

# Evaluation Report

Ex-Post Impact Evaluation of the Sustaining  
Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE)  
programme

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# Imprint

## **Evaluation Report**

Ex-Post Impact Evaluation of the Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme

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# Abbreviations

ILO	International Labour Organization
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SCORE	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises
SECO	Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (Switzerland)
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norway)
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
IP	Implementing Partners
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
BEDO	Business & Export Development Organization (Indonesia)
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
P3D	Centre for Regional Productivity Development (Indonesia)
CITEs	Centres for Productive Innovation and Technological Transfer (Peru)
TIP	Technological Institute of Production (Peru)
MTPE	Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion (Peru)
CDE	Business Development Center (Peru)
SNP	National Fisheries Society (Peru)
OWIT	Organization of Women in International Trade (Peru)
STSG	Skill Training Support Group (Ghana)
STCCI	Sekondi Takoradi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (Ghana)
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation (Germany)
MDPI	Management Development and Productivity Institute (Ghana)
MEM	Ministry of Emergency Management (China)
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (India)
AIEMA	Ambattur Industrial Estate Manufacturers Association (India)
VCCI	Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Viet Nam)



SME TAC	SME Technical Assistance Centre (Viet Nam)
ICP	International Centre for Productivity (Colombia)
MoM	Ministry of Manpower (Indonesia)
APINDO	Employers' Association of Indonesia (Indonesia)
SMI	Semut Management Indonesia (Indonesia)
BLK2	Balai Latihan Kerja (Work Training Centre) Semarang (Indonesia)
PRODUCE	Ministry of Production (Peru)
USAT	Santo Toribio University (Peru)
CONFIEP	National Confederation of Private Business Institutions (Peru)
IECC	International Exchange and Cooperation Centre (China)
CICO	Zhejiang Communication Investment Group Co., Ltd. (China)
SAWS	State Administration of Work Safety (China)
CCB	Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá (Colombia)
MELR	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (Ghana)
MOTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry (Ghana)
AAEA	Ahmednagar Auto & Engineering Association (India)
SME-TDC	SME-Technology Development Centre (India)
APCR	Association for Promotion of Competitive and Responsible Enterprises
HAWA	Handicraft and Wood Processing Association of Chi Minh City (Viet Nam)
BIFA	Binh Duong Furniture Association (Viet Nam)
FPA	Binh Dinh Forestry Product Association (Viet Nam)
CSID	Center for Supporting Industries Development (Viet Nam)



# Executive Summary

The International Labour Organization (ILO) commissioned an ex-post impact assessment of the Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme. The evaluation was conducted between March and December 2024.

## Evaluation approach

This ex-post impact evaluation employed a mixed-method approach, drawing on Outcome Harvesting (OH) and Contribution Analysis (CA) techniques to guide its design. While not following a full OH or CA methodology, the evaluation used these elements to identify intended and unintended outcomes, as well as to explore how SCORE Training may have contributed to observed impacts. The focus was on Indonesia and Peru, with in-country visits and SME surveys for detailed analysis. The other countries were assessed through desk research and online interviews.

### Data sources and tools:

- **Document review:** Annual reports, evaluation reports, and various impact assessment studies from Phase I - Phase III were examined.
- **Data review:** ILO's SCORE M&E database (2009–2024) for seven countries was analysed to understand the overall programme impact at the SME level, using baseline and endline assessments.
- **Online survey:** The survey was distributed in English, Bahasa, and Spanish to 864 SMEs in Indonesia and Peru. To enhance outreach, alternative methods like WhatsApp and the snowball approach were used. This resulted in 192 responses (131 from Indonesia and 61 from Peru).
- **Interviews:** 86 stakeholders were engaged. Field visits in Indonesia and Peru allowed for direct interactions, while online interviews were conducted in other countries. Focus group discussions included 24 trainers in Indonesia and Peru.
- **Triangulation and analysis:** Findings from documents, data, surveys, and interviews were cross-referenced to ensure conclusions were supported by multiple sources. Data were also broken down by country, company size, sector, and training year to identify patterns affecting SCORE Training's impact.

## Evaluation results

### SME-level sustainability

**SCORE Training has effectively driven the adoption of modern management practices in all seven countries**, with a strong focus on Workplace Cooperation in Indonesia, Peru, India, and Viet Nam. In China, Colombia, and Ghana, practices were adopted more broadly across key areas. Adoption rates in some countries increased significantly right after the SCORE Training—for instance, an eight-fold rise in Indonesia and a fourteen-fold rise in India for Workplace



Cooperation. The structured, coaching-based SCORE methodology was highlighted as a key factor in sustaining these changes, fostering ownership, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

**In-depth studies in Indonesia and Peru show that on average 65%<sup>1</sup> of surveyed companies adopted SCORE Training-related practices after the training, with 92% sustaining them over time.** Minimal declines (1.4 to 11 percentage points) were observed across short-, medium-, and long-term periods, demonstrating strong sustainability. Many companies replicated and scaled these practices to other departments or sister companies, with leadership involvement and employee engagement playing crucial roles in long-term success. Larger companies faced additional challenges, such as employee turnover and the need for continuous training.

### **SME-level impact**

Improvements in key performance indicators (KPIs) varied across countries, with reported positive changes in operational efficiency, resource management, and employee well-being ranging from 23% in Colombia to 87% in China. In addition to SCORE Training, economic and political factors significantly influenced these outcomes. **In Indonesia and Peru, where the changes were analysed in detail, over 94% of companies reported moderate to significant improvements in areas such as productivity, working conditions, and employee engagement as a direct result of SCORE Training.** Furthermore, the training instilled a culture of continuous improvement, enabling businesses to achieve lasting benefits. For instance, data from Indonesia and Peru demonstrate that these benefits increase over time as companies refine, scale, and integrate the practices learned during the training into their operations.

### **Institutional-level impact and sustainability**

The sustainability of SCORE Training delivery varied. In countries like Indonesia, China, and Viet Nam, strong institutional leadership, active public-private partnerships, and tailored local adaptations ensured ongoing implementation. For example, in Indonesia, BEDO and SMI actively supported training delivery, while in China, the SCORE Academy and IECC provided crucial institutional backing. In Viet Nam, VCCI and SME TAC played pivotal roles in embedding SCORE Training into local enterprise support systems. Conversely, in Peru, Colombia, Ghana, and India, the lack of lead implementation partners, centralized coordination, and adequate funding significantly hindered sustainability efforts. These countries struggled to maintain momentum, as the absence of coordinated support and financial resources made it challenging to institutionalize the training and ensure long-term impact.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure represents an average adoption rate across all individual management practices and should not be interpreted to mean that 35% of companies did not adopt any SCORE-related practices. In reality, nearly all companies adopted at least one practice.



	SME-level sustainability	SME-level impact	Institutional impact & sustainability	Strength of evidence
Indonesia	Moderate-High	High	Moderate-High	Strong
Peru	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Limited	Strong
China*	High	N/A	High	Moderate
Colombia*	Moderate-High	N/A	Limited	Weak
Ghana*	Moderate-High	N/A	Moderate	
India*	Moderate	N/A	Limited	
Viet Nam*	Moderate-High	N/A	Moderate - High	

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1: Focus on selecting and capacitating a few key lead implementation partners; and emphasise embedding SCORE Training into national and regional policy frameworks for sustained and scalable impact.** The evaluation found that the lack of capable lead organisations has hindered the sustainability of SCORE Training in many countries. While private sector and lead buyer engagement is valuable, it often lacks scale. Embedding SCORE Training into government-led SME development policies and programmes can provide a more sustainable, wide-reaching impact.

**Recommendation 2: Continue to provide systematic support for active implementation partners for long-term sustainability and foster cross-country collaboration and consistent implementation of SCORE Training.** The evaluation found that inconsistent support from the ILO weakens long-term sustainability, as implementation often depends on individual efforts rather than structured support systems. Systematic support will help partners sustain engagement and improve collaboration across countries.

**Recommendation 3: Establish a structured adaptation framework for SCORE Training to enable flexibility while preserving its core competitive advantage.** The adaptability of SCORE Training has been essential to its relevance across diverse contexts. However, without a clear framework, there is a risk of deviating from its core principles, including its methodology, workplace cooperation, and worker engagement. Implementing a structured approach will help maintain a balance between flexibility and consistency.

**Recommendation 4: Enhance incentives for company participation in SCORE Training by aligning it with recognized standards and providing meaningful recognition for trained companies.** To increase company participation, incentives must be tangible and directly relevant to business objectives. Aligning SCORE Training with recognized standards (e.g., ISO, Fair Trade, B-Corp) and international frameworks like the UN SDGs can enhance its value. Providing meaningful recognition for companies successfully implementing SCORE Training practices will increase motivation, visibility, and marketability for those companies.



# 1. Introduction

## The SCORE Programme

The Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme, a global programme by the International Labour Organization (ILO), aims to improve productivity and working conditions in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (see Annex 1 for more details). It is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) over four phases:

- Phase I (2009-2013): USD 11 million
- Phase II (2013-2017): USD 19.4 million
- Phase III (2017-2021): USD 20.7 million
- Phase IV (2021-2024): USD 3.1 million

The core component of the programme is the SCORE Training, which combines practical classroom training with in-factory consulting. The training demonstrates international best practices in the manufacturing and service sectors, facilitating SMEs' integration into global supply chains. With funding from SECO and NORAD, the ILO has supported government agencies, training providers, industry associations and trade unions in 11 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to offer SCORE Training to enterprises. Additionally, the SCORE Training has been implemented in over 30 countries with support from various other funding sources. Since its inception, over 5,878 enterprises have been trained and more than one million workers have benefited from the programme<sup>2</sup>.

## Impact evaluation background

### Evaluation purpose and objectives

Since the start of the SCORE programme, several evaluations and impact assessments have been conducted, including the SCORE Programme Institutional Impact Assessment (2021), the mid-term evaluation for Myanmar (2021), and impact assessments in Peru (2020), Viet Nam (2017), Ghana (2016), and India (2016). These studies provide insights into the impacts of the SCORE programme on SME performance, as well as its effects on implementation partners, and lead buyers. However, the assessments were conducted while the ILO SCORE Programme's support was still active, usually within a few years after the training's introduction. Thus, the long-term impact and sustainability of the SCORE programme have not been systematically examined.

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<sup>2</sup> The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (November 2024)



In order to fill this gap, the ILO commissioned orange & teal to conduct an ex-post impact evaluation of the SCORE programme. This evaluation, implemented between March and December 2024, aims to understand the impact and sustainability of the SCORE programme after donor funding ended, and to identify lessons learned and key success factors for sustainable SME training delivery.

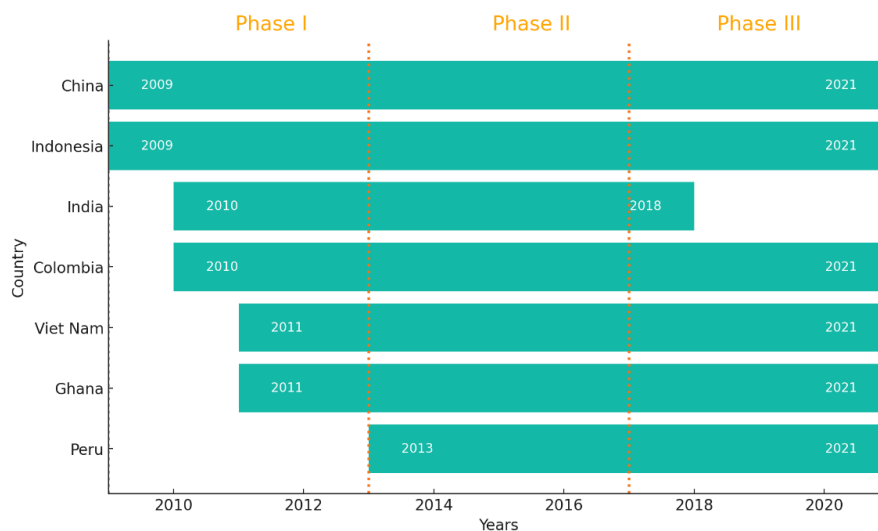
Specifically, the objectives of the impact evaluation are to:

- **Assess the sustainability** of programme results at the enterprise and implementation partners (IP) levels and analyse factors affecting sustainability. The role of lead buyers and government agencies are also considered to a lesser extent.
- **Evaluate the impact** of the SCORE Training on the participating enterprises' performance and overall growth over the period 2009-2024.
- **Explore the development of SCORE Training** as a key ILO service for SMEs beyond NORAD and SECO support.

### Scope, time, and intended users

The evaluation covers the SCORE Training's impact in seven countries: China, Colombia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Peru, and Viet Nam during the period 2009-2024. These countries were selected<sup>3</sup> to understand the impact and sustainability of the SCORE programme after the ILO's support phased out at the end of phase III in 2021 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: SECO - NORAD funded SCORE programme per country



<sup>3</sup> These countries were selected as they have not benefited from other SME development interventions by the ILO or other development partners that follow or build on the SCORE programme for at least two years after the SCORE Programme was completed, providing the most relevant and useful insights for future ILO programs sustainability strategy.



Among the seven countries, as recommended by the ex-post impact evaluability assessment, the main focus is on Indonesia and Peru where in-country visits and SME surveys were conducted for an in-depth analysis. The other countries were examined through desk studies and online interviews. The report's primary audience includes the ILO, NORAD, and SECO, focusing on assessing interventions' effectiveness, impact, and value for money to guide future funding and programming. Secondary audiences include SCORE implementation partners, policymakers, and practitioners, who can utilize the findings to refine implementation strategies, service delivery, and policies for greater impact. Insights may also interest private sector partners and civil society groups seeking evidence-based practices and opportunities for advocacy, collaboration, or scaling successful private sector development approaches.

## 2. Evaluation Methodology

### Evaluation design and approach

This ex-post impact evaluation was primarily conducted using a mixed-method approach, drawing inspiration from elements of Outcome Harvesting (OH) and Contribution Analysis (CA) to strengthen the analysis. While not strictly following all the steps of a traditional OH or CA methodology, the evaluation selectively integrated certain techniques to enhance understanding of both intended and unintended effects, as well as to explore plausible contribution pathways for observed outcomes.

Specifically, the SCORE Programme theory of change (ToC) at the enterprise and institutional levels (Annex 1) provided a guiding framework for the evaluation design, highlighting key result areas and informing data collection tools. By doing so, the evaluation sought to:

- Identify and verify both planned and unplanned outcomes, drawing on OH-inspired techniques such as participatory interviews and surveys.
- Examine the links between specific SCORE Training elements and observed impacts, using CA-like reasoning to create a narrative of SCORE's contributions, while acknowledging other influencing factors.

The evaluation employed a range of data collection methods—comprising in-depth interviews, surveys, data analysis, and document review to gather data on both outcomes and impacts as per the SCORE Programme ToCs. Data was then triangulated to strengthen the reliability and validity of findings. For instance, perceptions gleaned from interviews were cross-referenced against survey responses, monitoring data, and documentary evidence (see Annex 8).

While this integration of OH and CA served to enhance the rigour and depth of the causal analysis, it should be noted that these methods were not implemented in their full, traditional form. Instead, the evaluation used select components of OH and CA to reinforce a mixed-method design that remained flexible and responsive to the available resources, data quality, and the evolving context of the evaluation.



## Data collection and analysis

The evaluation employed both quantitative and qualitative methods and tools.

**Document review:** Annual reports, evaluation reports and several impact assessment studies from Phase III were reviewed to find answers to the evaluation questions and to contextualise the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

**Data review:** The ILO's SCORE M&E database was an important source of information related to trainers, enterprises, and organisations delivering SCORE Training in various countries and globally. Raw data on seven countries during 2009-2024 was retrieved and analysed to provide an overview of SCORE programme in each country, as well as to understand the overall impact of the SCORE Training at SME level, with baseline and endline assessments.

**Online survey:** An online survey was conducted to capture the perceived impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs in the two focus countries, Indonesia and Peru. The survey, available in English, Bahasa, and Spanish, was sent to 864 valid SME contacts (458 in Indonesia, and 406 in Peru), sourced from the SCORE M&E database.<sup>4</sup> However, a low engagement rate from the email invitation was observed, as the majority of SMEs were not responsive via email, particularly micro enterprises, and SMEs who participated in the training long before 2021. To mitigate this issue, alternative methods were employed, including sending mass survey invitations via WhatsApp and employing a snowball approach. The survey invitation was distributed through WhatsApp using the numbers available in the SCORE M&E database and shared with SCORE trainers and training providers, who were encouraged to circulate the survey within their networks. This method made it challenging to ascertain the exact number of SMEs reached, preventing the calculation of an accurate survey response rate. However, the close relationship between the trainers and the SMEs resulted in a significantly higher response rate.

The survey was open for three weeks, and two reminders were sent to engage respondents and boost the response rate. Overall, 192 participants responded to the survey (131 from Indonesia and 61 from Peru)<sup>5</sup>. This offers structured data for robust and valid findings. Additional results not included in the main body of the report can be found in Annex 6 and 7.

**Interviews:** We interacted with 86 stakeholders, primarily through face-to-face interactions in Indonesia and Peru during the field visits, and online in other countries. Of which, focus group discussions covered 24 trainers in Indonesia and Peru. Annex 3 contains the list of the participants. Analytical steps were taken throughout the evaluation process to see what information was still required and where sufficient information had been collected to respond to

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<sup>4</sup> This database includes all SMEs registered as recipients of the SCORE Training between 2009 and 2024. It is important to note that not all SMEs that participated in SCORE Training were registered in the database, especially after 2021. Since the conclusion of ILO financial support and oversight, many trainers have not consistently followed the comprehensive data collection process or have failed to register all the SMEs they trained.

<sup>5</sup> See Figure 37 and Figure 37 for more on characteristics of companies participating in the survey.



the evaluation questions. Available data was disaggregated according to country, company size, sector, and training year to discern key trends that might have influenced the training impact.

Table 1: Key characteristics of survey and interview participants

	Country			Respondent type				
	Indonesia	Peru	Others	SME	IP	Lead buyer	Government	ILO
Survey	131 (68%)	61 (32%)	N/A	192 (100%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Interviews	37	36	13	30	11	5	7	8

**Analysis and triangulation:** Throughout the evaluation, data were systematically reviewed to identify gaps and determine whether sufficient information had been gathered to answer the evaluation questions. By comparing and cross-referencing insights from documents, quantitative data, surveys, and interviews, the evaluation team could verify or challenge findings, ensuring that conclusions were built on multiple lines of evidence. Where possible, data were disaggregated by country, company size, sector, and training year to uncover underlying patterns and influences on programme impact. This integrated and iterative analytical process enhanced both the reliability and validity of the final conclusions and recommendations.

## Challenges and limitations

Several challenges and limitations arose during the data gathering and assessment process. Measures were taken to reduce these limitations, as detailed below, but they could not be fully eliminated<sup>6</sup>. It is therefore important to consider these limitations when interpreting the results:

- **Limits to representativeness:** Several interrelated challenges concerning the selection, diversity, and representation of stakeholders emerged during the evaluation. The purposeful selection of enterprises for interviews introduced the risk of bias, as these selected enterprises might not fully represent the broader group of participants in the SCORE programme. For instance, those who agreed to participate in the evaluation may generally be more successful SMEs. Additionally, the experiences and perspectives of these SMEs might not accurately reflect those of SMEs from different industries and regions. *Mitigation:* a multi-faceted approach was employed by: 1. Reviewing the stakeholder lists with an eye on representation and inclusion to ensure a wide variety of views; 2. Triangulation of findings, drawing upon interviews with different sets of stakeholders, surveys, existing documentation, and quantitative data to corroborate

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<sup>6</sup> Risks mentioned in the inception report that either did not arise or were effectively mitigated are not listed in this section.



findings; 3. Contextualizing findings, where possible, by providing differences between types of stakeholders.

