

Sino-Swiss Management Training Program for Sustainable Development (SSMTP4SD)



Mid-term Review / 2014-2018

March 26, 2018

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1. Preamble

The SSMTP4SD review / evaluation focuses on the 5th phase of the Sino-Swiss Management Training Program covering the period 2014 - 2018 and includes input for the so-called «prolonged phase» agreed to by the contract parties as a result of various quantitative and qualitative changes in the program structure and content as per CTCSPMO requests over the past 4 years.

This review / evaluation document does not provide respectively repeat known facts related to the pre-SSMTP4SD history since the start of the program in 1994 nor does it provide information on experiences of previous phases. It does not restate established acronyms or abbreviations etc. either.

The SSMTP4SD review / evaluation has been based on qualitative focus group meetings with senior management / decision-making bodies of the contract parties as well as quantitative and qualitative questionnaire-based interviews with additional senior managers and general management seminars' participants and action learning program (ALP) participants. Further the SSMTP4SD review / evaluation reflects the discussions and conclusions of the contract parties' workshop held in Beijing on January 29, 2018.

The review/evaluation method, content and process applied by EurAsia Competence AG have been discussed with and were approved by the SSMTP4SD contract parties. Review implementation started on November 1, 2017.

EurAsia Competence AG would like to thank the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the China Training Center for Senior Personnel Management Officials (CTCSPMO) and the University of Lausanne (Unil) for the good cooperation in the context of the «SSMPT4SD Mid-term Review» 2014 - 2018.

For EurAsia Competence AG

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Sorg".

Peter Sorg, Partner
Project Lead

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hans J. Roth".

Hans Jakob Roth, Chairman and Partner
Project Support

2. Information on mid-term review report structure and content

- The foundation upon which this report is based are the various reference documents ex. contract parties (SDC, CTCSPMO, UniL) and the documents ex. EurAsia Competence AG outlining the review approach, process and action program.
 - For details please refer to attachment 1, page 21.
- The report is primarily based on responses by the 70 persons who participated either in the Focus Group discussions and/or have completed the respective questionnaire for senior managers / decision makers of the program (total 42 persons) or have completed the questionnaire related to general management training seminar participants and action learning program participants (total 28 persons).
 - For details please refer to attachment 2, page 22.
- In line with the review method, content and process the 70 persons' quantitative and qualitative responses were clustered according to key review topics covering the following areas: educational process and impact; general management, partnership, organization, communication; sustainable development; fostering Sino-Swiss cooperation; outlook until the end of the prolonged phase and various additional comments / observations.
- All detailed quantitative results and qualitative comments made by the 70 persons involved in the SSMT4SD review / evaluation and summarized in this report have been provided to SDC in the form of respective separate tables and write-up notes.
- The report also includes comments and conclusions reached during the 1-day workshop of the contract parties (SDC, CTCSPMO, UniL) under the guidance of EurAsia Competence AG in Beijing on January 29, 2018. The workshop formed an integral part of the review process as per SDC terms of references document dated May 17, 2017.
 - For summary please refer to attachment 3, page 23 and following pages.
- The main chapters this report (chapter 4 – Results; chapter 5 – Conclusions; chapter 6 – Recommendations) focus therefore on the findings based on the respondents' feedbacks covering the aforementioned SSMT4SD key review topics and the SDC, CTCSPMO, UniL and EurAsia Competence AG Beijing workshop on January 29, 2018.
- We have refrained from writing an executive summary. The aforementioned main chapters (chapter 4 – Results; chapter 5 – Conclusions; chapter 6 – Recommendations) contain 14 pages which provide the contract parties top executives with the information required to understand the issues, the challenges and the opportunities of the Sino-Swiss Management Training Program related to the SSMT4SD 2014-2018.
- The SSMT4SD Mid-term Review 2014-2018's chapters 5 (Conclusions) and 6 (Recommendations) represent solely the views of the party mandated with the review – EurAsia Competence AG. These views are all based on the comprehensive inputs provided by the 3 contract parties respondents during the interviewing processes outlined in the report (see also attachment 2, pages 22).

3. SDC mid-term review terms of references and approach of EurAsia Competence AG

a) SDC terms of references (May 17, 2017)

- ...as a result, SDC and CTCSPMO together with UniL are currently discussing a “non-cost” prolongation of the phase. In view of the above extension, CTCSPMO and SDC agreed to conduct, together with UniL, an internal mid-term review (MTR) of the SSMT4SD. This implies a change to the Agreement signed by CTCSPMO and SDC on November 4, 2013, which stipulates in Article 9, that an independent evaluation should be conducted “one year before the program ends”;
- ...the main objective of this MTR is to assess the level and quality of implementation and to draw conclusions for the remaining implementation period;
- ...the main element shall be a structured discussion in a max. 2-day workshop in China in autumn 2017 with representatives of the CTCSPMO, SDC and the executing agency (UniL) on a number of issues. It is foreseen to collect a structured feedback through a questionnaire submitted to a selected number of participants to the first pillar of the program “Public Service Training” and to the second pillar, the “Western China Development Program”;
- ...the preparation and facilitation of the above mentioned workshop, the elaboration of the questionnaires as well as a short report on the MTR will be mandated to an external consultant;
- ...questions: effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, comments and recommendations.

