in the languages spoken and understood by the different participants to the training also posed a challenge to our trainers when we decided to blend English language with local languages spoken in the regions to facilitate understanding of the different concepts.

- Getting the training list for the different centers in a timely manner for proper planning was a challenge faced by the training provider.

- Dealing with the heads of training institutions based in the headquarters during preparation instead of dealing directly with the heads of centers in the regions seriously affected the planning and execution of training on the ground.

- The lack of or erratic electricity in some of the training centers affected the timely start of the training.

Recommendations and Next Steps

- We encourage that training institutions are aware of the caliber of trainees in terms of educational level/English language proficiency ahead of time to help them plan appropriately and for the training institution to recruit or post trainers to the different regions based on their local language ability.

- We encourage that the list of training participants is available to the training institution in a timely manner to assist in proper planning.
- We would like to encourage that the training providers are given a chance to deal directly with the regional heads of institutions during planning.
- We encourage that the chosen training centers have conducive training facilities and backup power source in case the main power source is unavailable or unstable.

Annexes

Please submit all of the below as annexes to the report or in separate documents alongside the report.

- List of participants in excel (See List of Participants template)
- List of media coverage see
-