- **Self-assessment bias:** The interview and survey primarily capture SME owners' perceived outcomes and impacts of the SCORE Training, rather than outcomes objectively assessed by the trainers. In addition, social desirability bias could have led interviewees to alter their responses to align with the expected results of the evaluation. *Mitigation:* Findings were triangulated using multiple data sources to corroborate or qualify the results. For instance, where possible, we cross-referenced the perceived outcomes of certain enterprises with any available objective data, such as performance metrics, financial outcomes, or productivity measures that the SMEs or trainers have collected independently. However, fully attributing changes to SCORE Training is not feasible due to limited data. While methods like regression analysis could help isolate SCORE's impact, the available data does not allow for this.
- **Data-related limitations:** The input of data into the SCORE M&E database by trainers is entirely voluntary, leading to variability in data completeness and availability following the exit of ILO support, particularly after 2021. *Mitigation:* To address data robustness, the analysis for Indonesia and Peru focuses on survey data from July 2024 and interview insights to assess sustainability and impact. For countries where only desk research and online interviews were conducted, we focused on changes before and after 2021, avoiding interpretation of the full data trend from 2009 to 2024, particularly where data gaps were most significant. Interview insights are also triangulated to capture major trend differences.

## Ethical considerations

We adhered to **ethical guidelines** by implementing measures for informed consent, ensuring anonymity, and maintaining data security in the following ways:

- Interview, survey, and focus group participants received information on the purpose of the impact evaluation, their involvement, and their rights. Cultural sensitivities and local customs were respected throughout the evaluation period, according to the principle of 'do no harm.'
- Participants received a generic link to the survey to prevent any possibility of identifying individual respondents; the survey included options to opt-out and delete responses.
- Recordings, transcripts, and other memos and contact information were deleted upon completion of the evaluation.



# 3. Findings

## 3.1. Global overview

### SCORE Training<sup>7</sup>

During the SECO-NORAD funded period (Table 2), the SCORE programme delivered training to 3,135 SMEs across the seven countries which are part of this review – Indonesia, Peru, China, Colombia, Ghana, India, and Viet Nam – training a total of 28,454 employees, of whom 57% were workers and 43% management-level staff. 36% of the training participants were women. These figures vary by country and will be discussed in detail in subsequent sections. Table 2 provides a summary of the SCORE Trainings by country.

After ILO support was phased out in 2021, the number of SMEs trained may not fully reflect the actual figures due to inconsistencies in data recording by trainers (see the Challenges and Limitations section in chapter 2 for more details). Nevertheless, a total of 538 enterprises were trained across the seven countries<sup>8</sup>—averaging over 180 enterprises per year. This represents roughly half of the annual average number of enterprises trained during the previous period. However, the true number of companies trained in the later period is likely higher, as not all training sessions were consistently documented by trainers.

Table 2: Summary statistics per country during the SECO-NORAD funded period

	SMEs trained	% of SMEs female owned	Size (average staff size)	Staff trained	% of worker trained	% of female trained	Average number of employees per SME	Average number of modules per SME
Indonesia	562	42%	34,872	2,475	63%	47%	62	1.25
Peru	430	32%	19,981	2,360	61%	38%	46	1.35
China	1,091	8%	286,166	15,448	55%	38%	262	1.94
Colombia	242	24%	74,384	1,610	60%	54%	307	1.59
Ghana	420	29%	15,345	2,333	64%	34%	37	1.53

<sup>7</sup> The SCORE Programme's main intervention is a training that combines classroom sessions with in-factory consulting to enhance decent work and workplace cooperation in SMEs. It includes five core modules—Workplace Cooperation, Quality Improvement, Clean/Lean Production, Human Resources Management, and Occupational Health and Safety (OSH). Additional modules were developed later, covering topics like Hospitality Coaching, Gender Equality, Responsible Business, Working Time, SCORE Basics, Covid-19 response, and the Factory Improvement Toolset (FIT).

<sup>8</sup> The distribution over the period following the end of the ILO SCORE Programme funding was as follows: Ghana (274 enterprises trained), Peru (98), Indonesia (53), China (48), India (46), Colombia (10), and Viet Nam (9). However, it is important to note that the accuracy of this data is uncertain, as the distribution is likely incomplete due to inconsistencies in data recording by trainers. In addition, the share of trainings recorded is expected to vary greatly between the countries.



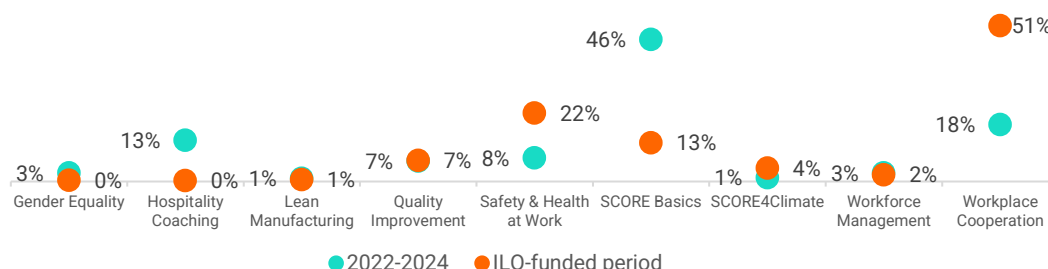
India	101	18%	7,409	1,473	37%	10%	73	2.64
Viet Nam	277	13%	142,838	2,755	57%	31%	516	1.47

Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Figure 2 shows that during the SECO-NORAD funded period, the Workplace Cooperation module was provided most frequently (51% of all modules), as it is a mandatory subject before taking other modules. In some cases, additional modules were offered as part of the standard package, based on the implementers' mandate and interests. For instance, in China the Ministry for Emergency Management (MEM) offered a training package combining both Workplace Cooperation and OSH modules.

In many countries – including Indonesia, Peru, Ghana, and China – SCORE Basics<sup>9</sup>, a programme typically offered to micro and small enterprises, has seen increased delivery. Various adaptations of the SCORE Training have also been implemented to meet evolving local demands, such as SCORE+, iCare, SCORE Business Continuity Programme (BCP), and SCORE Hospitality Coaching (HoCo) in Indonesia, as well as SCORE Plus and SCORE + FIT in China. In contrast, the traditional five-module SCORE Training remains the primary offering in other countries, like India and Viet Nam.

Figure 2: SCORE Modules delivered (% of total modules implemented)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

<sup>9</sup> SCORE Basics is a condensed and integrated training package that covers key areas such as workplace cooperation, joint problem-solving, quality management, human resources (HR), and occupational safety and health (OSH). The training is delivered through a 3-day workshop, followed by several in-enterprise coaching sessions. This programme was developed in response to changing demands in various countries, including Bolivia, Indonesia, and Ghana, among others.



## SME-level impact and sustainability

### Improvements and sustainability in management practices

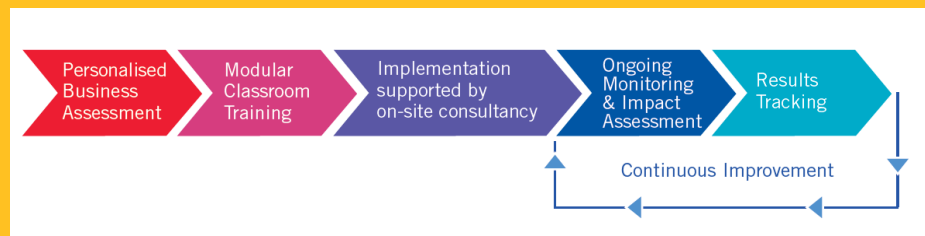
Data and interviews indicate that **SCORE Training has been effective in driving the adoption of modern management practices across all seven countries**. In Indonesia, Peru, India, and Viet Nam, most companies focused on adopting Workplace Cooperation practices, with less emphasis on other areas. In contrast, companies in China, Colombia, and Ghana adopted practices across most key areas, reflecting varying management needs, priorities, existing capacities, and the maturity of their systems. Notably, the training led to significantly increased adoption rates in several instances—for example, an eight-fold increase in Indonesia and a fourteen-fold increase in India for Workplace Cooperation—while other areas across different countries saw increases ranging from 1.5 to threefold.

Stakeholders unanimously recognize **the SCORE methodology and the Workplace Cooperation module as fundamental to the effectiveness and competitive advantage of SCORE Training** (see **Spotlight 1**). The coaching-based approach, supporting enterprises form internal teams to identify and solve challenges, fosters ownership and autonomy of the frontline workers. It provides a structured method that encourages bottom-up employee involvement, resulting in sustainable solutions and lasting change – key benefits consistently highlighted by participants. The rigorous SCORE methodology is highly effective in driving meaningful transformations in SMEs, offering not only knowledge but also the tools and support needed to successfully integrate change.

#### **Spotlight 1: SCORE methodology as the key value-addition of the SCORE Training**

Unlike conventional training, the SCORE methodology provides a structured four-phase coaching-based approach: (1) personalised business assessment, (2) modular classroom training, (3) on-site consultancy, and (4) follow-up with ongoing monitoring and impact assessment.

The training is followed by on-site consultancy, allowing businesses to implement best practices with direct expert support, enhancing the adoption of new management practices. Continuous, data-based monitoring ensures effective progress tracking and necessary adjustments, driving sustained improvements. This iterative cycle of assessment, training, practical implementation, and evaluation fosters a culture of continuous improvement, empowering SMEs to achieve tangible, lasting changes in efficiency, workplace cooperation, and productivity.



Source: [Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises Improving productivity and working conditions, ILO](#)



## Sustainability in management practices

The in-depth studies in Indonesia and Peru show that 65%<sup>10</sup> of companies surveyed adopt SCORE-related management practices on average, and of these, approximately 92% sustaining these practices, meaning that **the majority of companies surveyed, approximately three out of five overall, continue to implement the management practices they adopt**. Across short-term (less than 3 years), medium-term (3 to 5 years), and long-term (more than 6 years) periods, only minimal decline in the adoption rate is observed, ranging from 1.4 to 11 percentage points across both countries, demonstrating remarkable sustainability. Interviews across seven countries confirm that many companies not only sustain but also replicate and scale up the SCORE methodology across different departments. Some extend the approach to sister companies. In China, for instance, the SCORE methodology has been embedded as a core management philosophy throughout the entire network of subsidiaries within a conglomerate.

Surveys and interviews underscore **the importance of leadership involvement and engaging employees at all levels to change mindset, ensuring the effective adoption and long-term sustainability of management practices**. In larger companies, additional complexities come into play. Sustaining SCORE Training practices over time requires a combination of many factors, including strong management support, motivated staff, effective handling of employee turnover, and ongoing efforts in training and information sharing.

## Impact of the SCORE Training

**The improvement in KPIs among companies participating in SCORE Training shows significant variation across the seven countries.** In Colombia, around 23% of companies reported average positive changes across operational efficiency, resource management, and employee well-being. This figure rises to about 30% in Ghana and Viet Nam, around 38% in Peru and India, 50% in Indonesia and 87% in China<sup>11</sup>. These improvements were observed to boost customer satisfaction, profits, and sales in trained companies. However, it is important to note that various factors, including economic and political conditions and the (self-)selection into the training, significantly influence these changes – not solely the effects of the SCORE Training.

Evidence from Indonesia and Peru, where this was assessed in a survey, shows that **over 94% of companies credited SCORE Training with contributing moderately to significantly to improvements in operational efficiency, resource management, and employee well-being**. The training led to substantial improvements in productivity, cost savings, and across different key metrics. In other countries, impact of the SCORE Training was also confirmed through interview

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<sup>10</sup> This figure represents an average adoption rate across all individual management practices and should not be interpreted to mean that 35% of companies did not adopt any SCORE-related practices. In reality, nearly all companies adopted at least one practice.

<sup>11</sup> SCORE Training may not directly influence all KPIs, as companies reported benefits across a broad range of areas, including some outside the specific focus of the training modules. This makes averages a useful but imperfect measure for summarising SCORE Training's outcomes. While averages provide a helpful overview of general trends, they can mask variability and nuanced impacts observed across different KPIs and countries. For this reason, detailed cluster analysis and individual KPI assessments are essential and will be utilised in later sections to fully understanding the breadth and depth of SCORE Training's impact.



insights. While China experienced significant improvements across all key metrics, most other countries reported greater gains in operational efficiency. This trend is expected, as companies often prioritise cost-effective management practices that directly improve business operations before focusing on areas like HR management once immediate business benefits are realised.

A common outcome across companies that have seen significant impact was **the development of a culture of continuous improvement**. This shift in mindset, fostered by the SCORE Training, has enabled many businesses to achieve lasting, sustainable change. This aligns with data in Indonesia and Peru showing that the benefits of the SCORE Training become more pronounced over time, as companies refine and embed these practices.

## Institutional-level impact and sustainability

The sustainability of SCORE Training varies across the seven countries. Strong leadership, effective public-private partnerships, and local adaptations have supported ongoing training in countries like Indonesia, China, and Viet Nam. However, in Peru, Colombia, Ghana, and India, the lack of strong lead implementation partners, fragmented implementation without central coordination, lack of engagement from lead buyers, and limited financial support remain major barriers to sustainability.

### Indonesia

Since the end of the ILO SCORE programme in 2021, **the sustainability of SCORE Training in Indonesia has hinged on the proactive role of key private partners**. BEDO has emerged as the lead organisation, integrating SCORE Training into its core services, marketing to SMEs and lead buyers, and creating tailored offerings like SCORE Plus. SMI also remains highly active, expanding its reach through partnerships with government bodies and promoting sustainable business practices. Academic institutions such as Parahyangan University and APP Polytechnic Jakarta continue offering SCORE Training as part of community initiatives, albeit on a smaller scale. Conversely, some private IPs have scaled back or ceased their SCORE Training delivery due to limited commercial returns. Funding for SCORE Training now primarily comes from government subsidies, SME fees, and ad hoc contributions from lead buyers. The SCORE Training sustainability is driven by the adaptability and funding efforts of active partners like BEDO, SMI, and academic institutions, who have managed to keep SCORE Training relevant in the local context.

### Peru

In Peru, **SCORE Training has become fragmented since the end of ILO funding in 2021, with no clear lead institution guiding its continuation**. Key government partners like CITEs, affiliated with the Ministry of Production (PRODUCE), and the Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion (MTPE) played important roles in sector-specific training. While the MTPE has ceased their trainings, PRODUCE continues some implementation, and CITEs have seen mixed success in integrating SCORE Training as a standard service – one CITE interviewed achieving consistent delivery, while another struggled. The Business Development Center of Santo Toribio University (USAT) and independent trainers have maintained training efforts, and SME Peru Association has



re-engaged recently, but other private implementers like Fab Lab and most lead buyers have ceased involvement. The SCORE Trainers Association, initially formed to sustain SCORE Training after ILO support, has struggled with inactivity and poor coordination, limiting its effectiveness. Funding for SCORE Training has shifted from ILO and lead buyers to primarily localised public and private sources, which has proven challenging for micro and small enterprises due to cost barriers.

### China

In China, **the sustainability of SCORE Training currently depends on two key partners: the SCORE Academy and the International Exchange and Cooperation Centre (IECC)**, part of the Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM), both operating independently without collaboration. The SCORE Academy engages lead buyers in using SCORE Training as a tool for supply chain development but faces sustainability risks if lead buyers shift priorities or relocate supply chains. Despite this, it has expanded beyond China, piloting training in Indonesia, Viet Nam, and Pakistan. Meanwhile, IECC, supported by local governments, has trained over 1,800 enterprises, primarily state-owned and SMEs, focusing on safety and productivity. While the SCORE Academy struggles with limited SME demand and funding instability, the long-term backing from the MEM ensures IECC's consistent delivery to a wide network. Sustainability of the SCORE Academy hinges on diversifying funding, adapting training content, and expanding markets while addressing challenges from reliance on lead buyers and competing government-subsidised programmes.

### Colombia

The SCORE programme partnered with Alianzas por el Desarrollo, CIP, and the Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá to implement training during the SECO-NORAD funded period. The lack of a unified strategy between public and private implementers led to fragmented efforts, with each partner pursuing independent approaches and pricing, diluting the programme's effectiveness. Following the end of ILO funding in 2021, **the sustainability of SCORE Training faced significant challenges. The absence of coordinated promotion and central leadership, combined with political changes, hindered engagement and reduced the number of new companies.** Funding from government initiatives like "Factories for Productivity" was inconsistent, and support from lead buyers dwindled. Adaptations of SCORE Training were effective in addressing specific needs across sectors like manufacturing, but further updates were constrained by limited resources.

### Ghana

In Ghana, the SCORE programme collaborated with both public and private institutions, including MDPI, STSG, and STCCI, along with support from ministries like Employment and Trade. Since 2021, GIZ's funding has been key in maintaining the sustainability of the SCORE Training, allowing MDPI to train over 500 enterprises. However, the absence of a central supervisory body has led to inconsistent quality among independent trainers. **Funding remains a challenge, with limited contributions from the private sector, government, and lead buyers, posing risks to long-term sustainability.** Adaptations to the SCORE Training have helped meet local needs, particularly in manufacturing and agro-processing, though there are concerns about unregulated changes by independent trainers.



## India

**The sustainability of SCORE Training in India has struggled since the end of ILO support, largely due to the absence of dedicated leadership and funding.** During the SECO-NORAD funded period, partners such as FICCI, AIEMA, and SME-TDC were involved, but without sustained leadership, momentum has diminished. The Association for Promotion of Competitive and Responsible Enterprises was created to carry on SCORE Training efforts, but its influence has been minimal. Early support from government programmes and donors like KOICA, as well as private backing from lead buyers, has dwindled. Current challenges include limited funding sources, with no ongoing government, donor, or lead buyer support. Private consultancy firms have adopted few elements of SCORE Training, but it is often rebranded, and without formal certification, its market appeal is limited in comparison to other frameworks like ESG, which offer quicker returns and recognised credentials. The SME training sector in India, part of the highly competitive business development support landscape, requires continuous promotion and innovation to remain visible. Without these efforts, SCORE Training has struggled to maintain its visibility and impact.

## Viet Nam

During the SECO-NORAD funded period, SCORE Programme in Viet Nam adopted distinct regional strategies: VCCI in the South focused on a market-driven approach, while SME TAC in the North targeted SMEs with government support. Since 2021, these key partners have integrated the SCORE Training into their broader capacity-building programmes, and tailoring SCORE Training tools to meet their specific needs. VCCI shifted towards sector-specific programmes, while SME TAC used SCORE Training's coaching model for SME development, and other partners diversified their services leveraging SCORE Training's credibility. Despite the challenges posed by political changes and leadership instability, **flexible implementation by VCCI and SME TAC, and alignment with new ILO initiatives like the Productivity Ecosystem Programme have sustained SCORE Training's momentum in Viet Nam.** Funding has shifted to self-funded and co-funded models, incorporating public-private co-funding, which influenced broader SME support policies in Viet Nam. Although lead buyer engagement was limited post-2021, collaborations with companies continued.