b) EurAsia Competence AG approach

- ...the mandate has been entrusted to EurAsia Competence AG on 1th November 2017;
- ...the key documents upon which the evaluation method, topics, process etc. were based are:
 - SSMT4SD “Mid-term Review” 2014-2018, dated and distributed to SDC, CTCSPMO and UniL on October 30, 2017 (or shortly afterwards)
 - ...dito “Review Architecture” dated and distributed on November 6, 2017
 - ...dito “Focus Groups – Thematic Thrusts & Questions” dated and distributed on November 23, 2017
 - ...dito “Management Level / Key People – Thematic Thrust & Questions” dated and distributed on December 7, 2017
 - ...dito “Representative cross section of participants” (General Management Seminars & Action Learning Programs) dated and distributed on December 25, 2017
 - ...dito “Workshop / January 29, 2018, Beijing” dated and distributed on January 26, 2018

c) EurAsia Competence AG's approach characterized by:

- ...balanced quantitative, qualitative, representative, objective and neutral review/evaluation method, process and respective reporting;
- ...covering key stakeholders' groups of all contract parties involved in program...;
- ...qualitative via focus group interviews (program senior management and decision-making level);
- ...quantitative and qualitative via questionnaires covering senior management and decision-making level as well as seminar participants of both general management programs and action learning programs;
- ...covering the following areas :
 - educational process and impact
 - general management / partnership / organization etc.
 - sustainability focus
 - fostering Sino-Swiss cooperation
 - outlook until the end of the prolonged phase
 - various / additional comments & observations
- ...in the following manner :

3 focus groups (senior managers)	1 session each at SDC, UniL, CTCSPMO	20 persons
Questionnaire interviews (senior managers)	1 round each at SDC, UniL, CTCSPMO	22 persons
Questionnaire (general management seminar participants)	1 round CTCSPMO	14 persons
Questionnaire (action learning program participants)	1 round CTCSPMO	14 persons
Total		70 persons

4. Results

Overview of high level quantitative results

Focus Group interviews (senior management) and questionnaire based interviews (expanded senior management) as well as questionnaire-based interviews (General Management Seminar participants and Action Learning Program participants)

a) Focus Group interviews (20 persons ex. senior management)

During the pure Focus Group interviews participants (total of 20 senior management persons) from SDC, UniL and CTCSPMO - no questionnaires - rated the SSMT4SD overall as positive while at the same time their qualitative and recorded / noted responses to questions related to the review topics lead to differentiated qualitative comments and views/opinions which are summarized in the next chapter (Overview of high level qualitative results).

b) Questionnaire based interviews (22 persons ex. expanded senior management across all contract parties)

The following table summarizes the positive and very positive quantitative ratings (4 & 5 points) of the contract parties senior management per key review topic. SDC respondents did not give positive or very positive ratings to the review topic "Outlook until the end of 2019" related to the statement "...the SSMT4SD should continue (as is) without changes until the end of 2019" indicating that the remaining period should be used to upgrade program format and content. See also respective comments in the chapters "Overview of high level quantitative results" and "Overview of high level qualitative results".

Review Topic	SDC	UniL	CTCSPMO
1. Educational process/impact	69%	90%	99%
2. General management/partnership etc.	55%	100%	100%
3. Sustainable development	40%	85%	97%
4. Fostering Sino-Swiss relationship	66%	84%	94%
5. Outlook until the end of 2019	0%	100%	93%

c) Questionnaire based interviews (14 persons ex. CTCSPMO general management seminar participants)

The following table summarizes the positive and very positive quantitative ratings (4 & 5 points) of general management seminar participants ex. CTCSPMO. Note: in terms of population no overlap with senior management respondents in the previous table.

Review Topic	CTCSPMO
1. Educational process/impact	99%
2. General management/partnership etc.	100%
3. Sustainable development	92%
4. Fostering Sino-Swiss relationship	98%
5. Outlook until the end of 2019	97%

d) Questionnaire based interviews (14 persons) ex. CTCSPMO action learning program participants

The following table summarizes the positive and very positive quantitative ratings (4 & 5 points) of action learning program participants ex. CTCSPMO. Note: in terms of population no overlap with respondents in the previous tables.

Review Topic	CTCSPMO / ALP
1. Educational process/impact	99%
2. General management/partnership etc.	100%
3. Sustainable development	92%
4. Fostering Sino-Swiss relationship	98%
5. Outlook until the end of 2019	97%

Comments on high level quantitative overview

- Overall very positive quantitative ratings (points 5 and 4) of all contract parties' assessment of key review topics.
- More differentiated but still positive quantitative evaluation of SDC compared with UniL and CTCSPMO. This might have its origin in the fact that SDC had in the recent past regularly to justify its involvement in the program against the background of its key mandate – quote – “The primary philosophy of SDC is to fight poverty through participatory programs, creating sustainable improvements in peoples' lives by involving them in the process. Its main intentions are to improve access to education and basic health care, to promote environmental health, to encourage economic and governmental autonomy, and to improve equity in labour” - unquote -.
- CTCSPMO gave the whole program the highest quantitative ratings in all key review topics areas. This represents also the extremely high appreciation of CTCSPMO regarding the SSMTF fruitful cooperation between China and Switzerland now running for almost 25 years. This cooperation between CTCSPMO and SDC is perceived by both sides as political highly significant and representing a truly unique relationship based on mutual understanding and trust between the two countries. While – as mentioned above – SDC evaluated the program quantitatively in general in a more nuanced fashion the Sino-Swiss Management Training Program is highly appreciated by SDC as well and the respective SDC qualitative comments are fully in support of the program against the background of required and expected program adaptations for the prolonged period.
- The aforementioned more nuanced / differentiated quantitative positive evaluations of the senior management groups of SDC and CTCSPMO were especially related to the key review topics areas of “sustainable development” and “outlook until the end of the prolonged program period” expressing needs for adaptations as viewed by SDC.

- UniL senior management's quantitative positive evaluations lay in between the respective positive ratings of CTCSPMO and SDC and also strongly support the overall positive assessment of the contract parties' collaboration.
- It should be noted that a direct comparison between the quantitative positive evaluations of SDC, UniL and CTCSPMO has to be seen in the context of the differences in the number of senior management persons providing feedback to the respective questionnaire e.g. SDC = 3 persons; UniL = 4 persons; CTCSPMO = 15 persons.

Overview of high level qualitative results

However, comments made during the Focus Group interviews and/or comments made in the open-end questions sections of the questionnaires indicate plenty of room for improvements. The following lists represent the clustered remarks of respondents based on SSMTP4SD key review topics across the various respondents groups' involvement e.g. focus groups, senior management questionnaire, general management seminar participants questionnaire, action learning program participants questionnaire and Beijing workshop participants' discussions and agreement:

a) Educational process and impact

- Improve balance between general management, HR and sustainable development
- "Translate/adapt" the Swiss handling / approach of sustainable development to the needs in China
- Maintain contacts/exchanges with the members of the delegations once they are back in China. A SSMTP alumni network could help
- Develop ALP concept as role model for other priority topics of the program. ALP is very interactive and "hands-on".
- Develop program content more tailor-made to China needs. This includes "translation" of teachings to more concrete situations. Participants want to be able to apply what they learned on their jobs. Make courses more concrete and practical with examples for immediate understanding
- Consider long- and mid-term planning in the program in line with China government and public sector priorities
- Try to limit restrictions imposed to send people abroad since 2013/2014 if possible (training of trainers and executive young cadres seminars are investment for the future)
- Consider more visits to Swiss companies and Swiss public service institutions (deep impressions from visiting Swiss companies)
- Improve quality of translations/translators
- Involve more senior, mature professors and experts as lecturers
- Improve program in the field of organization and personnel development (How are leadership and management skills developed? How to assess, select and develop potential leaders and senior managers of the organization department and the personnel department? etc.)

- Re-emphasize general management topics closer to the idea of sustainable development

b) General management / partnership / organization / communication etc.

- Handle steering committee and steering mechanism in a more formal institutionalized way (improve efficiency and effectiveness of program steering)
- Handle monitoring and reporting more regularly and in a more formal institutionalized way
- Improve intensity of interactions between contract parties
- Improve common reciprocal understanding of training expectations
- Avoid short term (e.g. 2 weeks) cancellations of seminars because it creates difficulties for UniL. Also changes in program content create problems due to short term announcements (some experts have to be booked 12 months in advance)
- Make available profiles of participants (job and functions) for lecturers accurate understanding of participants backgrounds and to better understand their needs
- More detailed program demand analysis and content arrangement (make program fit for purpose based on delegations participants profile/needs)
- Improve understanding of various parties' demands, improve communication, improve translation
- Improve post-training evaluation, tracking of participants
- More involvement of SDC Beijing (coordinate program from SDC Beijing?)
- Improve monitoring of program. Monitoring still at "infancy". Unfortunately no monitoring possible after 6 months when the delegations are back in China (no opportunity to stay in touch with participants)
- More emphasis on practical aspects in the general program
- Improve communication between the contract parties
- Ensure flexibility in program management and content due to changes in China environment
- Improve systematic learning (sometimes insufficient and impertinent content). Some topics were less pertinent to the training theme

c) Sustainable development

- Ensure a balance between sustainable development and HR development (Sustainable development is a large topic, which can be linked to HR)
- With a better understanding of the jobs and functions of the participants the seminars could be better aligned to the needs (most participants work in HR positions with no direct link to sustainable development?)

- Sustainable development provides few concrete concepts/approaches/tools but represents more opportunities in terms of awareness building and global thinking
- A certain wrong understanding about the sustainable development topic should be corrected
- Sustainability can also be seen in other fields than ecology (e.g. in leadership, in organizational development etc.)
- Focus on people issues: sustainability yes but not only on the environmental side but on the people side as well
- Sustainable development in the human field is important. Should be main guiding line in the program to come
- Sustainability is important but should not be too much on technical aspects
- Training shows how we do things in Switzerland and not how to practically implement those concepts in China

d) Fostering Sino-Swiss cooperation

- Compared to 10 years ago not much has changed in terms of program concept, structure, format and content. But China has developed/changed significantly. There is the need to put the program into a bigger context e.g. bring social, political, economic, ecological and scientific / technological dimensions together
- Consider China's recent developments and adjust program (e.g. 19th party congress new priorities)
- Long lasting history of program. Very good opportunity for Switzerland to lead such kind of projects in cooperation with China
- High political impact of program in China. How does Switzerland look at the program?
- The program is a very important contribution in the bilateral relationships between China and Switzerland
- How are we positioning the program differently for adapting to new conditions?
- More cooperation and interaction; in-depth cross-cultural exchanges
- Advance the mutual understanding of the two countries

e) Outlook until the end of the prolonged period

- Building a more sustainable official team; combine sustainability and organizational work better
- Improve professional quality and competence of seminars/trainings and of lecturers
- Add the content of personnel management, especially arrange visits to personnel management departments of government at the federal, state and municipal levels and other large institutions

- Add experiences and practices of Swiss public management institutions in selecting, appointing and managing senior public service executives
- Improve summary upon completion of courses and training activities
- Reactivation of courses and participants
- 2017 format of training seems to be the best for trainees
- Public service focus is important for the program
- Improve social governance capability level; modernize social governance education and training
- Include innovation and high quality development education/training in the program
- Include entrepreneurship in the program
- Continue with rural re-vitalization strategy, include eco-development, eco-restoration and eco-tourism in the program
- Better connect program topics to China national development strategies
- Provide more education and training on how to attract more talents and how to build a sustainable talent team
- Continue with the rural area development in Western provinces
- We have spent less money than budgeted, because of cancellations and smaller groups than foreseen
- Request for more senior level of education by more senior/high level faculty or high-profile authorities
- Adapt to the new tasks and new requirements in the new era, implement 19th party congress decisions and make corresponding adjustments in the program.
- The target set by the 19th party congress is training a contingent of competent and professional officials. The program should be in accordance with that target
- 19th party congress, focus on quality, innovation, perfection. We look for innovation partnership in relation to government management
- How does Switzerland achieve social harmony, clean environment, open labour relations and peaceful social environment?
- 19th party congress underlined the balance of national disparities; how does Switzerland manage these issues?
- A “community with shared future” developed by President Xi; new focus of the program?
- How is innovation encouraged? What is the role of government in innovation?