## 3.2. In-depth analysis

### 3.2.1. Indonesia

#### SCORE Programme in Indonesia

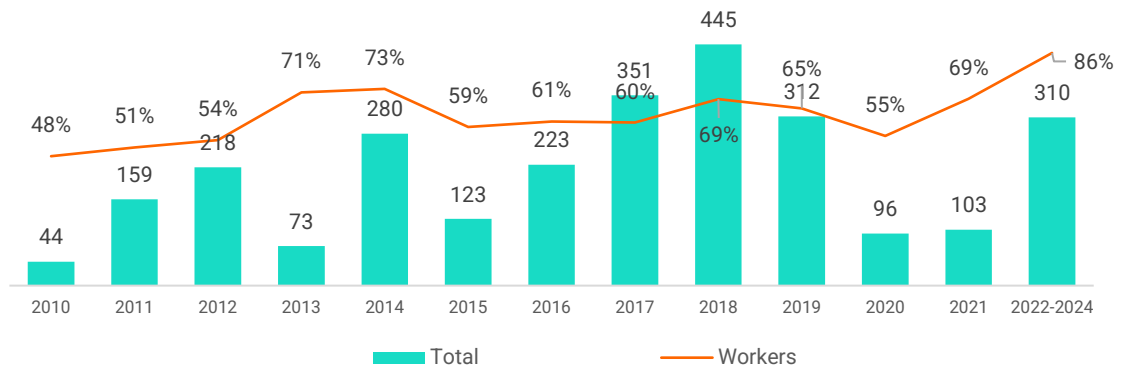
This section provides an overview of the evolution of the SCORE Training in the country based on feedback received, document reviews, and the data retrieved from the SCORE M&E database.



## SCORE Training

Since October 2009, the SCORE programme has trained 598 SMEs and 2,870 employees (48% women) in Indonesia, with approximately two-thirds of the participants being workers (Table 2). Following the end of ILO funding, the proportion of workers trained has reached a new high, with nearly 86% of all participants being workers (Figure 3).

Figure 3: SME Staff trained

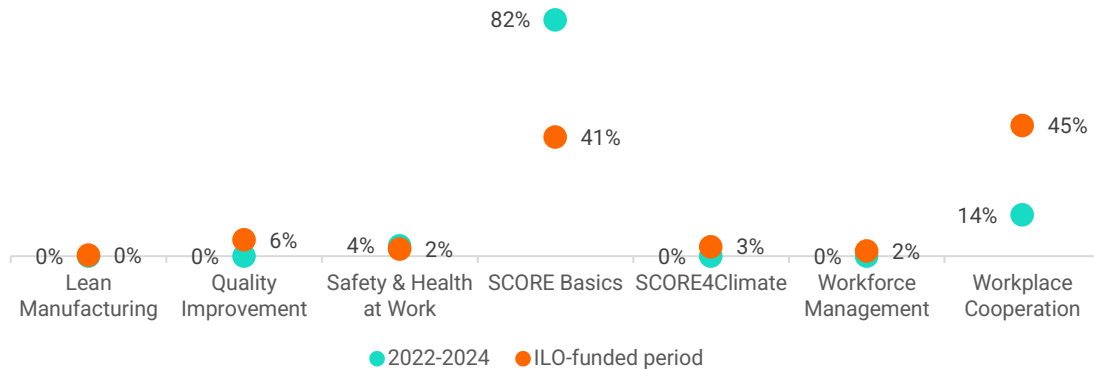


Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

The programme targeted enterprises in many sectors like automotive, food/ beverage, handicrafts, furniture, and apparel. The average enterprise in the programme has 62 employees. Field observations and interview findings indicate a predominant focus on micro and small enterprises, with only a few larger, medium-sized companies involved. The distribution has intensified during the 2022-2024 period, with SCORE Basics accounted for 82% of all modules delivered—double its share in the previous period (Figure 4). Consequently, demand for the Workplace Cooperation module has significantly declined, dropping to just one-third of its previous levels. However, this module, which covers essential topics like worker-manager communication, workplace organization, continuous improvement, and result measurement, is still offered as a key component of the Jakarta government's training initiative for sustainable business practices and productivity improvements.



Figure 4: SCORE Training Modules delivered (% of total modules implemented)



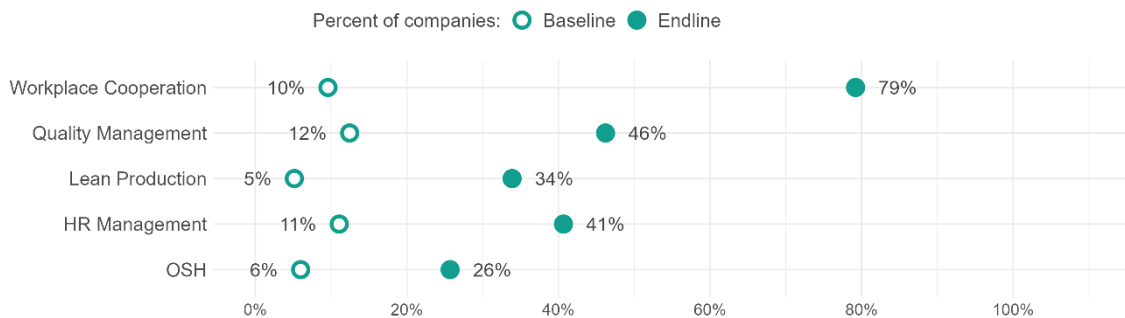
Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

## SME-level impact and sustainability

### Improvements in management practices

The SCORE M&E database contains 32 enterprise management practices, categorised into five SCORE Training key areas (Annex 5).<sup>12</sup>

Figure 5: Improvements in SMEs' management practices adoption: Baseline (pre-SCORE Training) vs Endline (post-SCORE Training)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: The graph shows the percentage of companies implementing management practices across five SCORE Training areas: Workplace Cooperation, Quality Management/Improvement, Clean/Lean Production, Human Resources/Workforce Management, and Safety & Health at Work (OSH), comparing baseline (pre-training) and endline (post-training) levels. Each

<sup>12</sup> While the original SCORE programme required detailed data collection, including baseline and endline assessments, BEDO and its partners now adjust their data collection based on project needs. For some projects, full data is collected as requested by donors, while for others, only workshop participation is recorded.



category includes a set of practices (See Annex 5 for more details). For each area, the average implementation percentage was calculated by averaging the baseline and endline percentages across all practices within the category. For more information on individual management practices, see Annex 6. While this provides a summary of changes, caution is necessary as averages may obscure variability among individual practices. For example, a high average endline percentage does not imply that all companies adopted every practice within the category.

**The SCORE Training has been a catalyst for a significant increase in the adoption of modern management practices.** Over the period 2009-2024, the average percentage of enterprises adopting new management practices increased nearly sixfold across all SCORE Training key areas, rising from just 8% to 45%<sup>13</sup>. The most significant improvement was observed in Workplace Cooperation where adoption rates rose by approximately eightfold (Figure 5).

Looking into more details (Figure 36), in Workplace Cooperation, nearly all enterprises swiftly implemented daily worker-management meetings, the 5S methodology, and the use of notice boards. According to interviewees, these straightforward improvements required minimal costs yet delivered significant and immediate results. In Quality Management, about half of the enterprises developed quality policies, established SOPs, gathered customer feedback, and consistently communicated information with employees. In Lean Production, several critical practices such as machine maintenance, productivity measurement, resource monitoring, material usage reduction which were largely absent before the training, though approximately half of the SMEs adopted them by the endline. Other practices including Takt time and line balancing were more difficult to implement.

However, the story in HR Management is more nuanced. While about half of the enterprises adopted essential labour practices such as minimum wage, overtime pay, and working time limits, fewer than a third implemented regular training programmes and complaint procedures. In OSH, only a quarter of the trained enterprises introduced practices such as risk assessments, emergency exit routes, PPE usage, and accident tracking. This lower uptake of HR Management and OSH practices is expected given the smaller number of companies that took these modules compared to Workplace Cooperation.

**Many SME owners, workers, and lead buyers identified mindset shift as a key challenge to adopting new practices.** The owners, managers, and workers were accustomed to their existing ways of doing business, the so-called “comfort zone”, making it difficult to embrace changes, even when new practices could improve productivity, safety, or efficiency. This challenge is especially pronounced in Indonesian culture, where open discussion, criticism, and vocalizing concerns are not the norms, complicating conversations about the need for change and the resolution of issues during implementation. Operational barriers, such as discomfort or an unsupportive working environment, can further impede the adoption of new practices, even when

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<sup>13</sup> The 45% reflects the average adoption level across all practices and categories at endline. It does not mean that every company implements 45% of the individual practices, nor that every individual practice has been adopted at a 45% rate. Certain practices are likely easier to implement or align better with company operations, leading to higher adoption rates. Others might be resource-intensive or complex, resulting in lower adoption rates. The 45% average smooths out these highs and lows, so the actual implementation of individual practices can vary significantly around this average. While the 45% average suggests that less than half of companies adopted some SCORE-related practices, a more detailed analysis of individual practices can be found in Annex 6 and in the main report to understand which were widely implemented and which faced challenges. In fact, the vast majority of companies adopted at least one practice.



their benefits are understood. Still, many interviewees noted that the SCORE programme provided valuable tools—such as worker-management meetings, suggestion boxes, and Kanban boards—to enhance communication, trust, and collaboration. These are helpful in creating conducive environment for changing mindset. However, for these practices to take root, the workplace culture and conditions must actively support and align with the goals of continuous improvement, demanding commitment and investment from both management and workers.

*"This did not happen before. Now every time we want to make a project, we sit together and we talk how we could do it better because sometimes from my side and for the staff side or for the worker side it's different angles what they see. This is how we can make changes." - MSEM owner*

*"During the implementation, those who didn't want to get out of their comfort zone, left. Those who stay are on board with the changes." – Worker*

*"With SCORE Training, we introduced new safety equipment like aprons and helmets for workers in high-risk areas. We all know this is to protect us but it is too hot in the factory, most of us are not able to wear helmets all the time. We switch back to wearing masks otherwise we cannot work." – Improvement project team*

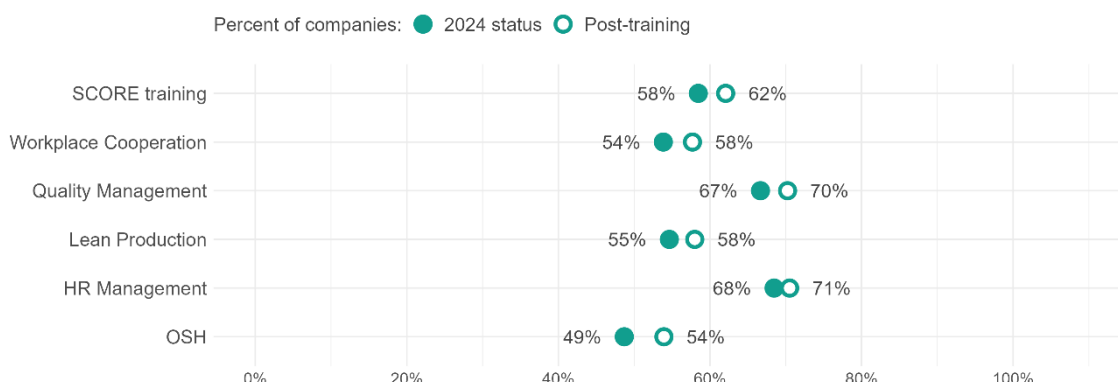
**Trainers emphasised the difficulty in shifting the mindset of business owners and employees when it comes to adopting new practices.** Many business owners struggle to see the value of SCORE Training unless it's directly required by buyers or offers immediate financial benefits. This hesitation stems from a reluctance to invest time and resources into training without the assurance of quick, tangible returns. Often, companies only take action when there is external pressure from buyers, revealing the difficulty in fostering a proactive approach among SMEs toward long-term improvement. Trainers also stressed **the importance of leveraging data and KPIs to showcase the benefits of change**, using measurable results to incentivise enterprises to implement improvements. This ability to provide measurable value, in addition to improving the worker-manager relationship and fostering a positive company culture, is one of the key strengths of SCORE Training.

### **Sustainability in management practices**

**Post-SCORE Training, SMEs have largely sustained their adoption of management practices.** In the survey, we asked SME owners or managers to identify the practices their companies adopted following the SCORE Training and to indicate whether these practices were sustained over time. Survey participants observed only a slight decline in the adoption rate, averaging a minimal 4 percentage point drop, from 62% to 58% in 2024. The decrease is consistent, ranging from 3 to 4 percentage points across key areas, with OSH practices experiencing the highest decline at just 5 percentage points (Figure 6). This evidence aligns with insights gathered from interviews and field observations.



Figure 6: Sustainability of SMEs' management practices adoption (Post-training - 2024)



Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

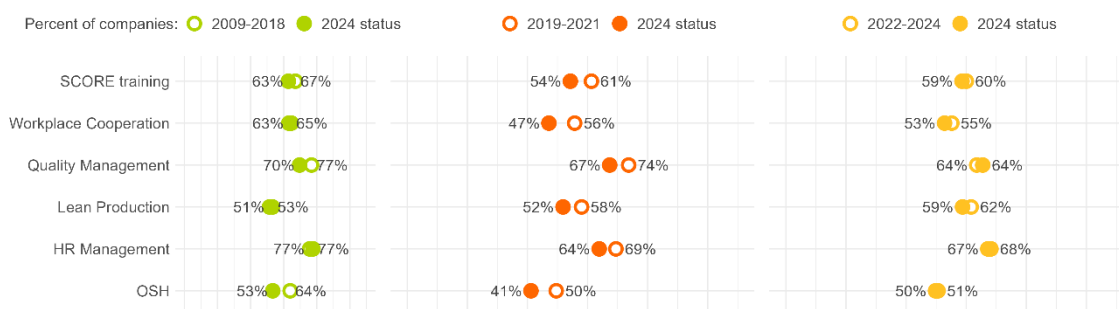
Note: This graph illustrates the percentage of 131 surveyed companies implementing management practices across five SCORE Training areas—Workplace Cooperation, Quality Management/Improvement, Clean/Lean Production, Human Resources/Workforce Management, and Safety & Health at Work (OSH)—at two points in time: post-training (immediately after SCORE Training) and in 2024 (current status). Only companies that participated in specific modules and implemented improvement projects within those modules were asked whether they continue to implement practices within the corresponding categories. As a result, not all companies were asked about all practices, as their responses were tied to the specific modules they completed. The percentages represent the average adoption levels of management practices within each category, and these averages were further aggregated across categories to calculate the overall percentage of companies implementing SCORE Training practices (See Annex 5 and 6 for more information on individual practices).

While the trends differ across various training period <sup>14</sup>, the data shows remarkable sustainability. From both short-, medium-, and long-term assessments of companies participating in the SCORE Training, it is evident that once companies adopt an approach, they tend to maintain it consistently, with minimal decline over time. As expected, recent participants (2022-2024) experienced only a slight decline in adoption rates, dropping 1 percentage points from 60% to 59%. Those from 2019-2021 saw the sharpest decrease of 7 percentage points, from 61% to 54%. Surprisingly, companies from 2009-2018 demonstrated greater long-term resilience with just a 4-percentage point drop, outperforming the medium-term group (Figure 7). Hence, it appears that management practices are sustained more effectively in the long-term than in the medium-term, which can be seen as somewhat paradoxical. However, interview insights suggest that the medium-term group's sharper decline may be attributed to unique challenges, including the shift to fully online training, the broader struggles of keeping businesses afloat during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the abrupt changes in business conditions post-pandemic, all of which made it more difficult to sustain management practices.

<sup>14</sup> Out of the 131 Indonesian companies surveyed<sup>14</sup>, 24.4% participated between 2009-2018, providing over 6 years to assess the long-term effects and sustainability of the practices adopted. Another 26% joined during 2019-2021, offering a 3 to 5-year window to evaluate medium-term impacts, where initial improvements may have solidified, or challenges emerged. The remaining 49.6% participated recently, between 2022-2024, leaving limited time for assessment, with the focus on early outcomes and ongoing implementation.



Figure 7: Sustainability of SMEs' management practices adoption, breakdown by training period



Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Interestingly, over the long term (more than 6 years), most companies that adopted practices in Workplace Cooperation, Lean Production, and HR Management have continued to implement them effectively. However, Quality Management and OSH practices saw a significant decline of 7 percentage points (Figure 7). This mirrors the pattern observed when comparing baseline and endline data, indicating that **the two areas, Quality Management and OSH, are less favoured by SMEs. Even when adopted, these practices are sustained less consistently by companies.**

This trend is also echoed in the views shared by many interviewees, including owners and lead buyers. They emphasized that quality management practices like defect analysis, information sharing, and SOPs are complex and resource-intensive. Since these practices don't always provide immediate benefits, companies often shift their focus to more pressing tasks. Additionally, maintaining these practices requires ongoing investment, which can be challenging for micro- and small enterprises. Regarding OSH, practices like using PPE, establishing emergency routes, and conducting risk assessments are often implemented primarily to meet legal or lead buyer requirements, rather than being a priority for companies. However, as a lead buyer representative pointed out, the increased active involvement of workers and the OSH committee is expected to help sustain these practices to some extent. This may partly explain the 5-percentage-point decrease in OSH adoption rates –the largest across SCORE Training areas–though still a modest overall change (Figure 6).

Field visit insights also show that **many enterprises, from small businesses to established firms, have been effectively scaling SCORE Training practices to enhance operational efficiency and professionalism.** Motivated by initial successes, companies have expanded methodologies like lean production, Kaizen, and 5S across their entire operations. For small businesses, this often means professionalising their entire company, while larger firms replicate these practices across departments or new facilities. Many business owners confirmed that this strategic scaling helps them meet growing demands, optimise resources, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. An implementer estimates that around 40% of trained companies demonstrate significant changes in adoption and scale up, while 60% experience less pronounced changes.



## **Spotlight 2: Examples of scaling up SCORE Training management practices**

### **From Manual to Digital – A Kanban Evolution**

In 2015, a small cosmetic manufacturer joined the SCORE programme, receiving foundational training across various business and operational modules over a twelve-month period. As part of their continuous improvement efforts, the company implemented the Kanban system to streamline workflow and reduce waste. Initially, the system was managed manually with a physical board, but its success prompted a significant investment in digitizing the process, further enhancing efficiency.

According to the owner, this strategic move has already yielded a strong return on investment. Therefore, the company plans to expand Kanban's application beyond production. Starting in August 2024, they will integrate Kanban into their administrative and reporting systems, marking another milestone in their commitment to operational professionalism.

### **Overcoming New Factory Setup Challenges**

A long-established furniture manufacturer has recently faced the challenge of setting up a new factory. With 20 years of experience, the company had learned valuable lessons, but the complexity of scaling up called for a more strategic approach.

Applying SCORE Training principles from the outset, the company focused on efficient layout planning, waste management, and optimized production processes. Leveraging their past experiences with SCORE Programme in 2018 proved crucial. For example, they have implemented clean production practices and waste management systems, such as installing water filters for finishing processes, right from the start. This proactive approach ensured that the new factory is built with operational efficiency and sustainability in mind.

### **From Improved Factory Environment to Flexible Home-Based Work**

After participating in the SCORE programme in 2021, a garment manufacturer significantly improved working conditions, including creating dedicated rest areas and enhancing workspace organization. These changes boosted employee satisfaction and productivity. Later on, in 2024, they introduced flexible working arrangements, outsourcing tasks like sewing to home-based workers. By giving sewing machines to housewives in the community and allowing them to pay back slowly, the company empowered these workers to contribute from home. As a result, the company reduced its in-house workforce by 66%, from over 100 employees to around 34, but also lowered electricity costs and sped up production. The flexible model, particularly benefiting housewives, enabled them to work from home, balancing personal responsibilities while contributing to production.