- New needs as expressed in the 19th party congress should be program points
- Add comparative study of China and Switzerland

f) Various comments

- Senior participants require senior lecturers
- Continuous improvement is important
- Improve the quality of translations
- More autonomy for the implementation agency
- Better integration of contract parties
- Understanding of the Chinese partner's organizational structure and its needs should be improved on the Swiss side
- Need to foster cross-cultural understanding: what is important to us might not be important for you and vice-versa
- More communication important for Chinese side
- Exchange ideas after return to China
- If training can adjust to the new program of the party it can achieve significantly more
- Arrange study tours to Swiss innovation parks (e.g. EPFL Brain/Mind institute, schools of life sciences, robotic systems laboratories etc.) to understand future trends
- Organize visits to well-known multinationals such as ABB, Novartis etc.
- Invite Swiss politicians or leading parliamentarians to communicate with the participants when introducing the Swiss political system etc.

g) Financial aspects

- The contract between SDC and UniL as agreed by the SSMT4SD contract parties had a total budget for the period 2014-2018 of CHF 7.5mio.
- This budget amount is/was split up into 3 cost blocks: a) = Swiss HQ (UniL); b) short term experts; c) project funds (e.g. seminars).
- Due to changes in program format and content as well as cancellations of courses etc. and tight budget control/disciplined costs management not all budget funds were used until the end of March 2018.

- This allowed the contract parties to agree on a prolongation of the program and the remaining funds of the original budget amount allows “a no-additional costs-prolongation” of the program while implementing the recommended changes proposed in this SSMT4SD Mid-term Review Report.

5. Conclusions

a) General

- All in all the contract parties, the Focus Group participants and the questionnaire respondents, consider the SSMT4SD a highly satisfactory undertaking. The Focus Group interviews and discussions as well as the open-end responses of the questionnaires have provided very valuable qualitative inputs regarding the program's challenges and opportunities. Especially the inputs provided for the "prolonged period" represent ample "food for thought" for the contract parties' coming to grips with format and content of the SSMT4SD for the upcoming 2 years.
- The following points highlight the most important areas which require attention:

b) Communication among contract parties (SDC, CTCSPMO, UniL)

- There is a lack of frequent and formal institutionalized exchanges and joint integrated assessments of seminars formats and contents among the contract parties. At a high level the contract parties function in the sense of a partnership among equals which does not foster a clearly structured program steering, monitoring and updating process collaboration. In such a setting ("perceived or actual partnership among equals") program leadership and ownership at the strategic level and the operations/processes level require integrated and constant high level coordinated communication among contract parties' top executives to keep the program on track and to anticipate, discuss and accommodate changes in line with the needs of the "customer".
- As a result of the above the contract parties often make their own interpretations of things which would have deserved more joint in-depth clarifications e.g. meaning of terms used such as "sustainable development"; roles and accountabilities of the seminar participants related to their jobs/functions (not "only HR people"); Swiss side understanding of the Chinese side regarding the structures and mandates of the Organization Department, the HR Ministry, the CTCSPMO, the Academy and the respective needs for education and training of public service management officials within the context of the Chinese government's overall development priorities and plans.
- Changes required in SSMT4SD seminars and training format and content are often communicated on a too short notice ex. CTCSPMO to UniL (it can take a couple of months for making best possible program adjustments due to availability of experts).
- Decentralised and dis-jointed (separate) evaluations of SSMT4SD seminars and trainings by UniL and by CTCSPMO and the absence of sharing respective documents frequently and formally between the contract parties work against an integrated approach regarding the actual and overall SSMT4SD impact and respective program improvement possibilities.

c) Structural compatibility between education and training needs of China's public service management officials and overall format and content of SSMT4SD's seminars and trainings

- The rapidity and dynamics of change in the China environment and the respective requirements for the education and training of public service management officials necessitates constant adaptations to program contents (e.g. 13th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China (2016-2020) and the key governance accents of the 19th Party Congress). This is very likely a situation which will accelerate over the years to come and needs to be considered in the

design, organizational structure and education/training formats and contents of the Sino-Swiss Management Training Program.

- China will and has to improve skills and know-how of the pool of its public service management officials at high speed and comprehensively. Leaders, management and employees in all fields of government activities need to be able to function at “peer level” with their international counterparts as well as with leaders and managers of the SOE-sector (Stated Owned Enterprise) and with the private sector. At the same time public service management officials in China have to build and maintain competences required to be accepted and credible role models and partners for the Chinese society at large in order to be able to achieve the desired outcomes of the latest long-term development plans of the country. The Organization Department and the CTCSPMO have a key responsibility in this respect and the Swiss side of the program has to ensure alignment of the Sino-Swiss Management Training Program to these requirements.
- The fact that the Chinese side will put more emphasis on the education and training of senior public service management officials and of SOE’s senior executives from now on is fully in line with the aforementioned point and the Swiss side has to ensure that the program’s seminars and trainings reflect the resulting leadership and managerial education and training requirements.
- “Translational” education and training for public service management officials with contextual practical application relevancy is at the forefront of CTCSPMO’s and the participants’ interest (bridge the gap between theory and practice).
- In this respect the inclusion of visits to public sector management institutions in Switzerland and to leading Swiss multinational/global enterprises (establish a balance between visits to private companies and public sector management institutions in Switzerland) is highly appreciated by the Chinese side.
- Furthermore, there is a need on the Chinese side to put the SSMT4SD format and content and the government public sector management in Switzerland and private sector approaches into the context of the respective Swiss political, economic, social, scientific, ecological and human behaviour culture and system (this allows the China side to better “translate” education and training courses into the China environment).
- All parties mentioned that translators’ competences should be improved.

d) Accents for the prolonged phase (until the end of 2019)

- The prolongation of the SSMT4SD provides the contract parties the opportunity to formally agree on joint program goals and management until the end of 2019.
- Program goals and management to be elaborated by the contract parties until the end of 2019 among others should consider the inclusion of governance management elements of the Chinese key agenda items as stipulated by the 13th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the People’s Republic of China (2016-2020) in the spirit of the CPC’s leadership priorities as per the party’s 19th National Congress.
- CTCSPMO’s intention to include more senior executives and managers in charge of public service management and also to include senior executives and managers of SOE’s in the program is fully in

line with the aforementioned government governance management imperatives. The aim being to improve leadership- and managerial competences and integrity in all areas of public service in line with Xi Jinping's thoughts for "A new Era".

- The above remarks may lead to program adjustments in the form of a continuous improvement process which would allow to enrich the existing format and content of the SSMTTP4SD.

e) Financial aspects

- As mentioned earlier the agreed 2-years prolongation of the SSMTTP4SD should not create budgetary constraints. Handling of program finances and respective budget control was disciplined and tight.

6. Recommendations

The recommendations put emphasis on the prolonged program phase until the end of 2019. In this context and considering that there are “only” some 20 months remaining we are suggesting to implement the following actions which can make decisive positive contributions to the program’s impact and outcome:

Communication among contract parties (SDC, CTCSPMO, UniL)

- a) Set-up a telephone conference based SSMTP4SD steering/monitoring and updating mechanism in a 4 months interval (3 telephone conferences per year). Assign accountability for the organization of the telephone conference to one contract party (ideally SDC) being responsible for scheduling, preparing agenda items and leading the discussion.
- b) Until the end of the agreed prolonged period SDC’s Beijing staff at the Swiss Embassy should play an important role in supporting the contract parties hands-on and this in proximity to CTCSPMO. From an overall program coordination and communication point of view this should facilitate communication and further program implementation.
- c) CTCSPMO and UniL to continue with SSMTP4SD ad-hoc education and training related direct exchanges aiming at clear and advance information on needs of delegations including profiles of participants (CTCSPMO) allowing UniL to have a better understanding of delegations participants, their jobs and functions and their expectations and needs.
- d) Avoid short notice changes in education/training content and format (CTCSPMO) while ensuring optimal flexibility to adapt existing education/training modules to specific needs of the delegations (UniL)
- e) UniL and CTCSPMO to share their respective separate education/training evaluations (e.g. UniL’s seminar evaluations in Switzerland; CTCSPMO internal evaluations on site in Switzerland and/or evaluations by the heads of delegation and their groups and CTCSPMO upon return to China).

Structural compatibility between China’s public service management official’s education and training needs and overall format and content of SSMTP4SD’s seminars and training

- a) CTCSPMO to provide guidance to UniL regarding SSMTP4SD program adaptations needed to align the program for the agreed remaining prolonged period with the Chinese government’s priorities as per 13th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the PRC 2016-2020 and the 19th Party Congress’ leadership priorities.
- b) UniL to elaborate and propose SSMTP4SD update inclusive evtl. budget adaptations required to SDC based on guidance received by CTCSPMO.
- c) The contract parties (SDC, UniL, CTCSPMO) to formally agree on respective SSMTP4SD goals and actions until the end of the prolonged period.
- d) The sustainable development thematic thrust penetrating the program should remain but needs to be put into a wider leadership/management and organizational competences development and respective education/training context. As leaders and managers the delegations’ participants (public service management officials) have to constantly and continuously update their respective skills and know-how in an ever evolving and more and more demanding multi-dimensional sense and environment.

There is also a lot of interest on the Chinese side for sustainability related to social and leadership/management themes e.g. social responsibility; ethics; government interactions with the public; key issues challenging or safeguarding government credibility; social welfare system; health care; organizational and leadership sustainability; how to build sustainable teams etc. all giving the existing SSMT4SD additional value adding opportunities.

UniL to extend sustainable development into other leadership/managerial and organizational development disciplines (seminars and visits to Swiss government agencies and leading Swiss companies).

- e) Innovation and quality/precision, scientific and technological advances in key areas (especially the concepts behind technology and their local and global implications and opportunities) and their influence on society are themes with which China's government wants to come to grips with. Developments in fields such as artificial intelligence/machine learning; robotics; bio-pharmaceuticals; digitalization; big data; nano-technology etc. are topics which can be very well covered by Switzerland and its respective leading institutions.

China is in the process to establish itself as global innovation leader in the new economy sectors. The drive with which China is developing in the respective fields is unprecedented. The implications this development will have on society (globally, regionally and locally) is of highest relevance to the Chinese leadership. The Sino-Swiss Management Training Program has to pro-actively consider the "grand design of things to come" in the conceptualization of the education and training requirements.