## **Enabling and hindering factors**

Figure 8 shows that the most critical factors for sustaining management practices are strong management support (68% of participants) and active employee participation (63%). These results are echoed by interview insights, highlighting **the importance of leadership involvement and engaging employees at all levels to ensure practices are effectively maintained.**

*"I think the owner or at least the very high decision maker or the soul of the company should participate in SCORE Training and commit to make changes, because it's actually changing the whole culture of the company." – SME owner*

*"It shouldn't be only the burden of me as an owner, but then it became a burden of everybody, you know. So, it's about sharing. Sharing responsibility, sharing passion, and just a matter of the mindset of we are doing it together as a team." -SME owner*

Effective information sharing (62%) and continuous training (49%) further support these efforts by keeping the workforce informed and skilled. Regular assessments (47%) help organizations



adapt and refine practices, while low staff turnover (37%) ensures stability and knowledge retention. Together, these factors create a solid foundation for sustaining management practices over the long term.

Breakdown by firm size reveals that management support and active involvement are universally critical across all firm sizes, with small, medium and large enterprises emphasising this factor the most (83%). Additionally, continuous training and information sharing become increasingly important as organizations grow, while larger firms also place a higher value on low staff turnover and periodic assessments to maintain operational efficiency (more than 60%) (Figure 39).

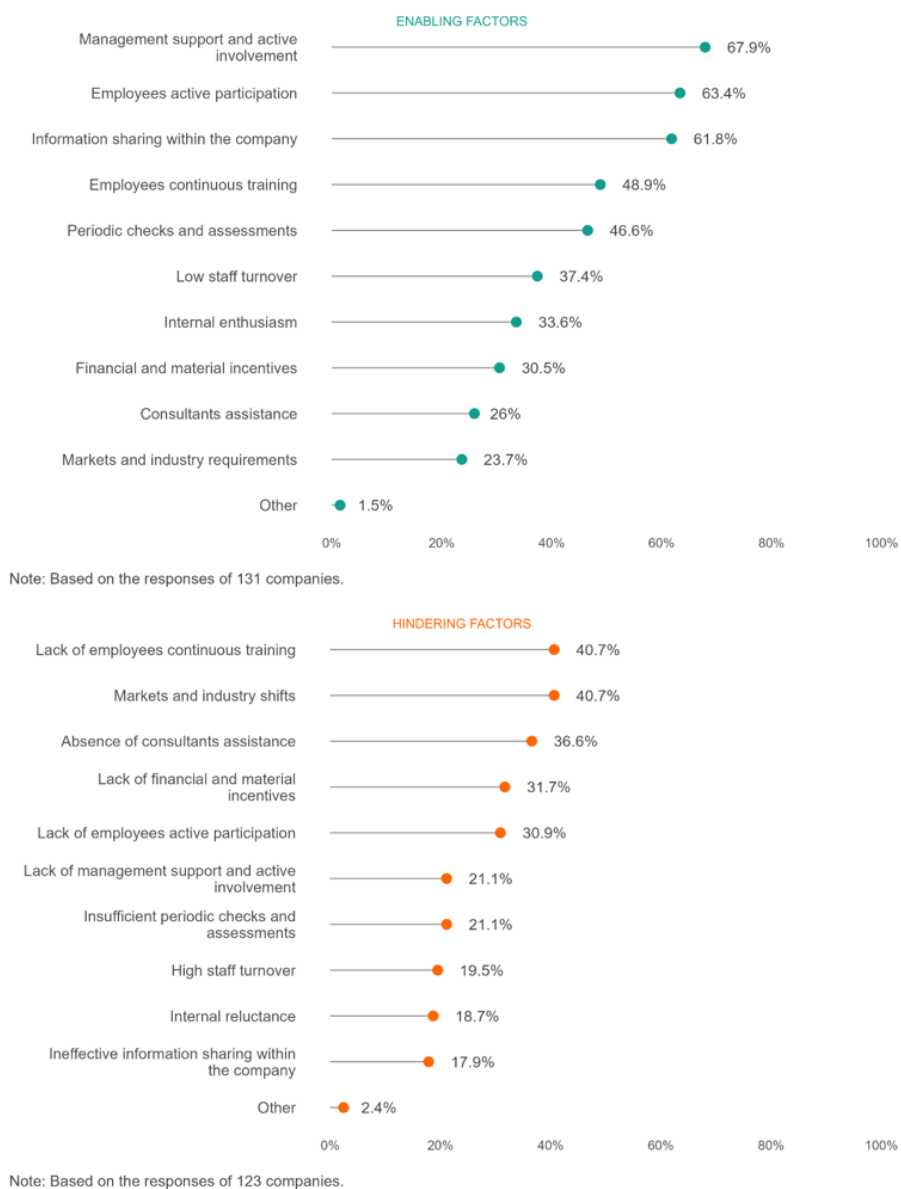
When asked about the most significant factors hindering the sustainability of management practices (Figure 8), survey participants pointed at market and industry shifts (38%) and a lack of continuous employee training (38%), highlighting **the challenges organisations face in adapting to external changes and developing their workforce**. Interviewees indicated that COVID-19 posed significant challenges for their businesses, making it more difficult to maintain newly implemented practices. Additionally, keeping the practices consistent over time has been challenging, especially as the team grows and new employees join. The absence of consultant assistance (34%) also poses a significant barrier, as companies may struggle without external expertise to guide them. Additionally, the lack of financial incentives (30%) and employee participation (29%) further impedes progress.

Distinguishing between firm sizes, medium and large enterprises reported higher concerns with market and industry shifts and high turnover (44%), lack of training and employee participation (56%). In contrast, **small firms were more troubled by financial constraints** (38%) (



Figure 40). This feedback aligns with interviewees' observations, emphasising that small and micro enterprises often lack the resources—both financial and human—to fully implement and sustain management practices, making it difficult to manage the additional workload required for effective adoption and long-term sustainability of these practices. Many owners also emphasised that ensuring that the sustainability of practices after the initial implementation phase is challenging, noting that long-term success heavily relies on management's commitment and willingness—particularly when training is perceived as a temporary project rather than a lasting initiative.

Figure 8: Enabling and hindering factors to sustaining management practices



Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



## Impact of the SCORE Training

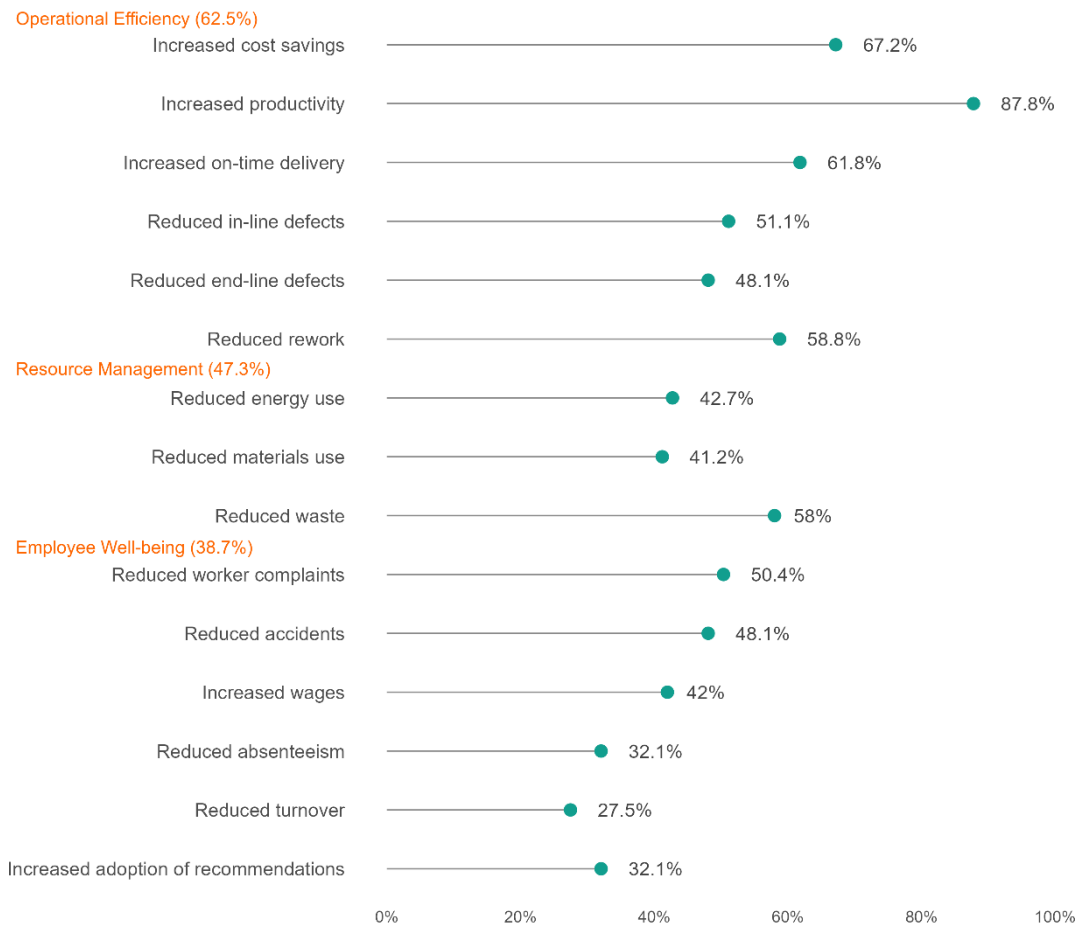
Upon asking whether these changes occurred since the SMEs' participation in SCORE Training (Figure 9), **approximately half of the companies reported positive improvements on average across all key KPIs.**

**Companies observed the most significant impact in operational efficiency**, with 63% of companies reporting positive outcomes. Notably, a large number of companies experienced substantial benefits, such as increased productivity (89%), cost savings (67%), and improved on-time delivery (62%). Additionally, there were significant reductions in rework (59%) and in-line defects (51%), indicating strong gains in quality and efficiency. **Resource management experienced modest gains**, with more than half of the companies succeeded in reducing waste (58%). However, the reductions in energy use (43%) and materials use (41%) were more moderate, suggesting that while waste reduction is a strong focus, there is still room for greater efficiency in other areas of resource management. **Improvements in employee well-being were the lowest**, with an average of 39%. While there were some positive changes, such as reduced worker complaints (50%) and accidents (48%), challenges persist in areas like the adoption of recommendations (32%), reducing absenteeism (32%), and lowering turnover rates (28%).

Looking into different training periods, it is evident that **the positive impacts of SCORE Training tend to become more pronounced over time, as companies have longer periods to implement and refine their improvements** (Figure 41). For instance, the percentage of companies reporting increased cost savings and productivity grew significantly over time, with the groups trained during 2009-2018 showing the highest percentages—94% for productivity and 78% for cost savings. In areas such as on-time delivery, reduced rework, and reduced accidents, there was a similar trend. This, in alignment with the interview feedback, suggests that these operational benefits are more effectively realised and reported as companies continue to refine their processes over time. In resource management, where improvements tend to emerge more gradually, there is a noticeable increase in the percentage of companies reporting reductions in energy use and materials use, especially in the 2009-2018 period. However, improvements in employee well-being, such as reduced absenteeism and increased adoption of recommendations, are reported by fewer companies, particularly those who participated in the earlier periods. Interview insights suggest that the initial positive impact on employee engagement tends to fade over time if the practices are not consistently maintained. Sustaining these improvements likely requires ongoing effort to reinforce and embed changes in company culture, as mentioned by many both trainers and business owners.



Figure 9: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training



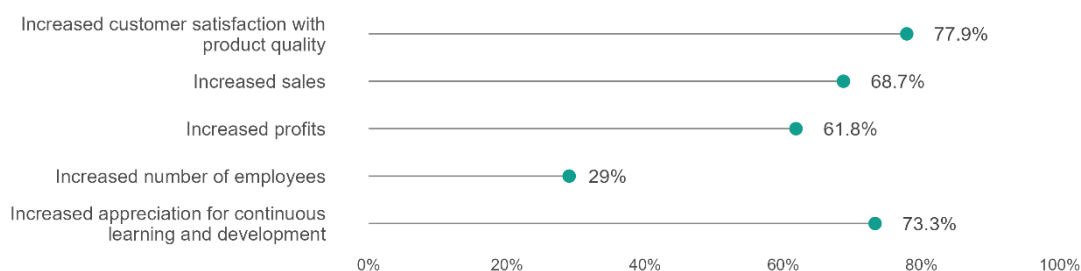
Note: Based on the responses of 131 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

**The SCORE Training is more effective for micro- and small enterprises, especially in operational efficiency.** The survey results show higher percentage of micro- and small enterprises reporting positive outcomes across various KPIs compared to medium and large enterprises (Figure 42). Micro enterprises in particular report the highest percentages across several key areas, such as increased productivity (92%), increased cost savings (68%), and improved on-time delivery (66%). This sentiment was echoed by trainers and SME owners/managers, who explained that smaller companies, with their compact size and typically more agile structures, can implement training insights more effectively and see quicker, more significant results. As one trainer explained, *“Large companies often struggle with immediate impact due to existing developed systems, making further improvements harder. Micro enterprises may find it easier to commit and implement SCORE programme changes.”* Small enterprises also show notable improvements, particularly in areas like reduced waste (62%), reduced worker complaints (69%) and reduced accidents (50%), also indicating that smaller organisations can more rapidly adapt their processes and culture in response to the implementation of new practices.



Figure 10: Impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs' performances

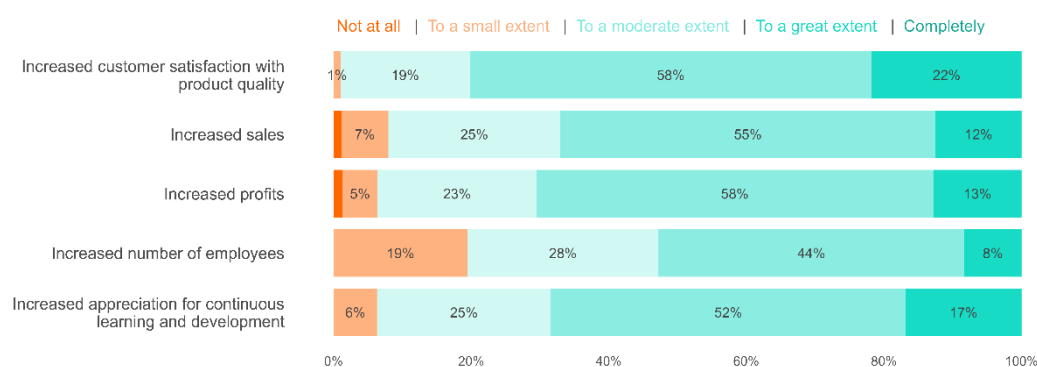


Note: Based on the responses of 131 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

When it comes to business performance, more than two third of companies have reported positive outcomes in customer satisfaction, profits, and sales since their participation in the SCORE Training. A significant majority, 78%, experienced an increase in customer satisfaction with product quality. Increased sales and profits were observed by 69% and 62% of companies, respectively (Figure 10). When analysing these outcomes by company size, micro- and small enterprises showed the most notable improvements, with 81% reporting enhanced customer satisfaction, 76% experiencing increased sales, and 71% achieving higher profits (Figure 44). During the field visit, many business owners and managers reported significant growth in sales and profitability, which they attribute to the implementation of the SCORE methodology. Many have successfully expanded their client base beyond Indonesia, reaching more demanding markets in Europe, the US, and other regions.

Figure 11: Perceived contribution of the SCORE Training to the observed impact



Note: Based on responses from 101, 88, 78, 36, and 95 companies, respectively.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

When surveyed, the vast majority of companies (94-99%) reported that the SCORE Training contributed at least moderately to their improvements in sales, profitability, and customer satisfaction. Over two-thirds of these companies indicated that SCORE Training played a significant or even decisive role in their success (Figure 11). Micro companies reported a notably



strong impact from SCORE Training, often outperforming their larger counterparts. For instance, 98% of micro enterprises indicated that SCORE Training contributed significantly to increased profits, compared to 83% and 75% in small and medium/large enterprises, respectively (Figure 46). This resonates well with interview insights where trainers and business owners acknowledged that for larger companies, SCORE Training does not replace existing systems but rather supplements them by introducing new perspectives and practices. This can lead to more refined and effective processes within the company, but the impact might not as strong as witnessed in micro- and small companies.

### **Spotlight 3: Examples of the SCORE Training's impact**

#### **Strategic growth and ethical market penetration**

Founded in 2019 during the COVID-19 pandemic, this company, initially began as a sourcing agent, connecting local artisans with global buyers, quickly adapted and transitioned to designing and selling curated products. They aim at leveraging Indonesia's rich resources while directly addressing customer inquiries about social impact. This shift, supported by SCORE Training in 2021, enabled them to achieve substantial growth in net profit sales, increasing from less than 25% pre-SCORE Training to over 35%, with a peak of 41% in 2021. By expanding their customer base to over 30 countries, particularly in Europe, the US, and the Asia-Pacific region, they successfully entered new markets by prioritising quality over quantity. Improved employee relations led to higher job satisfaction and retention, while the focus on ethically conscious customers enhanced loyalty and repeat purchase rates. After SCORE Training, the company achieved BSCI (Business Social Compliance Initiative) certification, highlighting their commitment to ethical business practices. They plan to pursue ISO certification to further enhance their credibility and compliance with international standards.

#### **Exponential increase in project size**

A furniture manufacturer has experienced significant growth since its participation in SCORE Training in 2018. Sales have skyrocketed from small projects worth 25-40 million Rp to major projects valued up to 800 million Rp, thanks to enhanced efficiency and quality that have increased customer satisfaction and repeat orders. The company's emphasis on group work has increased efficiency, with carpenter teams growing in size, allowing for the timely completion of larger, more complex projects. Improved scheduling and supervision have nearly eliminated workplace accidents, further enhancing productivity. As a result, the company has strengthened its reputation through reliable on-time delivery and high-quality products, leading to more repeat orders.

*"I think SCORE contributed 50% to the success, because our mindset is changing. The point is, the way we look at things is different. That's the thing."*

#### **Cultural Shift Fuels Resilience**

A cosmetics manufacturer, established in 2002, underwent a transformative cultural shift after joining the SCORE Training in 2015. In addition to revamping its entire production process, the programme instilled resilience through employee engagement, empowering the team to contribute actively to the company's direction. During the pandemic, this shift allowed the company to pivot from its previous focus on hospitality-based products (80% of its business) to high-demand skincare items, which now account for 60-70% of the portfolio. Despite a 69% drop in production during the pandemic (from 12,790 kg in 2019 to 3,959 kg in 2020), the company quickly rebounded, reaching 18,160 kg in 2023—a 42% increase over pre-pandemic levels. This resilience is rooted in a company-wide culture of innovation and adaptability.

*"100% of our achievements is from SCORE Training I would say. SCORE Training is the foundation, the tool to professionalize the factory."*



**When considering non-business-related performance, the most significant impact observed by both survey participants and interviewees is the shift in mindset.** Three out of four SME owners reported an increased **appreciation for continuous learning and development** since participating in the SCORE Training (Figure 10). Of these, 94% agreed that SCORE Training played a decisive role in driving this mindset change (Figure 11). There is little variation when comparing by firm size, with 96% of small enterprises acknowledging SCORE Training 's important role, slightly higher than the 93% observed in micro, medium, and large enterprises (Figure 46). Looking at the timing of their training, the long- and medium-term groups (96% and 95%) reported a greater contribution from SCORE Training compared to the most recent group (92%), indicating that as more time passes after the SCORE Training, the mindset change becomes more apparent and deeply embedded if being sustained.

Many companies visited during the field visit demonstrated a strong commitment to training and development, driving continuous improvement and maintaining competitiveness. Ongoing investments in internal workshops were evident, reinforcing skills gained through programmes like SCORE Training. Several companies have also invested in external training, while some actively seek specialized expertise abroad in areas such as lean manufacturing, GMP compliance, and international regulations, recognizing the limitations of local consultants. There is also a growing demand for further training in fostering international partnerships, complying with global standards, and enhancing skills in marketing, supply chain management, and ethical sourcing. While many are proactive in pursuing training, others remain more passive, often relying on new training opportunities initiated by lead buyers rather than taking the initiative themselves.

**A notable and unexpected impact of the SCORE Training is that many company owners have become SCORE trainers themselves,** seeing it as an opportunity to give back to their community. This initiative aligns with the Indonesian cultural values of sharing and mutual support, creating a vibrant and growing network of trainers. These trainers actively support one another, sharing opportunities and leveraging platforms like WhatsApp to connect with suppliers and strengthen their supply chains. By training other SMEs, they not only reinforce their understanding of the SCORE methodology but also gain new insights and perspectives. This experience has transformed their businesses while fostering personal and professional growth, equipping them with valuable leadership and coaching skills to continue grow their own company and help other SMEs enhance their operations and realise their potential.



## Institutional-level impact and sustainability

To evaluate the impact of the SCORE programme on implementing partners (IPs) and its sustainability, we assessed their capacities in five areas. **1. Sustainability of SCORE Training service delivery:** The ability of IPs to continue quality training beyond initial funding. **2. Acquiring funding for SCORE Training:** Success in securing financial support for long-term viability. **3. Adapting SCORE Training:** The effectiveness of tailoring training to local contexts and sectors. **4. Performance and position in the training industry:** Competitiveness and capacity to meet enterprise needs. **5. Certifying trainers:** Maintaining a roster of qualified trainers to ensure consistent, quality delivery. These areas provide a holistic view of the SCORE programme's integration and sustainability by IPs.

### Institutional Partners (IPs)

There were eight IPs who delivered SCORE Training in the country during the SECO-NORAD funded period. These included the Ministry of Manpower (MoM), the Employers' Association of Indonesia (APINDO), as well as several private organisations such as the Business and Export Development Organisation (BEDO), Semut Management Indonesia (SMI), Karya Dua Perempuan, Riwani Globe, BLK2 Semarang, and Proserve Indonesia. Additionally, academic institutions like Parahyangan University and APP Polytechnic Jakarta were also involved in providing SCORE Training.

By the end of Phase III in 2021, following the ILO's efforts to enhance the capacities of IPs to deliver SCORE Training independently of donor funding, BEDO<sup>15</sup> emerged as the lead IP in Indonesia, serving as the primary contact and coordinator within the IP network. Field observations and interview insights indicate that certain IPs, such as SMI, Parahyangan University and APP Polytechnic Jakarta remain highly active. They have incorporated SCORE Training into their portfolios, independently marketing, selling, and organizing SCORE Training for enterprises across Indonesia and in other countries. They have also taken ownership in adapting and creating training content to better align with local contexts and demand. In contrast, other private IPs seem to offer SCORE Training only as a small part of their services, or no longer include it at all.

#### 1. Sustainability of SCORE service delivery

**Since the ILO SCORE Programme's support ended in 2021, certain private sector partners have taken strong ownership of the SCORE Training, playing a crucial role in its sustainability.** Field findings show that training providers, particularly BEDO and SMI, have been successful in creating opportunities by leveraging government subsidies, attracting lead buyers to sponsor SCORE Training, and selling training packages directly to SMEs. This multi-faceted approach has contributed to the sustainability and continued growth of SCORE Training services. Conversely, some private IPs have reduced or stopped using SCORE Training due to perceived limited

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<sup>15</sup> BEDO, a non-profit business member organization, founded in 2006 in Bali, specialises in organizing business coaching and capacity-building workshops focused on design, marketing, product development, export, and company growth. BEDO participated in the SCORE ToT programme in Jakarta in 2015 and became a fully independent SCORE Training provider in 2018. Source: <https://www.be-do.org/>



commercial benefits, although evidence suggests they have adopted part of SCORE methodologies to enhance their business offerings and operations.

#### ***Spotlight 4: Examples of key private partners' SCORE Training delivery***

##### ***BEDO's SCORE Training Strategy Post-2021***

Since 2021, BEDO has refined its business approach to SCORE Training, shifting from a reliance on donor funding to independently selling the programme to SMEs. To meet the needs of micro businesses, they developed SCORE Plus, a tailored version of the programme. Each year, BEDO develops comprehensive training programmes that are promoted through social media and their website, offering both SCORE Plus and regular SCORE Training sessions. As a result, SCORE Training now represents around 40% of BEDO's overall business, with the remaining 60% focused on export coaching. BEDO has fully integrated SCORE Training into its core services while broadened its market reach.

##### ***SMI's Continued Leveraging of SCORE Training***

SMI has reinforced its vision to become a leading management consultancy, focusing on improving organisational performance and competitiveness. In collaboration with the Jakarta government and key ministries, particularly the Centre for Regional Productivity Development (P3D), SMI has significantly expanded its outreach with SCORE-related services, promoting sustainable business practices and productivity enhancements. From 2018 to 2021, SMI trained 375 micro enterprises with a budget of USD 25,500. Since 2022, at the government's request, SMI has shifted focus to training SMEs. Between 2022 and 2024, they trained 242 enterprises with a training budget of USD 129,000. Looking ahead, SMI plans to train 150 enterprises in 2025, with an allocated budget of USD 89,000 from the government of Jakarta.

**Public partners remain engaged and contribute to the programme's sustainability, though on a smaller scale than private implementers.** Field visit and document reviews confirm that institutions like APP Politeknik Jakarta and Parahyangan University (Unpar) continue to offer SCORE Training as part of their community development programmes, aimed at enhancing SME competitiveness in their regions. APP Politeknik Jakarta has created the 4-month iCare programme since 2019, integrating SCORE methodology for SMEs in hospitality and retails. Meanwhile, Unpar has adapted the SCORE Training module into its own 4-month training, focusing on micro-enterprises. The iCare programme concluded its 5th cohort with 16 SMEs in November 2023, in partnership with the Department of Industry and Trade in South Jakarta and Sukabumi, with plans to continue. Unpar's programme runs annually in collaboration with Bandung Regency, trains 20-40 SMEs per cycle.

## **2. Funding of the SCORE Training**

Although it is challenging to determine the exact amount of funding for SCORE Training in Indonesia after 2021, **the funding mix is primarily derived from SME fees, government support,** and, to a lesser extent, contributions from lead buyers, public actors, and donor funding. Private training providers have made greater progress in securing funding, identifying opportunities, and writing proposals, as their operations depend on it. Public partners, by contrast, have less need to seek external funding beyond their own regular budget or specific government subsidies. However, some public partners, such as Parahyangan University, do charge fees to SMEs or successfully secure funding from other organisations as part of their financial strategy.



### **Spotlight 5: Examples of funding strategies**

#### **Targeting SMEs, lead buyers and potential donors**

BEDO uses Instagram as its primary marketing platform to promote SCORE Training programmes, successfully attracting over 500 participants through targeted campaigns. Additionally, BEDO collaborates with lead buyers, including Linux, Amazon, and William Sonoma International, to expand its reach and impact on their supply chains. BEDO also actively seeks funding from various development organisations, such as GIZ, for initiatives like integrating climate resilience into SME operations. Discussions with GIZ are ongoing, and GIZ has shown interest in future collaborations.

#### **Leveraging government support and SMEs' needs**

SMI has established strategic collaborations, including a partnership with the Jakarta government, running until 2024, with plans to expand the SCORE Training further. It also focuses on commercialisation of the SCORE Training, responding to increased demand from SMEs for training in areas like ISO standards and human resources, and other emerging topics such as eco-productivity and SCORE for climate.

#### **CSR fund and donors**

SCORE Training, a key component of Parahyangan University's community development programme, is primarily supported by the university's CSR fund. Collaborations with financial institutions like Finatra have enabled the programme to grow, covering additional costs to reach more SMEs. The university is actively seeking new partners to further expand the programme's reach and impact.

## **Lead buyers**

**The engagement of lead buyers in the country has generally been limited**, with most brands favouring an audit-only approach and being hesitant to invest in the capacity-building of suppliers within their supply chains. Since 2021, some existing and new lead buyers have engaged their suppliers with SCORE Training. Most of these lead buyers also offered other supply chain development programmes to their suppliers.

In the interviews, lead buyers indicated several key motivations for participating in SCORE Training: (1) to accelerate progress toward their CSR objectives and long-term sustainability goals; (2) to improve their supply chain's understanding of and compliance with necessary regulations, particularly in traditional businesses lacking modern management practices; and (3) the credibility of the ILO, coupled with (4) the positive feedback on the tangible results of SCORE Training, further reinforces their decision to participate. As one lead buyer mentioned: *"We see that the SCORE programme can drive the management system to have more awareness about health and safety. We want to change the mindset of the management and workers, not just forcing them to comply."*

**Lead buyers reported mixed results with SCORE Training.** While some saw improvements in the working environment, employee satisfaction, and operational efficiency, others expressed concerns about reverting to old habits over time. Key challenges included staff shortages, high employee turnover, and the absence of key personnel, such as owners or senior management, from training sessions. Traditional mindsets focused on short-term results and economic pressures, particularly as orders returned to pre-pandemic levels, further hindered sustained



change. Suppliers also faced difficulties maintaining new practices due to limited orders and differing standards required by other clients.

### Governments

**Government support for SCORE Training is sustained but hinge on companies' commercial interest for sustainability.** The Jakarta government's use of SCORE Training highlights its focus on boosting productivity, particularly in micro-sized businesses and traditional markets that are essential to local economic growth. However, scaling the impact has been challenging due to limited budgets, the need to tailor training to diverse participant needs, and the dynamic nature of field conditions. Recognising these constraints, the government is pursuing partnerships with business associations and promoting self-funded programmes to ensure long-term sustainability. This approach not only reduces reliance on government resources but also showcases successful case studies to encourage broader adoption. This suggests that while the government can provide ongoing support, broader sustainability will depend on attracting businesses to invest in self-funded training and fostering partnerships with industry stakeholders.

### 3. Adaptation of the SCORE Training

**Each IP in Indonesia actively tailors its niche by adapting SCORE Training materials to address the specific needs and demands of their local context.** By retaining the core emphasis on improving workplace cooperation, this customisation allows the programme to remain flexible and effective across various industries and regions. This adaptability not only enhances its relevance but also contributes to the long-term sustainability of SCORE-like services. For example:

- BEDO focuses on micro businesses with SCORE Plus, simplifying modules and adding topics like financial management, digitalization, and online marketing. Core SCORE Training components make up only 30%, while 70% is tailored to essential skills for micro businesses. The organisation integrated SCORE Training with Fair Trade principles in collaboration with Forum Fair Trade Indonesia and trained seven trainers to deliver the programme to SMEs, educating them on fair trade practices, including treating employees well, ensuring decent workplace conditions, and promoting fair payments. BEDO is also adopting the SCORE for Climate module, aligning with sustainability goals. Following a successful pilot in Kyrgyzstan with a 95% satisfaction rate, future plans aim to further streamline climate content, making it more accessible and easier to implement.
- Approximately 40% of SMI's training services are based on the SCORE programme, with a strong focus on human capital and lean production, making SCORE Training a key component of their offerings. New methodologies, such as in-depth lean manufacturing and eco-productivity, are integrated to offer comprehensive training solutions. SMI continuously updates its curriculum with Kaizen principles.
- Parahyangan University adapts its training annually to serve micro-enterprises and service industries, incorporating topics like waste management, sustainability, and risk management.



- APP Politeknik Jakarta has integrated SCORE Plus, SCORE Business Continuity programme (BCP), and SCORE Hospitality Coaching (HoCo) to create the iCare programme focusing on improving SMEs' customer service in hospitality and retail.

**The IPs not only adapt the content but also customize the training methodology to fit Indonesian culture, making the training more interactive through discussions and interactive games.** This approach has become a common practice among SCORE trainers to enhance engagement and effectiveness. Technological integration also plays a critical role in making SCORE Training accessible, relevant, and aligned with modern trends. For instance, Parahyangan University has introduced [online SCORE course](#) on the Unparplus platform, while BEDO developed a productivity training app for SMEs, called [OPTIMA](#)<sup>16</sup>, inspired by SCORE Training.

#### 4. Performance and position in the training industry

**Private sector partners have significantly professionalised their organisations since their participation in the SCORE programme, particularly in training methodology, and systemised delivery.** For example, interviewees, including implementers and trainers, confirmed:

- BEDO transitioned from a community organization to a recognised training provider, using SCORE methodology to improve both internal and external training programs. This enhanced professionalism has allowed BEDO to secure collaborative projects with Indonesian ministries, including the Ministry of Trade where BEDO enhanced the export readiness of 100 SMEs, making them more competitive in the global market.
- SMI has strengthened its capacity to deliver training services by expanding from the automotive sector to various industries, thanks to the comprehensive and flexible nature of SCORE Training. By implementing SCORE Training principles, SMI can now train around 100 companies annually using the same six trainers, compared to 50-60 companies previously. This systematic and standardized approach has improved the quality and consistency of SMI's training services. The Jakarta government also commended the SCORE methodology for its systematic approach to collecting baseline data from participants and developing relevant KPIs. Additionally, they valued the comprehensive coaching support provided to SMEs, which empowers them to identify and solve problems independently.

**The improved organisational and technical capacities have significantly enhanced the private IPs' reputations in the training market,** increasing their visibility within the industry and credibility with clients, while also supporting other aspects of their business. For instance, BEDO's growing reputation has resulted in project proposals for export training from Indonesian ministries, including the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Industry. As a BEDO representative noted:

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<sup>16</sup> Launched in August 2020, OPTIMA includes SCORE Basics module training videos and has been downloaded over 1,000 times. The app was recently updated in January 2024, continuing to provide valuable resources to support SME growth.



*“These projects were awarded to us partly thanks to our association with SCORE Training and the ILO.”*

**There is no sense of competition among the IPs, but rather a spirit of collaboration, as each occupies distinct niches without overlapping.** They work closely together, sharing materials and occasionally collaborating to learn from one another. For example, BEDO, which typically works with micro and small enterprises, partnered with SMI when tasked with training of a large enterprise with 3,000 employees for the lead buyer William Sonoma. Given SMI's extensive experience with medium and large enterprises, this collaboration allowed BEDO to successfully deliver training at a scale outside its usual scope.

According to interviewees, **there is significant commercial potential for SCORE Training, as its pricing is competitive, and its materials and methodologies are of higher quality** compared to other training programmes available in the market. Additionally, the demand for SCORE Training is projected to increase as more businesses recognise the value of internal improvements and the need to comply with international standards. The growing focus on sustainability and export readiness further fuels this demand. Trainers suggest that incorporating market insights and offering certifications could enhance the SCORE programme's appeal to businesses, making it a more attractive and viable option for companies seeking to improve their operations.

## **5. SCORE certified trainers**

Since 2021, the responsibility for conducting Training of Trainers (ToT) and maintaining a roster of certified trainers has shifted to the IPs, with BEDO taking the lead. As of 2024, the country has 7 expert trainers and 9 certified trainers (ILO SCORE M&E Database, August 2024). However, 18 former trainers have let their licenses expire (42%), largely because being a SCORE trainer is not their primary focus or occupation. Interviews reveal that only a small number of trainers only a small number of trainers pursue training as a full-time career. Despite this, **the network of current and potential SCORE trainers remains strong and active, supported by BEDO to meet the ongoing demand for SCORE Training.**

Private sector partners like BEDO and SMI often work with networks of independent SCORE trainers who deliver training on demand, based on their availability. While SCORE Training is not the primary focus for many trainers, this model has proven effective. Each IP maintains a broad network, ensuring that when some trainers have limited availability, others can step in to deliver sessions. As a result, there are no major challenges in maintaining consistent training delivery, with trainers readily available to meet demand when needed.

Public sector partners, such as APP Politeknik Jakarta, typically rely on their own staff for SCORE Training. For example, Parahyangan University engages over 20 lecturers in delivering SCORE Training, while APP Politeknik Jakarta's Business Incubator Team (Inbizz) manages the iCare programme. However, these institutions face challenges, as their primary focus on research and publications can complicate the integration of community development programmes like SCORE Training. Additionally, maintaining trainer certification is difficult due to the time-consuming reporting processes. As a result, many university trainers lose their certification simply because they are unable to complete the required reporting on time.



## 3.2.2. Peru

### SCORE Programme in Peru

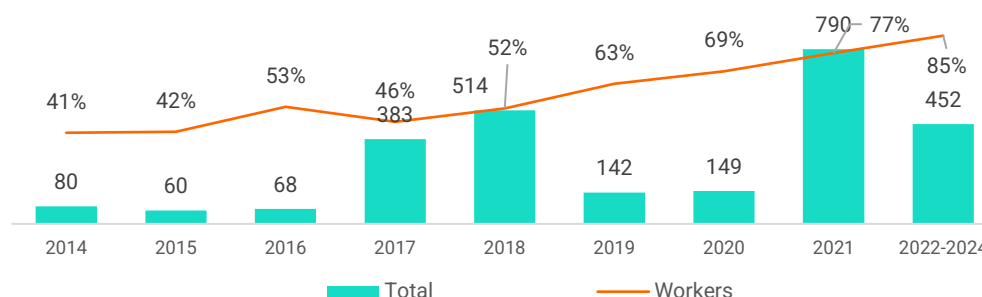
This section provides an overview of the evolution of the SCORE Training in Peru based on feedback received, document reviews, and the data retrieved from the SCORE M&E database.

In Peru, according to interviewees, it cannot be ensured that all implementers collected data after the 2021 cessation of direct ILO funding. However, the evaluation still trusts on the available information from the SCORE database in this section as it is considered the most reliable source.

#### SCORE Training

Since August 2013, the SCORE programme has trained 430 SMEs and 2,360 employees (38% women) in Peru, with approximately three-fifth of the participants being workers (Table 2) and two-fifth being part of the firm management. Following the exit of the SCORE programme in 2021, the proportion of workers trained has continued to increase, reaching 85% of participants in the 2022-2024 period (Figure 12).

Figure 12: SME Staff trained



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

The average enterprise in the program has 46 employees (Table 2), with targeted sectors including manufacturing, agribusiness, fishing, food and beverages, energy, services, and construction. The Workplace Cooperation module remains the most demanded, though its share of delivered modules has significantly declined from 54% before 2022 to 37% in the 2022-24 period. Similarly, the delivery of SCORE Basics module<sup>17</sup>, the second most utilised module, has decreased from 23% to 16% over the two compared periods, potentially due to the shift away from micro-enterprises in the post-2021 period. In contrast, the implementation of the Workforce

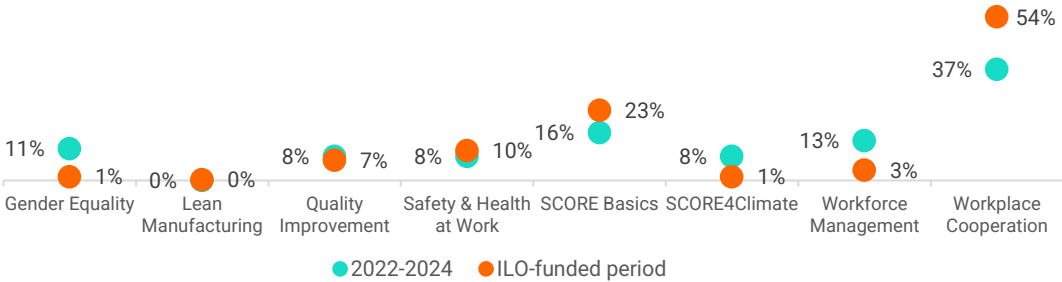
<sup>17</sup> See Footnote 4 for more details.