It should be kept in mind that for China's government innovation and quality/precision in all areas of life (politics, economics, science/technology, ecology and human behaviour) are the key ingredients to continue to develop the country in a new and different way. Entrepreneurship, innovation and quality/precision will be the drivers of development based on the common will and fundamental interests of the Party, the Nation and the People in building a prosperous society and the socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era. The resulting fierce competition will create a new and strong momentum in the development of China over the next decade. The Sino-Swiss Management Training Program can continue to make significant contributions to this endeavour provided the contract parties (actual and future) understand the context, the needs and the benefits of the SSMT4SD cooperation and develop the program accordingly.

UniL to accommodate CTCSPMO's respective needs in the program accordingly and with the required flexibilities in seminar design (format and content).

- f) The Action Learning Program (ALP) represents an optimal "fit for purpose" in the program. SSMT4SD education/training on the one hand and the profile and jobs/functions of China side participants allow a professional and topic relevant beneficial approach. The contract parties might want to use the ALP experiences as a model for improving the alignment of education/training courses and their contents with competences and jobs/functions of seminar participants. This will require – depending on the thematic thrust of series of seminars for a delegation - a more targeted participants selection approach on the side of CTCSPMO allowing UniL to fully exploit topics-participants-aligned seminar/training sessions for the benefit of all involved.
- g) HR (Humans Relations) general and specific management topics will and have to remain a very important pillar of the program. As public service management officials the participants (from central government, provinces and municipalities) want to get familiar with state of the art people management policies, principles, practices and processes both on the public management- as well the private-sector-side (how

to spot potential leaders?; how to develop career plans?; how to assess and improve performance?; etc.). The SSMT4SD has to ensure that respective topics communicated by CTCSPMO are adequately covered in the seminars, by the mandated lecturers and supported by practical examples from both public management institutions' as well as private sectors' sides.

Others

- a) The idea of conducting more education/training on site in China is an idea which seems to have appeal to the contract parties for a number of reasons (costs; more intense exchanges with participants; more "home-oriented" practical discussions and direct involvement of CTCSPMO management in the courses). Against the background of the remaining relatively short program prolongation period until the end of 2019 this is an alternative worthwhile to be considered and requires further discussions among the contract parties top executives.

7. Attachments

Attachment 1 – List of reference documents ex. SDC, UniL, CTCSPMO

- **Evaluation of the Sino-Swiss Management Training Program (Public Service Training and Western China Extended Program), 2009-2012**
Dr. Arthur Zimmermann, odcp consult gmbh, Switzerland and Prof. Xiangming Chen, Graduate School of Education, Peking University, Beijing, China, **March 2013**
- **ProDoc – Project / Program Documentation including Log frame, time budget and outline of activities, CTCSPMO Budget Sheet**
Sino-Swiss Management Training Program for Sustainable Development (SSMTP4SD) CTCSPMO for SDC, **June 11, 2013**
- **Project description – Sino-Swiss Management Training Program for Sustainable Development (SSMTP4SD)**
SDC East Asia Division; Home page (https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/de/home/aktivitaeten_projekte/projekte-fokus/projektdatenbank.filterResults.html/content/dezaprojects/SDC/en/1993/7F03442/phase11), **January, 2014**
- **Sino-Swiss Management Training for Sustainable Development 2014-2017**
UniL overview on projects, outcomes and detailed expected outputs including yearly program schedule, **January, 2014**
- **Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for a «Mid-term Review» of the «Sino-Swiss Management Training Program for Sustainable Development»**
SDC outlining background, objective of the MTR, methodology, questions, schedule, **May 15, 2017**

Attachment 1 – cont'd – List of documents ex. EurAsia Competence AG

The following documents were provided to the contract parties for approval/endorsement before respective activities were implemented.

- **SSMTP4SD «Mid-term Review» 2014-2018, Evaluation/review mandate presentation**,
EurAsia Competence AG, October 30, 2017
- **SSMTP4SD «Mid-term Review» 2014-2018, Review Architecture**,
EurAsia Competence AG, November 6, 2017
- **SSMTP4SD «Mid-term Review» 2014-2018 Focus Groups – Thematic Thrusts & Questions**,
EurAsia Competence AG, November 23, 2017
- **SSMTP4SD «Mid-term Review» 2014-2018, Management Level / Key People, Thematic Thrusts Questionnaire**,
EurAsia Competence AG, December 7, 2017
- **SSMTP4SD «Mid-term Review» 2014-2018, Representative cross section of participants**, (General Management Seminars & Action Learning Programs), EurAsia Competence AG, December 25, 2017
- **SSMTP4SD «Mid-term Review» 2014-2018, Workshop**,
January 29, 2018, EurAsia Competence AG, January 26, 2018, Attachment 2

Attachment 2 – Overview: Focus Group interviews & questionnaire based interviews (senior management & expanded senior management) as well as questionnaires related to General Management Seminars and Action Learning Program

3 Focus Group Interviews (Senior Management)

SDC, Bern, November 23, 2017	3 Participants
SDC, Beijing, December 6, 2017	2 Participants
UniL, Lausanne, November 24, 2017	6 Participants
CTCSPMO, Beijing, December 7 & 8, 2017	9 Participants

Focus Group Questionnaires (Expanded Senior Management)

SDC, Bern, November 23, 2017	1 Participant
SDC, Beijing, December 6, 2017	2 Participants
UniL, Lausanne, November 24, 2017	4 Participants
CTCSPMO, Beijing, December 7 & 8, 2017	15 Participants

Total Senior Management Focus Groups & Focus Groups Questionnaires	42 Participants
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Questionnaires related to General Management & ALP

CTCSPMO, Beijing, December 2017	- GM	14 Participants
CTCSPMO, Beijing, January 2018	- ALP	14 Participants

Total General Management & ALP Questionnaires	28 Participants
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GRAND TOTAL ALL RESPONDENTS	70 PARTICIPANTS
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Attachment 3

Notes: SSMT4SD mid-term review workshop between SDC, CTCSPMO UniL and EurAsia Competence, Beijing January 29th, 2018

Introduction to the topic by Peter Sorg to review process

Start with the reviews of the various ppt's. Introduction of the different steps made by EurAsia Competence (EAC). Quality of the review program, short discussion of the review process. Would the contracting parties like to have seen something more? No particular remarks as to the process – main interest lies in the results.