Management, Gender Equality, and SCORE4Climate modules has notably increased during the 2022-2024 period (Figure13).

The interviews showed that **many participant SMEs in Peru are not fully aware of the full range of modules**, their content or their potential benefits. Limited awareness prevents further adoption, suggesting potential gaps in the marketing and sustainability strategy of SCORE Training.

Figure13: SCORE Training Modules delivered (% of total modules implemented)



Source: The ILO’s SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

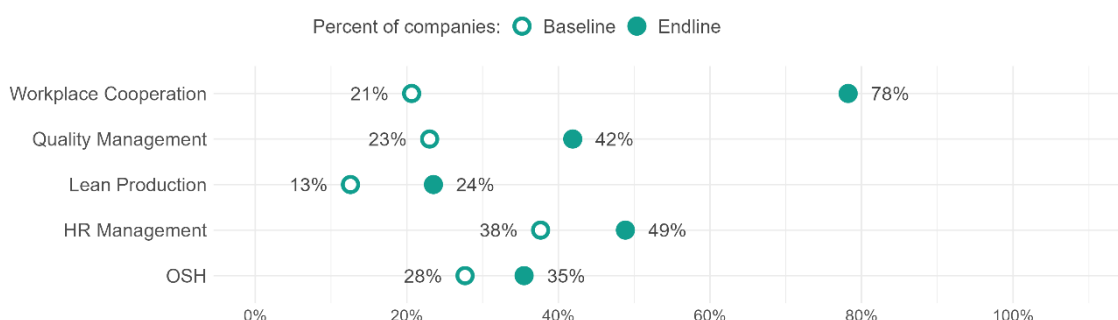
## SME-level impact and sustainability

### Improvements in management practices

Over the 2013-2024 period, the average percentage of enterprises adopting new management practices across all SCORE Training key areas nearly doubled from 25% to 46%. This increase suggests that the **SCORE Training has played a significant role in encouraging the adoption of these practices, although to a lesser extent compared to other countries like Indonesia and China**. The most significant improvement was observed in Workplace Cooperation where adoption rates rose by approximately fourfold reaching 8 out of 10 enterprises (Figure 14).



Figure 14: Improvements in SMEs' management practices adoption: Baseline (pre-SCORE Training) vs Endline (post-SCORE Training)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: The graph shows the percentage of companies implementing management practices across five SCORE Training areas: Workplace Cooperation, Quality Management/Improvement, Clean/Lean Production, Human Resources/Workforce Management, and Safety and Health at Work (OSH), comparing baseline (pre-training) and endline (post-training) levels. Each category includes a set of practices (See Annex 5 for more details). For each area, the average implementation percentage was calculated by averaging the baseline and endline percentages across all practices within the category. For more information on individual management practices, see Annex 7. While this provides a summary of changes, caution is necessary as averages may obscure variability among individual practices. For example, a high average endline percentage does not imply that all companies adopted every practice within the category.

**Within the Workplace Cooperation sphere, the application of 5S and the use of notice boards were implemented in nearly all SCORE-trained enterprises** (Figure 48). Additionally, daily worker-management meetings and the implementation of the Employee Suggestion Scheme (ESS) were adopted by almost 3 out of 4 trained companies. These items were also among the most frequently mentioned SCORE-related achievements during the interviews, underscoring their impact on the participating enterprises.

**Upgrading worker facilities also showed significant, though slightly smaller, progress**, increasing from 24% to 59%. Cost, complexity or perceived benefit may have been barriers in this area, as one interviewee mentioned: *"It's been challenging to keep up with the upgrades to our facilities because it requires significant investment. We've made some progress, but there's still a lot to do"*. Progress in other areas was more moderate. **OSH and HR Management showed notable improvements, while Lean Production and Quality Management advanced at a slower pace.** (Figure 48).

**SCORE Training enhanced existing motivation within enterprises, providing structured methods and clear steps for continuous improvement.** From the interviews, it was clear that participating enterprises – mostly at the management level – generally showed commitment and motivation before implementing or even knowing about SCORE Training, often driven by a desire to improve their operations. The SCORE Training amplified this motivation, providing structured methods and tools that participants had not previously considered. In several interviews, companies expressed a clear willingness to engage with SCORE Training because they were already looking for ways to enhance productivity or improve workplace dynamics. After the training, the interviewees frequently perceived a noticeable boost in motivation and commitment to continuous



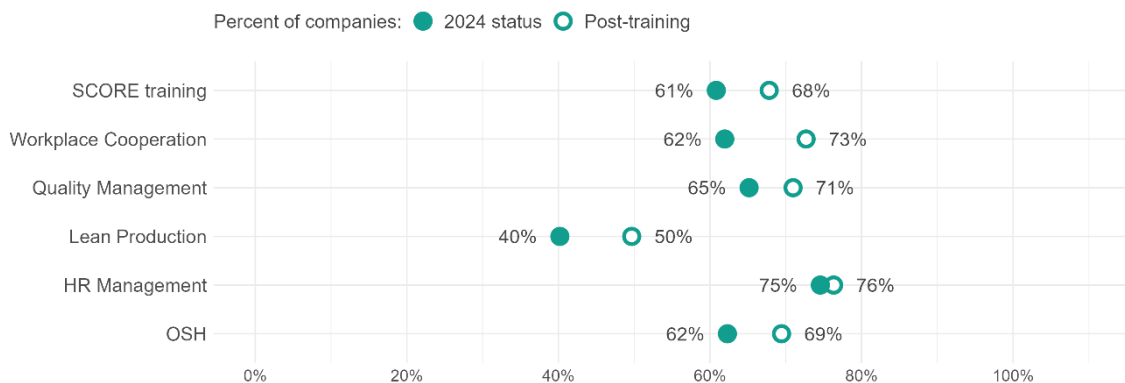
improvement, as SCORE Training helped clarify the steps needed to achieve their goals and left them feeling prepared to pursue bigger goals.

However, **some managers interviewed mentioned initial resistance among employees to adopt new practices and technologies.** This was addressed by involving the entire team in the change process and providing thorough training and support.

### Sustainability in management practices

**Until now, SMEs have largely maintained their management practices.** Survey participants perceive only a small decline in the adoption rate, averaging 7 percentage points drop, from 68% to 61% (Figure 15). The decrease ranges from 1 percentage points in HR Management to 11 percentage points in Workplace Cooperation. This reflects a consistent though modest reduction in adoption across most areas.

Figure 15: Sustainability of SMEs' management practices adoption (Post-training - 2024)



Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

*Note: Only companies that participated in specific modules and implemented improvement projects within those modules were asked whether they continue to implement practices within the corresponding categories. As a result, not all companies were asked about all practices, as their responses were tied to the specific modules they completed. The percentages represent the average adoption levels of management practices within each category, and these averages were further aggregated across categories to calculate the overall percentage of companies implementing SCORE Training practices (See Annex 5 and 7 for more information on individual practices).*

This was largely reflected in the interviews. Interviewees perceived that many core management practices introduced through SCORE Training have been sustained over time while also acknowledging that some practices had not been fully maintained. **Many enterprises noted the successful integration of SCORE Training improvements into their regular operations.** These practices were viewed as valuable, contributing to enhanced communication, organization, and safety within the companies.

*"We kept applying what we learned through SCORE Training, especially in maintaining the workshop and administrative areas. The companies we worked with [clients] continued to open doors for us due to these improvements." – SME Owner*



However, **challenges for sustaining management practices, such as maintaining motivation and ensuring continuous improvement, remain.**

*“Keeping the team motivated and engaged in continuous improvement efforts was challenging, especially after the initial excitement of the SCORE program wore off” – SME manager*

#### **Spotlight 6: Examples of the SCORE Training's practices that have been maintained**

##### **The sustainability of new practices enabled the enterprise to work with more clients.**

An electrical services provider in Peru participated in the SCORE Training pilot as part of a sustainability strategy to improve the supply chain of a Lead Buyer. The company implemented Module 1 (Workplace Cooperation) of the SCORE programme in 2021, covering workplace cooperation, team formation, communication, and productivity.

- **Communication systems:** New practices were implemented to enhance workplace communication. The introduction of communication boards facilitated better information sharing between workers and supervisors, fostering transparency and teamwork.
- **Continuous improvement and problem-solving:** A continuous improvement team was formed, actively working on "quick wins"—short-term projects delivering high-impact results. This empowered employees and instilled a culture of proactive problem-solving and team-based decision-making.
- **Productivity and indicators management:** The company started tracking productivity indicators systematically, ensuring operations were measured and optimized. Attention to machinery alignment and workflow efficiency became a key part of sustaining productivity gains.

Operational improvements following SCORE Training enabled the company to secure new clients within the fishing sector, demonstrating that these enhanced practices positively influenced marketability and business sustainability.

##### **Innovative improvements**

Another SCORE-trained enterprise, a small textile company based in Arequipa that specializes in manufacturing and commercializing alpaca, cotton, wool, and blended fiber products, participated in the SCORE Training about four years ago. With a core team of four in-house employees, four additional remote workers, and contracted workers hired as needed for seasonal demand, the company introduced an innovative production management system during SCORE Training. This system aimed to integrate both the production and personnel aspects to better organize ongoing work.

- **Personnel tracking and production planning:** A system was implemented to accurately track employee work hours and introduced the use QR codes to uniquely identify production packages.

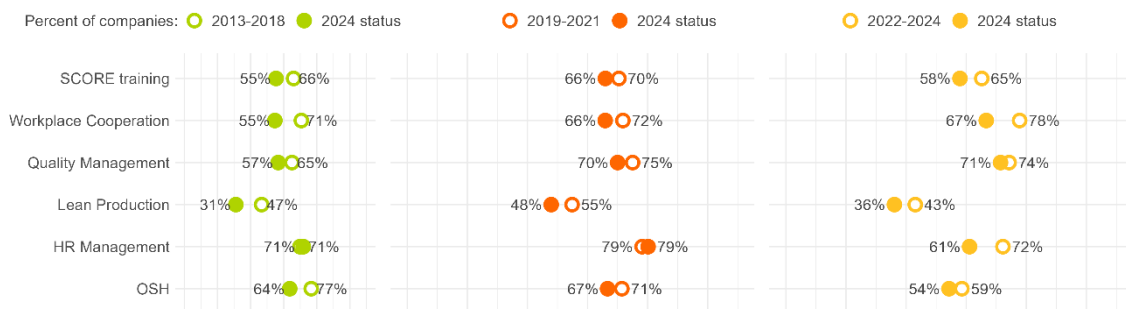
This represented a significant innovation for the company, enhancing production through the setting of clear monthly goals, monitoring outputs, and efficiently allocating resources for improved operational flow. The owners emphasized the importance of this system in maintaining order in the workplace and delivering in a timely manner, which, in turn, contributed to a better workplace atmosphere and strengthened owners - employee relations. However, it was highlighted that some components of this system were not sustained in the long term.



**There is notable sustainability across training periods** (Figure 16). Though modest, the extent of the decrease varies depending on the training period<sup>18</sup>. As expected, more recent companies participating in the SCORE Training show a higher rate of sustained management practice adoption compared to those who participated longer ago. Recent participants (2019-2021 and 2022-2024) experienced a minor decline in adoption rates, dropping by 4 and 7 percentage points on average, respectively. Companies from 2013-2018 saw the largest decrease, falling by 11 percentage points, from 66% to 55%. The declining trends exhibit similar patterns across all SCORE Training areas and periods.

**The transition to hybrid online-offline models during the COVID-19 pandemic does not show any significant disruptions..** However, during the interviews, some implementing partners noted that additional effort was needed to effectively follow up with micro-enterprises, especially during the COVID-19 adaptation period. This included adjusting training sessions or following up with companies on weekends.

Figure 16: Sustainability of SMEs’ management practices adoption, breakdown by training period



Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

**Numerous enterprises, from small businesses to larger established firms, have effectively scaled up SCORE Training practices.** For smaller enterprises, this typically involves professionalizing their operations in various dimensions, while larger firms replicate the methods across various departments or newly established facilities. Business owners have noted that this strategic approach to scaling allows them to better meet increasing demand, optimize their use of resources, and cultivate a culture centred on continuous improvement.

<sup>18</sup> Out of the 61 Peruvian companies surveyed, 27.9% participated between 2009-2018, providing over 6 years to assess the long-term effects and sustainability of the practices adopted. Another 44.3% joined during 2019-2021, offering a 3 to 5-year window to evaluate medium-term impacts, where initial improvements may have solidified, or challenges emerged. The remaining 27.9% participated recently, between 2022-2024, leaving limited time for assessment, with the focus on early outcomes and ongoing implementation.



### **Spotlight 7: Examples of scaling up SCORE Training practices**

#### **Scaling up practices in a different location**

**SME1:** After the initial implementation of SCORE Training practices at the main site in Lima, a small company expanded these improvements to a new facility in the north of Peru. Once the company experienced the benefits of SCORE Training in Lima, they replicated all operational improvements at the new location. The second site followed the same standards for workspace organization, quality, and safety as those established initially.

- **Facility Modifications:** Specific changes were made to the new site to match the quality and structure of the original facility. This included reorganizing spaces, creating designated areas for different operations, and improving facilities for staff, such as changing rooms.
- **Consistency in Tools and Operations:** At first, tools were shared between the two sites, which was logistically challenging. As operations grew, the company invested in separate sets of tools for the new location to maintain smooth operations without transferring equipment between sites.
- **Training and Workforce Expansion:** The scale-up required hiring new staff, who were trained using the same principles from SCORE Training to ensure they adopted the same practices and standards in quality, safety, and operations.

#### **Scaling up practices across departments within the same location**

**SME2:** A company that initially implemented SCORE Training practices within its production operations quickly found value in using these tools to enhance logistics and operations management. After the introduction of indicators for client satisfaction (measuring delivery times, quantities, and completeness), these practices were expanded throughout the company. The focus on data and monitoring performance helped align different departments and encouraged an outcome-driven approach.

*"One of the classes we had discussed measurement indicators, and that led us to analyse what we could measure in our area and what data we needed to evaluate or make decisions. From there, we created a list by area and have been working that way." – SME Owner*

**SME3:** A company in the fire safety systems sector used SCORE Training as a launching pad to standardize safety protocols across multiple areas of operation. Initially, the SCORE principles were applied to the administrative team; later, the company scaled these practices across different departments. They improved safety compliance, formalized inspection processes, and automated reporting.

*"[SCORE Training new management practices] was ingrained and established throughout the entire production process and in all areas." – SME Owner*

### **Enabling and hindering factors**

Survey results suggest that while external factors and incentives contribute to some extent, **a combination of internal dynamics including management support, staff motivation, and continuous training are critical for sustaining SCORE Training management practices over time** (Figure 17).

**Management support and active involvement stands out as the most significant factor, with three out of four companies identifying it as a key enabler.** Other notable contributors include internal enthusiasm and employees' continuous training, both at 59%, and employees' active participation at 57%. In contrast, elements like markets and industry requirements (21%) and financial and material incentives (26%) are identified by fewer companies as crucial enablers.



Regarding the hindering factors that impact the sustainability of management practices (Figure 17), results suggest that **external pressures, insufficient resources, and limited external support hinder the effective implementation of new practices.**

**The most significant obstacle identified is markets and industry shifts**, with 49% of companies recognizing it as a major challenge. This likely reflects concerns over Peru's political and economic instability over the past years, marked by six presidents since 2018 due to corruption scandals, impeachments, and public protests. These upheavals, coupled with slow growth, rising inflation, and the lasting effects of COVID-19, have created an uncertain environment for businesses adapting to shifting market demands.

Moreover, **SMEs interviewed emphasized the increasing demands from lead buyers for their micro and small suppliers to comply with safety and health regulations.** Similarly, lead buyers noted that suppliers must meet specific standards to remain within their supply chains, making compliance particularly vital for SMEs aiming to maintain contracts with larger companies operating under strict regulatory frameworks. While on some occasions this is seen as an opportunity, it may present challenges for SMEs. In addition, absence of consultants' assistance (40%) and lack of financial and material incentives (33%) are also notable barriers that many companies face.

Furthermore, in several interviews SMEs noted that their **motivation to continue improving their business practices was greatly sustained by ongoing support, in particular follow-up visits.** They recognized that without such follow-up, it was natural for some of the changes to lose focus over time.

**Micro and small firms tend to rely more on a variety of factors** such as internal information sharing within the company and periodic checks and assessments, compared to medium and large enterprises that benefit more from stable, trained staff and direct leadership involvement (Figure 31).

One micro enterprise in Arequipa shared their experience, noting that not all aspects of the SCORE Training continued successfully. For instance, accident prevention indicators were initially developed but were later discontinued due to a lack of capacity for ongoing tracking and oversight. **The absence of dedicated personnel to monitor and follow up on SCORE Training practices presented challenges in sustaining certain improvements.**

*"The biggest reason we didn't continue with some of the practices is because we didn't assign someone to take charge. We were looking for someone to join who could oversee it at that time, but due to distance<sup>19</sup> and other issues, there was no one available to take on that role." – SME Owner*

**In larger firms, findings underscore the critical role that strong leadership, as well as well informed, engaged, and well-trained workforce, play in maintaining effective management practices.**

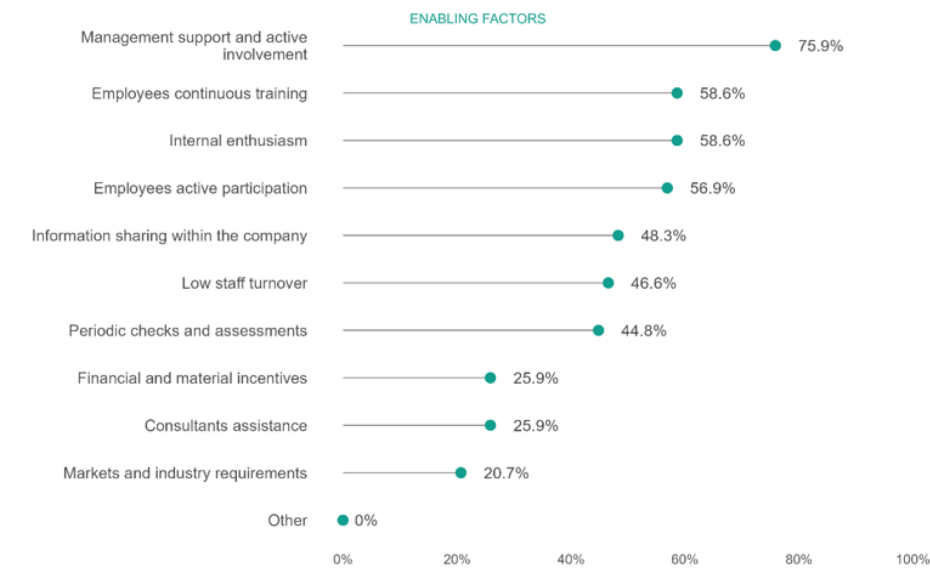
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<sup>19</sup> The SME is situated in a relatively remote area.

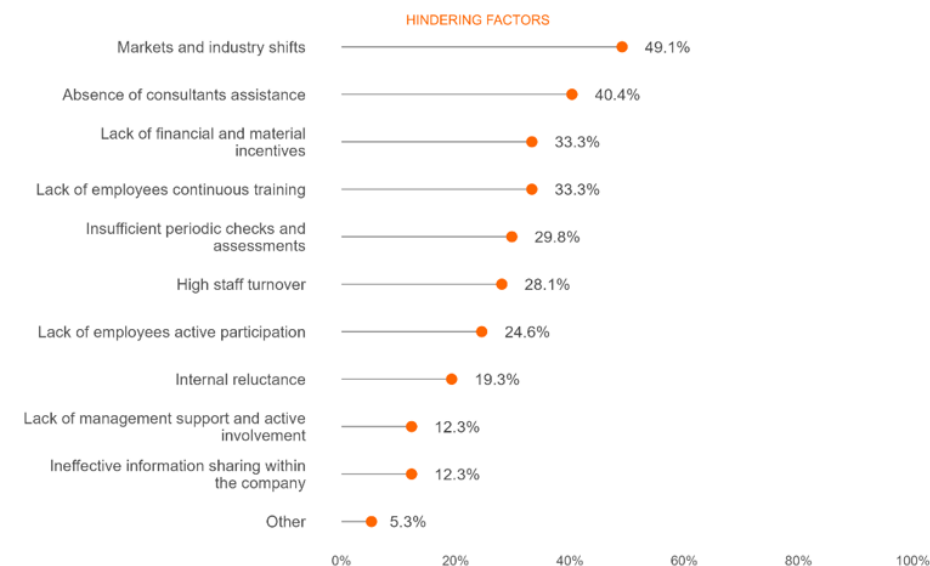


Additionally, **financial and material incentives play a moderate role** for micro and medium/large enterprises (23-24% of companies reporting this as an important factor), while a notable share (46%) of small companies indicate highlight incentives as significant, though the reasons for this difference are not immediately clear. Notably, internal enthusiasm and consultants' assistance are less influential, especially among smaller firms.

Figure 17: Enabling and hindering factors to sustaining management practices



Note: Based on the responses of 58 companies.



Note: Based on the responses of 57 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



## Impact of the SCORE Training

On average, **around 38% of the Peruvian enterprises reported positive changes in KPIs since SMEs participation in SCORE Training** (Figure 18), nonetheless trends are significantly different across training period, firm size and region. **The most notable impact is observed in Operational Efficiency** (46%). Companies reported the greatest improvements in on-time delivery (63%), cost savings (58%), and productivity (54%). Other less prominent impacts include reductions in rework (37%), in-line defects (34%), and end-line defects (31%). For Resource Management (38%), improvements were focused on reducing materials use (41%) and decreasing energy use and waste, both at 36%. These findings suggest that many companies have effectively optimized resource utilization, contributing to both operational efficiency and sustainability goals. In the area of Employee Well-being (29%), the most significant improvement was the reduction of accidents (53%), followed by decreases in worker complaints (31%), absenteeism (24%), and turnover (15%). The increase in wages was noted by 17% of the companies, indicating that employee welfare less prominent compared to efficiency-related outcomes.

### Spotlight 8: Examples of KPIs improvement

#### **SME1 - Operational efficiency**

An electrical systems company credited SCORE Training for helping them create a structured layout that improved service efficiency and client satisfaction. This optimisation allowed them to expand their client base and maintain quality. They implemented KPIs and quality control standards as part of the SCORE Training, enhancing their competitiveness.

*"Thanks to SCORE Training, we have been able to utilize 100% of our workshop capacity, which is optimal and efficient for providing good service to our clients" – SME manager*

#### **SME 2 - Reducing materials use**

An industrial services company, focused on both resource efficiency and employee well-being with SCORE Training's guidance. The training led to initiatives such as reusable drinking cups and energy-saving practices, which reduced waste and promoted sustainability. Additionally, the company introduced a feedback system that increased transparency and engagement among employees, contributing to a safer and more connected workplace.

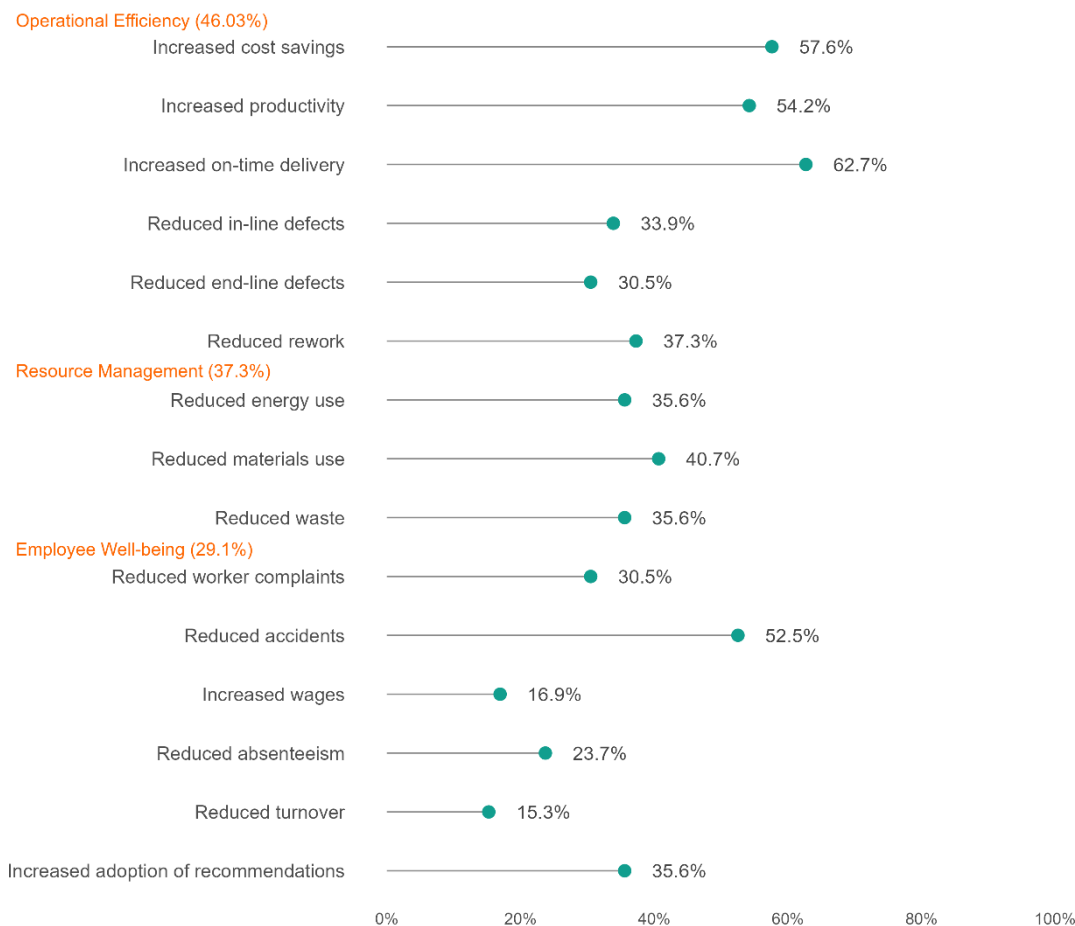
*"With the implementation of the reusable cups, the use of disposable cups was considerably reduced. Today, we no longer use them." – SME manager*

The success of the reusable drinking cups led other contractors to follow suit, and it eventually became a requirement from their main client.

*"We noticed that other contractors took us as a reference and started implementing it as well. Today, it is a requirement from our client that all personnel, at least on the project, have a reusable cup." – SME manager*



Figure 18: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training



Note: Based on the responses of 59 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

**Companies trained in the 2009-2018 period consistently outperform in operational efficiency and resource management**, particularly in cost savings (65%), productivity (65%), and energy use (47%) (Figure 52). Their extended timeframe for implementing changes likely explains their enduring, broad-based improvements across KPIs. **In contrast, those trained more recently (2019-2024) show targeted progress**, with the 2019-2021 cohort excelling in on-time delivery (71%) and reduced worker complaints (40%), reflecting newer priorities in timeliness and workplace well-being. The latest group (2022-2024) leads in reducing rework (47%), indicating a recent focus on refining process quality, although broad impact is still developing compared to earlier cohorts.

**Small enterprises tend to demonstrate greater improvements across KPIs, especially in operational efficiency, whereas medium and large firms show more modest gains across most areas, suggesting that SCORE Training may be better suited to smaller enterprises** (Figure 53). Small enterprises report the highest percentages in increased productivity (62%), increased on-time delivery (73%), and reduced accidents (58%). Similarly, micro enterprises rank highest in

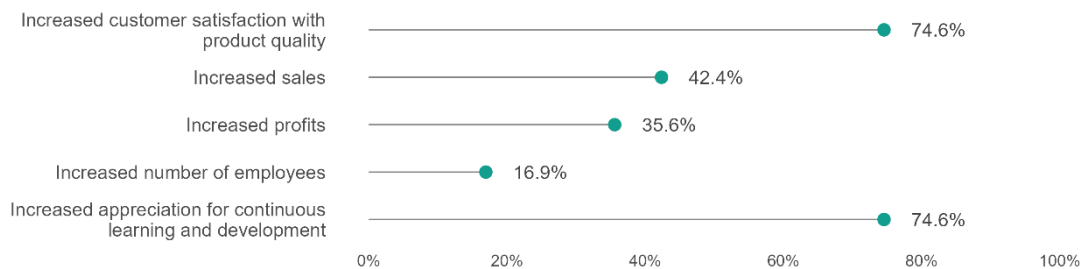


increased cost savings (70%), reduced end-line defects (41%), and reduced waste (41%), while also holding the second position in several KPIs, including increased on-time delivery (56%) and reduced materials use (37%). Medium and large enterprises show lower overall improvements compared to smaller firms. However, they rank highest in reduced in-line defects, reduced rework, reduced worker complaints, reduced accidents and increased adoption of recommendations, with 50% in most cases.

**Participants from Lima demonstrate greater improvements across most KPIs, particularly in operational efficiency and employee well-being** (Figure 54). While other regions generally show lower overall performance, they significantly outperform Lima in one area: the adoption of recommendations. For enterprises outside Lima, the infrastructure and digital divide, along with their distance from the country's main political and economic centre, may influence how they benefit from the training.

**The most significant impacts of SCORE Training on SMEs business performance are increased customer satisfaction with product quality and greater appreciation for continuous learning** (Figure 19), both at 74.6%. Financially, 42.4% of companies report increased sales, and 35.6% see higher profits, indicating moderate yet positive growth post-training. However, workforce expansion is the least affected, with only 16.9% of companies reporting an increase in employees.

Figure 19: Impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs' performances



Note: Based on the responses of 59 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Along with the already mentioned in product delivery enhancements and compliance with regulations, Interviewees highlighted that **SCORE Training fostered a culture of ongoing improvement within their organizations, encouraging employees to view skill development as a continual process rather than a one-time event**. Moreover, some SMEs stressed the structured training modules and practical applications as it prompted them to invest more in their workforce, leading to increased motivation and engagement.

**The implementation of feedback mechanisms and follow-up support has been crucial in reinforcing the importance of continuous learning**. Interviewees emphasized that regular interactions with trainers and the adaptation of training content to meet their evolving needs cultivated a mindset of adaptability and resilience. SMEs in various industries recognized that the ongoing support allowed them to embrace change effectively and strive for operational excellence.



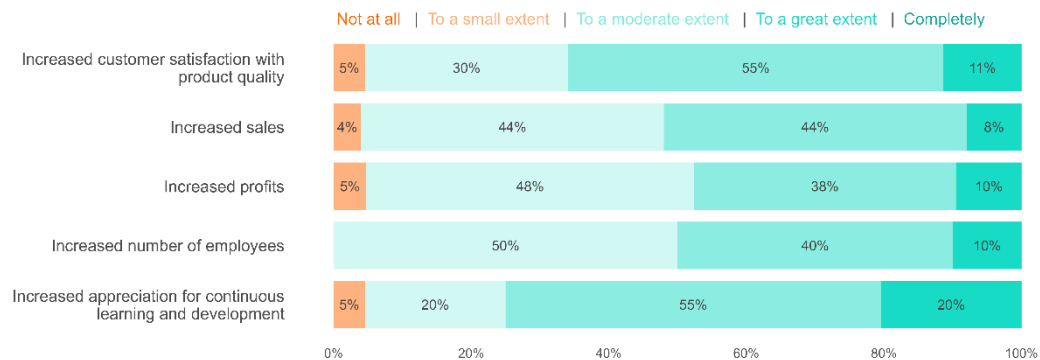
By training period, Figure 55 consistently shows **high performance in increased customer satisfaction with product quality**, with 76% for both the 2009-2018 and 2019-2021 cohorts, and 71% for 2022-2024. **Increased appreciation for continuous learning and development** is also high overall, particularly in the 2019-2021 cohort at 80%, followed by 76% for 2022-2024, and 65% for 2009-2018.

The impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs’ performance broken down by firm size (Figure 56), shows an interesting mixed picture. **Micro and small enterprises perceived greater impacts in increased customer satisfaction with product quality** (81% and 73% respectively), while medium and large enterprises reporting 50%. **In terms of increased appreciation for continuous learning and development, medium and large enterprises stand out with a 100%**, compared to 73% for small and 70% for micro enterprises.

**When it comes to financial metrics, increased sales and profits are fairly consistent across SMES**, showing 37%-38% for micro and 46% 38% for small enterprises, while medium/large enterprises report lower numbers for profits (17%) and higher numbers for sales (50%) (Figure 56).

Consistent with earlier findings, SCORE Training is perceived to have a significant impact on key performance areas, particularly in customer satisfaction, product quality, continuous learning and development, and increased sales. **Between 95% and 100% of companies attribute at least moderate improvements in these areas to their participation in SCORE Training** (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Perceived contribution of the SCORE Training to the observed impact



Note: Based on responses from 44, 25, 21, 10, and 44 companies, respectively.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



# Institutional-level impact and sustainability

## Institutional Partners (IPs)

In Peru, during the SECO-NORAD funded period, there were six SCORE Training implementers. From the government side, ten Centers for Productive Innovation and Technological Transfer (CITEs)<sup>20</sup>, affiliated with the Technological Institute of Production (TIP) and part of the Ministry of Production (PRODUCE), played a key role for sector specific trainings. Alongside, the Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion (MTPE) also participated, focusing mainly on micro enterprises. On the other hand, the Business Development Center (CDE) of Santo Toribio University (USAT) contributed as a private implementer in the northern part of the country. The SCORE Trainers Association<sup>21</sup> with their network of independent trainers and the SME Peru Association – part of the National Confederation of Private Business Institutions (CONFIEP)<sup>22</sup> – were involved in different locations and sectors. Finally, there was shorter, more targeted collaboration with the Fab Lab Association<sup>23</sup>.

### 1. Sustainability of SCORE service delivery

Since the end of Phase III in 2021, **the continuation of the SCORE Training has become fragmented across different implementers, with no leading institution or clear strategy guiding its future.** While the launch of SCORE Programme was well-defined, the strategy for its continuation has been unclear since the end of direct ILO funding. Each partner adopted different approaches to sustain the SCORE Training, including in financial, marketing and any other aspects, while some IPs discontinued the training altogether.

**A few key implementers have sustained SCORE Training in Peru on a minimal scale since 2021.** The Ministry of Production (PRODUCE), through its Technological and Innovation Centres (CITEs), trained 10 SMEs, with 4 in 2022 and 6 in 2023, focusing on the wood and furniture sector. The Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion (MTPE) implemented training for 11 SMEs in 2023

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<sup>20</sup> The Centers for Productive Innovation and Technological Transfer (CITE) promote innovation and encourage the use of new technologies among producers, companies, associations, and cooperatives. All CITEs are affiliated with the Technological Institute of Production (ITP) and serve as the executing arm of the ITP in promoting technological innovation, fostering applied research, specialization, technological transfer, and the dissemination of technological knowledge within each productive chain.

[www.gob.pe/952-centros-de-innovacion-productiva-y-transferencia-tecnologica-cite](http://www.gob.pe/952-centros-de-innovacion-productiva-y-transferencia-tecnologica-cite)

<sup>21</sup> The SCORE Trainers Association, formed in 2020 as part of the SCORE exit strategy, was made up of certified SCORE trainers. Its goal was to provide services that improve productivity and working conditions in enterprises through SCORE Training. The association also aimed to promote business services, develops training and technical support programmes, seek funding, and establish partnerships with public and private entities to support its mission.

<sup>22</sup> The National Confederation of Private Business Institutions, commonly known as Confiep, is a private organization that brings together the Peruvian business guild. [www.confiep.org.pe](http://www.confiep.org.pe)

<sup>23</sup> Fab Labs, launched by MIT, are small workshops with digital fabrication tools (like 3D printers and laser cutters) that allow anyone to prototype and create products. In Peru, *Fab Lab Lima* at Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP) is a leading hub, driving innovation and sustainable solutions, including projects like affordable housing and environmental sensors for the Amazon. These labs aim to empower local communities to tackle challenges through technology. <https://fab.pe/>



but has since ceased to implement trainings. Independent SCORE trainers have continued their efforts, reaching 21 SMEs, training 15 in 2022 across wood, metal-mechanics, manufacturing, and agroindustry, and 6 more in 2023.

**Additionally, other private implementers have delivered SCORE Training in a fragmented and irregular manner**, including the Business Development Center (CDE) of Santo Toribio University (USAT), along with independent trainers and their association, the SME Peru Association – part of the National Confederation of Private Business Institutions (CONFIEP). Recently, the National Fisheries Society (SNP) and the Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT) implemented the SCORE gender equality module in 3 large fishing companies in 2022.

**One of two interviewed CITEs managed to integrate SCORE Training into its existing administrative and financial structure as a regular service.** The integration of SCORE Training into this CITE meant that training could be delivered through established processes, enabling trainers to manage it as part of their standardized services. This facilitated equipping trainers with the necessary tools and support for effective training delivery as well as effective administrative systems and processes for managing SCORE Training, while also providing the necessary budget to offer the service at a reduced cost. This CITE emphasized that this operational integration streamlined their work and ensured consistent quality across all training sessions. The other CITE did not manage to integrate SCORE Training into its structure, posing challenges for its sustainability.

The SCORE Trainers Association's purpose was to create a collaborative platform for trainers to continue supporting SMEs while fostering a community among themselves. It aimed to be self-financing and promote the growth and sustainability of the SCORE Training. However, **despite initial enthusiasm, interviewees mentioned that the association is currently inactive.**

On the one hand, some trainers mentioned that **the absence of clear guidelines and defined roles within the organization created confusion regarding responsibilities and hampered effective collaboration among members.** They noted that this lack of clarity led to a situation where individual trainers operated independently rather than as a cohesive unit. Consequently, this resulted in missed opportunities for collaboration and resource sharing, leaving some trainers feeling disconnected from the association's goals. In this regard, some trainers highlighted the need for improved communication and operational protocols within the association.

Moreover, trainers discussed **the necessity of developing a comprehensive marketing strategy** to promote SCORE Training effectively and attract new clients, which would benefit the association.

*"Without a clear structure, we find it difficult to work together and share resources" - Independent trainer*

*"The sporadic involvement makes it hard to achieve common goals" - Independent trainer*

On the other hand, some trainers referred to the **diminishing demand for SCORE Training among SMEs, primarily due to financial limitations, as a significant factor affecting the association's opportunities for collaboration** among various consultants. Trainers also highlighted that by



showcasing the value of collaboration and the benefits of SCORE Training, the association could increase its visibility and influence within the training landscape.

## 2. Funding of the SCORE Training

**Funding for SCORE Training in Peru has evolved over time, drawing on public and private sources that vary significantly depending on the implementer and timing.**

Pre-2021, available ILO funds (via SECO and NORAD) facilitated the implementation of SCORE Training, with some implementers integrating the programme and providing additional funding. For instance, the Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion offered financial support for programme delivery, covering training materials and logistics. Lead buyers, such as Tasa and Austral, also contributed by funding the training of their suppliers and covered costs like materials, transportation, and other logistical needs, while the remaining expenses were covered by ILO funds. Post-2021, with the cease of international funding, **the SCORE Training shifted towards more localised public and private funding.**

### Governments

PRODUCE has continued to implement SCORE Training independently for SMEs through TIP and their CITEs network, charging them a subsidised rate, while the MTPE has offered SCORE Training for free to enterprises.