Underlining the positive attitudes of everybody to the program as such and the appreciation of the efforts made in the different fields. Detailed views on potential changes. Prof Palazzo takes the position of an observer more than direct participant due to the service providing part of the program.

Discussion of the objectives presented

Consistency of the objectives through all the documents representing them, though verbally the descriptions may have been somewhat different. Mix of quantitative and qualitative objectives with accountabilities of the contract parties.

Generally happy, though the program objectives due to “dynamics of external circumstances” did not always develop the way it was originally intended. Reduction in number of seminars (TOT and EYC) resulting in changes in budget (less expenses / costs absorbed). The logframe was the document based on which everybody was working.

What are the remarks to the changes of the program as initially stated?

Changes of quantitative objectives – the reduction of the train of trainers program is an important element for the Chinese academy. Same is true for the reduction in the training of young cadres. Need for training young officials becomes less important due to changes of environment and priorities set by the government (regulations become stricter leading to program downsizing). Therefore downsizing groups for trainings abroad. Chinese tendency is to give priority to training of directors and DG trainings. Train of trainers and young cadres program will not be taken up again in the future. The three groups targeted will be: Directors of personnel department in central ministries, then state owned enterprises and the third group will be composed of provincial and urban departments groups.

Cadres now have reached a certain level and understanding. GDP is not the only criteria for evaluation any longer – seeking a more comprehensive holistic understanding of sustainability. Limited resources, so concentrating on the key managerial and leadership issues. Different approach; more on influencing lower ranks by higher cadres, not the other way round. Going abroad is not the only way for a development of cadres. Resources are more limited, so the Chinese side has to concentrate on higher level officials.

SDC suggestion to do some more trainings in China rather than abroad is welcome by the Chinese side. How far the University can go along with such a change remains to be seen, of course.

Concentration on the level of higher officials seems to be the move on the Chinese side – and it is in the right direction when looking at the feedback from our side.

Information from Mr Dong of the Organization Department once more as a key input to the discussions afterwards. There seems to “have been” a misunderstanding or lack of communication regarding the topic “sustainable development” and “human resource management” (perception: “China is sending HR people for training in sustainable development”). The Organization Department is in charge of educating and training government officials in the broadest possible terms focusing on key topics related to China government priorities. The Organization Department is a decision-making body in the selection and assessment of leadership and managerial competences of senior and middle level government officials. The Organization Department is in charge of top management level in the provinces and they are in turn in charge of management at municipal level. Of course there is a strong HR component to the Organizational Department’s mandate but the traditional HR functions e.g. payroll admin and appraisals etc. of government employees are done in the Ministry of Personnel.

Discussion on the first impressions and views from our side

Presentation of the way we tackled the subjects. Starting with the overall design level of the program.

SDC: overlap of the objectives to some extent, though some misunderstandings do exist. But practically it worked, otherwise it would have been stopped. Still hope to contribute with Swiss expertise to the project and the participants. In order to contribute with top Swiss expertise we need to be able to fully understand China’s education and training needs related to SSMTTP.

Mr. Dong Hai’s explanations related to sustainable development (the China way) and related to the Organization Dept. and the Personnel Ministry and CTCSPMO was very helpful and it is understood that both training areas “sustainable development” and “HR” should be put into a larger managerial and organizational context.

UniL: no misunderstanding re: HR – the questions are more or less answered – the rest will have to be done by us. On the sustainable development side the issue is that if we are too abstract then we seem to be too theoretical. On the other side if we are too concrete then we seem to be too detailed. The China side would like to get more out of the program on the concrete side – concrete input for local adaptation they do not get enough.

From CTC’s view the groups are homogenous, all being responsible for persons in a strategic and operational way. How do we manage, how do we chose, how do we prepare career paths for our clients. We send the best people chosen. They should be able to grasp what is presented to them.

Is the quality of the candidates always appreciated? Both Swiss sides underline that the quality of the candidates is known.

Peter Sorg: From our point of view the ALP is maybe a role model on how to align specific education and training needs to people in charge of a topic in China (e.g. sustainable development). The biggest structural compatibility between course format and content and course participants’ expectations is with the ALP part of the program. “ALP is fit for purpose”.

Steering function; SDC: was originally seen as an integrated approach for steering and monitoring. Seems to function quite well, the exchanges take place, feedbacks are exchanged. It can always be improved. The steering was not really taking place, respective meetings were more on an ad hoc level and the distance did not help. Is that a problem? Yes and no. We could have done more and can probably improve on this side, e.g. with Skype, as it was planned originally.

UniL: We do this directly when there is something to be discussed. No real need to change that.

Peter Sorg: Can the monitoring of UniL and of CTCSPMO be shared in a more consistent institutional way – or is this not a perceived need?

SDC: Ad hoc management done so far. Better communication can be done. Really try to communicate only on operative side this may provide a value added. But not in integration as such, this would create a heavy structure and load on the partners. But again we can find a point of having a trilateral discussion through Skype.

Positive outcomes of the cooperation efforts

SDC: difficult to measure and evaluate, but important for us as on the Swiss side there is taxpayers' money involved. Better people to people contact would help for the program. We invested time and money and – if possible – would like to keep in touch with the persons involved (Alumni idea). A felt need from the Swiss side – but one that will hardly be possible given the control and protection of high level cadres by the party.

CTC: Importance of the program also for the Chinese Foreign Ministry. It underlines the bilateral relations in a very important way. The important role from a political cooperation perspective is obvious from the Chinese side. Managerial communication is enhanced. Recent example agricultural development program – CTC has been asked and handed this over to the Swiss side. So ongoing programs should be seen as a result of the outcomes. These results may not materialize immediately but the effect of the program in the mid- and long-term is very important.

Mr Shi: program has to be seen on a broader scale – influences will be in the long run. The program has a deep impact on participants. Years later one of the participants may have an idea going back to what he has seen in Switzerland. Second remark - Alumni – within the group that went there are contacts that remain, although overall we may not have an organization that works that way.

Improving the program for the rest of the prolonged period

SDC: No revolutionary change necessary.

Content of training: quality should be assured – who participates is less important, but the needs must be clear and for whom they want this. Clearer picture of the background of candidates. Then responses from Lausanne can be better. (More information from CTCSPMO to UniL and from UniL to CTCSPMO).

Communication – we can do better, interacting more often. Institutionalized and more frequent.

Steering and monitoring was mentioned as well – we can go along the axis we have. Looking and asking as a base of communication. This would ease the job of everybody.

Relationship question and political value added of the program. Different possibilities tested in the past, have no blueprint. The Swiss Embassy in Beijing would be ready to explore the possibility organize an interaction between the participants and relevant representatives of the Swiss business community. Thematic workshops or seminars, for example on topics related to climate change and environment could be envisaged. Informal exchanges between staff of the Embassy and SSMT4SD's delegations heading to or coming back from Switzerland e.g. Apéro before leaving Beijing. More involvement of Swiss Embassy Beijing.

Bringing experts to China a further possibility. Broaden exchanges between Swiss business community and officials is an interest from the Swiss side. Business visit of Swiss company before they leave to Switzerland???

CTCSPMO

Impression of the participants are positive, but that does not exclude some critical remarks. Concrete suggestions

Improvements of status quo

Sustainable development in a general organizational management sense – 50% sustainability/50% HR sustainability.

Sustainability should include the social side of sustainability, welfare, health, organizational and leadership sustainability, how to build sustainable teams, technical innovation for sustainable outcomes. Include famous institutions working in education and applied technology e.g. ETH (brain research) bio-pharmaceuticals, digitalization, big data, robotics etc. latest needs in line with 19th people's congress.

Also cover latest philosophy of questions we all fight for and where Switzerland is already well advanced e.g. government interactions with the public etc., how to establish credibility?.

If HR – not only HR, but social responsibility, ethics e.g. how to encourage people to innovate in their environment. Corporate governance, elements of future competition how to make organizations fit for competition etc.

When covering HR we hope that the lectures touch more on core issues of HR. How to spot the potential leaders? How to develop career plans? How to objectively praise and improve the performance of these persons. If possible also to prepare some opportunities to visit Swiss government agencies. How does the Swiss government function? Even now our participants do think that the Swiss have some secrets behind their success. We have only people. How can we find the best? How to select top people?

It is not easy to prepare a comprehensive overview of a field. But this is what we need. An overview on the topics. A cohesive picture of certain issues.

Improvement beyond the status quo

CTCSPMO: adding value to Swiss partners we tend to increase persons from the SOE's (state owned enterprises). They are more active than pure government people. Increasing this part should also lead to a more tailor-made program for them e.g. tailor made programs for SOE's and their respective needs.

Change status quo or transcend status quo will be more difficult, we do not really need that, we can concentrate on what we have and where we can improve. Therefore let us first improve from where we are right now.

Uni Lausanne

UniL has always reacted to the wishes of the participants. All the propositions CTC made were easily introduced. Innovation can be done, also in the HR field. High tech companies, how do they manage this?

We can also visit more cantonal and city governments, but then the language issue comes up very quickly.

Challenge for the trainers: we get questions only a week before the program starts. It is difficult for the trainers to adapt to these demands (too short time span to digest questions).

Peter Sorg: Innovation will have to be defined and an innovation strategy would have to be clearly worked out. This is a key element. Innovation in SOEs? Innovation in science? Innovation in social fields? Innovation in business processes? etc. Last but not least: innovation alone does not create wealth. What creates wealth is the application respectively commercialization of innovation.

CTC: Ideas, concepts behind technology is more important than the pure technological side. It may be focus on start-ups, it may be how to motivate people for start-ups. How will innovation influence our society? What will the function be in a highly competitive world and in such a fast developing world? Ideas behind, ideas influencing society. New insights and tendencies for the future. What are the predictions for this kind of things? Learning new things, establishing innovation and moving to development (applied technology).

Quality and precision led personal development. Open the horizon, open the eyesight to things to come, to become better leaders.

This requires more suitable experts and the selection of more suitable organizations to be involved. We are interested also in big data, learning organization, robotics, nano technology, digitalization etc.

CTC was asked to provide more concrete input to UniL and SDC on the above.

Regarding the remaining program period and budget

Review of program and budget by UniL based on more concrete input to be provided by CTCSPMO to SDC (aforementioned education and training needs might require that experts are in-sourced at a higher than budgeted rate, maybe even from abroad).

Objective should be to manage within existing budget available. Maybe internal re-allocation of budget elements / shifting education and training format and content.

UniL to make revised budget available to SDC for review. Communication SDC and UniL to review budget and discuss remaining period with CTCSPMO.

Official end

Mr Shi: program to be based on a changing background that is why innovation is so important. The other element is quality that we feel we must increase along the developments. Innovation and quality set the stage for education and training. Proper assessment of needs and means will be very important. Further communication necessary to go on with an excellent program. Education and training needs for the remaining period have to be elaborated as soon as possible in a flexible communication environment.