#### **Spotlight 9: Contrasting realities in CITEs**

The two CITEs visited, one in Lima and one in Arequipa, presented very different funding situations:

**It was crucial for one CITE to integrate SCORE Training as a standard service, adopting a stable state co-financed pricing model based on internal tariffs.** This approach aimed at building a sustainable model, contrasted with the initial system, which offered reduced fees to SMEs but did not rely on long-term regular budget funding. This approach allowed this CITE to embed SCORE Training within their service portfolio, making it broadly accessible.

In contrast, **the another CITE was unable to integrate SCORE Training as a standard service and therefore could not offer it under a reduced standard tariff system, posing serious challenges to its sustainability.** This CITE noted that while some SMEs could afford the services, many required financial assistance, which limited their participation. The lack of integrated funding support hindered its capacity to make SCORE Training sustainable and accessible.

### Private sector

At the same time, independent trainers, private entities, and institutions such as the Business Development Center (CDE) of Santo Toribio University (USAT) has sustained SCORE activities by offering technical assistance and training services at a higher cost, as these services are not subsidised, which in some cases may have discouraged potential participants.



**Interviewees' views on SCORE Training pricing varies greatly by region, implementing partners, and context.** Some interviewees perceived the cost of SCORE Training as high for micro and small enterprises, with trainers and participants indicating that USD 500 to 1,500 per module is prohibitive for smaller businesses. In contrast, medium and large enterprises, as well as lead buyers, found the cost more acceptable. Additionally, some small businesses expressed a willingness to participate when offered cost-sharing, which allowed them to participate in the training at a reduced cost.

One interviewee mentioned that efforts have been made to seek alternative funding sources, such as applying for grants from local innovation funds like Pro Innovate, though these attempts were ultimately unsuccessful. **Despite these setbacks, opportunities to explore similar funding avenues still exist and are seen as a potential means of sustaining the programme.**

Another suggestion from the interviewees is to **integrate SCORE Training into government services, such as through CITEs.** By aligning SCORE Training with national development programmes, for instance, through government efforts to integrate business in the formal economy, as it could gain access to state funding and support, making it more sustainable in the long term.

### **Lead buyers**

**The SCORE programme's collaboration with lead buyers in Peru was described by one interviewee as a pilot.** Initially in 2018, attracting lead buyers was challenging, even with free offerings. The SCORE programme gained traction by hiring a lead buyer manager with industry connections, who effectively engaged eight of the ten lead buyers in Peru, particularly in fishing and mining. These lead buyers financed the implementation of SCORE Training throughout their value chains, focusing mainly on micro and small suppliers. The most committed lead buyer supported around 20 SMEs, while others worked with smaller numbers. After 2021, this lead buyer continued implementing SCORE Training modules into 2022 and early 2023, while other lead buyers ceased their involvement.

The effort to engage lead buyers was limited in scope rather than a comprehensive strategy rollout. A full expansion did not occur due to several factors, including the absence of measurable business indicators to assess SCORE Training's impact from the lead buyers' perspective, which made direct benefits harder to discern, as well as the departure of the lead buyer manager after the ILO SCORE programme concluded.

### **3. Adaptation of the SCORE Training**

**Implementation partners generally perceive the adaptability of the SCORE Training positively while also noting that adjustments are often necessary to meet the specific needs of different regions, business sizes, and industries.**

IPs in Peru adapted not only the SCORE Training content but also the training methodology:

The CITEs adapted SCORE Training to better suit the local business environment, making the programme more relevant and accessible to the SMEs they serve. **A key change in one CITE was**



**restructuring the SCORE Training sessions to be more interactive and practical as well as adapting the training based on the sizes and level of development of their client companies.** Initially, the programme followed a lecture-based format with limited hands-on activities, but this CITE modified it so that 80% of the training was practical and dynamic, compared to the original 20%. This allowed participants to engage actively in exercises that directly applied to their business operations. Group activities, simulations, and on-site applications of concepts enabled SMEs to put theory into practice more effectively.

Another significant part of the adaptation strategy in this CITE involved **more frequent and intensive follow-ups than the traditional SCORE Training.** While the programme's model suggested one visit per month for three months following the training, this CITE found that SMEs required closer and more consistent monitoring. They scheduled weekly or bi-weekly visits and conducted regular phone check-ins. This approach enhanced accountability and maintained momentum in implementing new practices. It also strengthened the relationships between trainers and companies, offering continuous support for improvement.

**Individual trainers appreciated the flexibility of SCORE Training, which allowed them to tailor content to local contexts and specific industry needs, making the training more relevant and effective.** They noted that the programme could be customized to fit the specific needs of different industries, making it relevant to a wide range of enterprises. However, trainers stressed the need to update training materials and incorporate new ones as well including more localized examples and case studies to enhance engagement and understanding if SCORE Training continues to be implemented.

On another note, individual trainers as well as government officials highlighted that **the informality of microenterprises often makes it difficult to implement the training as designed.** In this regard, interviewees suggested the need for better knowledge-sharing on SCORE Training adaptations among IPs. As customizing modules and training delivery is essential to engage micro and small enterprises – given their limited time and financial resources – the Ministry of Labour condensed the five modules into two blocks. Other interviewees stated that offering shorter, more targeted modules and integrating local business practices increases relevance, indicating a lack of awareness of existing adaptations, again underscoring coordination and knowledge gaps.

#### **4. Performance and position in the training industry**

Trainers indicated that exists a **notable stable demand for SCORE Training among SMEs, driven by a growing awareness of the importance of operational improvements and regulatory compliance.** Yet they also emphasized that financial constraints often limited participation.

*"After a pilot programme with five companies, many other businesses expressed a desire to participate, but again, financing blocked those opportunities" – Independent trainer*

*"If there were grants or subsidies available, I believe we would see a substantial increase in participation from smaller enterprises" - Independent trainer*

While trainers acknowledged a competitive landscape, with other organizations offering similar training programmes for SMEs, they also highlighted several **value-added features of the SCORE**



**programme that set it apart from competing training initiatives.** They noted that SCORE Training's comprehensive and practical approach provided SMEs with actionable tools to enhance their operational efficiency, addressing real-world challenges rather than focusing solely on theoretical concepts. Additionally, the emphasis on continuous improvement instilled a mindset that encourages ongoing learning and adaptation, essential for long-term success in a competitive environment.

Moreover, various SMEs and trainers reported that **obtaining SCORE Training certification significantly enhanced their credibility in the market.** They found it easier to secure new training contracts, as SMEs valued the recognised expertise that came with being a certified ILO-SCORE trainer. Also, trainers emphasized that the certification directly impacted their ability to attract and retain clients in a competitive landscape.

*"The certification added credibility; it made clients more likely to trust my expertise" - Independent trainer*

*"Having the SCORE certification opened doors for me; I found that SMEs valued it when considering training options" - Independent trainer*

*"The recognition that comes with the SCORE Training certification has significantly helped me in securing new business opportunities" - Independent trainer*

## 5. SCORE certified trainers

In Peru, the total number of trainers is relatively high compared to other SCORE beneficiary countries. However, with 38 trainers holding expired licenses, this could compromise the country's capacity for future programme implementation (ILO SCORE M&E Database, August 2024).

During the interviews, trainers reported that their involvement with SCORE Training began through various channels, including direct outreach from the ILO and existing partnerships with corporate buyers. Many trainers were already engaged in initiatives focused on improving operational practices, quality control, and compliance among businesses. Additionally, they typically possessed diverse professional backgrounds, with many being experts in specific topics.

**The ToT and certification process was generally perceived positively by trainers,** who appreciated its comprehensive nature. The interactive sessions included practical exercises that prepared them for delivering SCORE Training content. However, some trainers suggested improvements, such as extending the duration of the ToT to allow for deeper exploration of the modules and enhancing the quality of training materials. They felt that additional time for practice would better equip them to handle real-world training scenarios effectively.

In regard to reputation, individual trainers noted that **the credibility associated with SCORE Training certification was another significant advantage, as it increased client trust.** Lastly, trainers valued the networking opportunities SCORE Programme created, fostering a supportive community where they could share best practices and resources. Overall, these features contributed to SCORE Training's effectiveness in driving meaningful improvements within SMEs.



*“SCORE Training provides practical solutions that SMEs can implement right away, which sets it apart from other training programs” - Independent trainer*

*“We can customize the SCORE Training modules to fit the local industry, which makes the training much more effective for participants” - Independent trainer*

*“Having SCORE certification really boosts my credibility; it makes clients more likely to trust my expertise” - Independent trainer*

*“The connections I’ve made through SCORE Programme have been invaluable. Sharing experiences with other trainers helps us all improve” - Independent trainer*

**The shortage of trainers in some institutions constitutes a significant bottleneck for the implementation of SCORE Training**, particularly when the certifications of existing trainers expire.

- For instance, **within the MTPE, only a few trainers are certified and capable of implementing the programme**. This lack of personnel with experience in business management poses a challenge, particularly as the majority of trainers within this branch of the ministry are lawyers who may not have the necessary background for SCORE Training delivery.
- **Similarly, the limited availability of certified trainers in one CITE created a bottleneck for training delivery**. In this context, maintaining the quality and continuity of the training required ongoing support and a pipeline of trained facilitators who could meet the specific needs of the local context.
- **In contrast, another CITE has a team of SCORE trainers, who have been instrumental in implementing various modules of the programme since 2017**. Initially, they relied on independent trainers but later trained their own staff to better match the needs of the sector. Other CITEs across different sectors and regions in Peru, such as leather, footwear, agro-industry, and forestry, have also trained their personnel as SCORE trainers, with CITE Madera providing part of the training

### 3.3. Broad-scope assessment

This section analyses the remaining focus countries—China, Colombia, Ghana, India, and Viet Nam—using data from the ILO database, desk research, complemented by interview insights. Since no surveys were conducted in these countries, as indicated in the inception report, we rely on data extracted from the ILO database to conduct our analysis. This approach allows us to compare key metrics and trends across two distinct periods: during the tenure of ILO funding and after its conclusion. This comparison aims to identify any significant shifts or continuities in the data that could indicate the impact of the SCORE Training. Although post-ILO data reported by trainers is less robust, it still offers valuable insights into later developments, though trends should be interpreted cautiously. To enhance accuracy, we cross-check these trends with interview insights. In China, we interviewed multiple stakeholders, while in other countries, we interviewed only the former ILO SCORE Project Coordinator, with the exception of Colombia, where we also spoke with a private organisation involved in SCORE Training delivery.



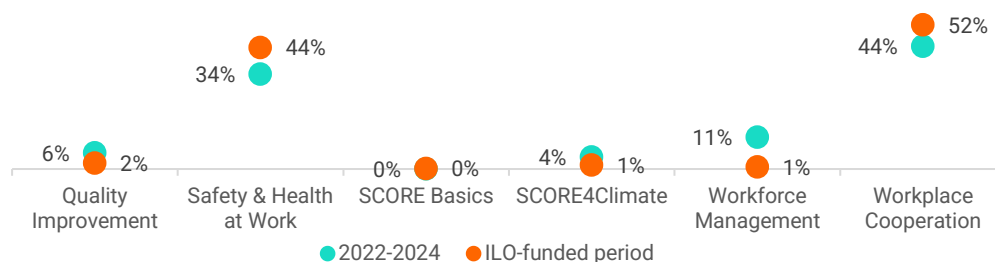
### 3.3.1. China

## SCORE Programme in China

### SCORE Training

During the period 2009-2021, the SCORE programme trained 1,091 SMEs and 15,448 employees, of whom 55% were workers and 38% were women (Table 2). The programme targeted all sectors, with the average SME employing 262 workers. During the ILO SCORE-funded period (Figure 21), on average, Chinese enterprises participated in two SCORE Training modules. Of all modules delivered, the Workplace Cooperation module accounted for 52%, while the OSH module represented 44%. In the later period 2022-2024, interest in these two modules has remained strong, mainly driven by the influence of lead buyers and the Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM).<sup>24</sup>

Figure 21: SCORE Training Modules delivered (% of total modules implemented)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

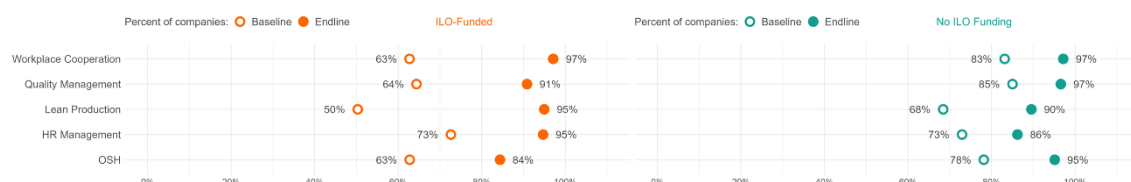
<sup>24</sup> The Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM) was established in 2018, expanding the responsibilities of the former State Administration of Work Safety (SAWS), which had initially supported the SCORE programme. MEM now oversees a broader range of responsibilities, including occupational safety, natural disaster management, and accident response, positioning it as a key agency in ensuring safety standards across various sectors in China.



## SME-level impact and sustainability

### Improvements in management practices

Figure 22: Improvements in SMEs' management practices adoption: Baseline (pre-SCORE Training) vs Endline (post-SCORE Training)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

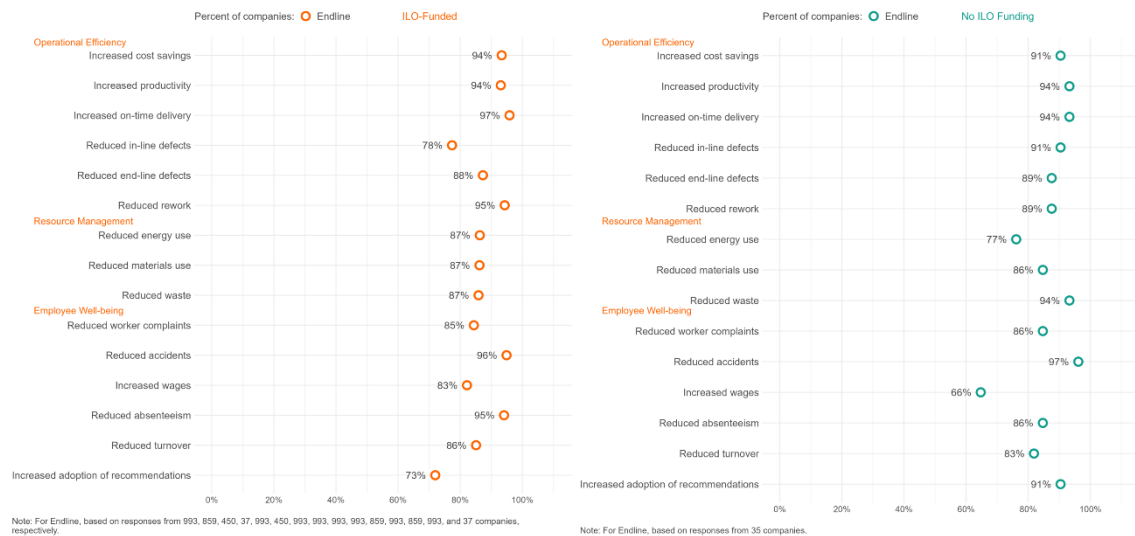
During the SECO-NORAD funded period 2011-2021 (Figure 22), there was a significant increase in the adoption of new management practices among enterprises across all key areas. This trend continued into the subsequent period, with approximately 93% of enterprises adopting these practices. Notably, **Chinese enterprises exhibited a broad adoption of new management practices across all areas, unlike enterprises in other countries, which often focused on specific areas like Workplace Cooperation.** Additionally, the higher baseline for the participating Chinese companies reflects their more mature state of existing management practices compared to other countries.

**All interviewees - including implementation partners, lead buyers, and trainers - highlighted that shifting mindsets was the most challenging aspect of delivering SCORE Training and methodology.** Initial resistance from company owners and workers accustomed to traditional management methods posed a significant hurdle. Convincing them to embrace SCORE Training's collaborative practices required considerable effort. While the SCORE Academy (see below) leveraged case studies, success stories, and data to showcase the effectiveness of SCORE Training to lead buyers and their supply chains, emphasising the crucial role of leadership's direct involvement and support, the International Exchange and Cooperation Centre (IECC) adopted a two-stage strategy to address reluctance. First, they set examples by selecting poorly managed companies as pilot projects, using their tangible improvements to demonstrate SCORE Training's benefits to others. Second, they organised promotional seminars for company representatives to highlight the advantages of SCORE Training, aiming to generate interest and broader adoption. These approaches were instrumental in overcoming resistance and encouraging the uptake of SCORE Training and new management practices, paving the way for broader industry-wide adoption.



## Impact of the SCORE Training

Figure 23: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

During both the SECO-NORAD funded period and the subsequent phase, **the SCORE program achieved significant improvements across all metrics**, with over 80% of companies reporting positive outcomes—substantially higher than those seen in other countries. Companies in the later period performed slightly better in areas such as "Increased adoption of recommendations" (91% vs. 73%) and "Reduced end-line defects" (91% vs. 78%). Despite these differences, both periods show substantial gains in operational efficiency, resource management, and employee well-being, demonstrating that **the benefits of the SCORE programme are well sustained, even without continued funding support from the ILO.**

According to the many institutional partners, while no formal post-impact evaluations have been conducted, **most participating enterprises have not only sustained the management practices they adopted but have also expanded the methodology across their entire operations.** Larger companies, in particular, have integrated SCORE Training principles throughout all divisions, branches, and subsidiaries, driven by its clear benefits, such as reduced energy consumption, improved site management, and enhanced product quality. For SMEs, SCORE Training has resulted in significant cost reductions and efficiency gains by promoting worker-driven improvements in processes and quality. The program has also boosted productivity and fostered greater cooperation, creating a positive work environment that supports long-term competitiveness. These organisations continue to **appreciate the SCORE methodology for its transformative impact**, highlighting its ability to shift traditional, rigid management systems towards a more inclusive and holistic approach that fosters collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement.



### Spotlight 10: Scaling Safety and Innovation through strategic integration of SCORE methodologies

The Zhejiang Communication Investment Group Co., Ltd. (CICO), a state-owned enterprise (SOE), manages over 370 enterprises across sectors like highways, railways, chemical industries, engineering, and logistics. In 2017, CICO adopted the SCORE program with the support from the MEM, piloting it in Huzhou to address the need for a standardised safety approach. After the initial success, CICO made a strategic decision to scale up SCORE Training across all its branches and enterprises from 2019-2024, embedding the program into its long-term management strategy. This move transformed SCORE Training from a pilot project into a fundamental part of CICO's operational philosophy, integrating safety and continuous improvement into the company's daily practices.

This institutionalisation of SCORE Training marked a shift from CICO's traditional top-down methods like ISO 9000, which provided structure but lacked the flexibility and frontline engagement SCORE Training emphasises. The bottom-up approach of SCORE Training has been transformative, empowering over 300 self-managed teams to actively manage safety and operational efficiency. By involving frontline workers in identifying risks and proposing solutions, CICO has fostered a more inclusive culture, with employees at all levels feeling a stronger sense of ownership. SCORE Training's focus on continuous, incremental improvements has proven essential for adapting to the varied challenges across CICO's diverse operations. With significant investment in internal consultants and Enterprise Improvement (EI) teams in place, CICO has maintained consistent implementation of adopted management practices. As a result, CICO positions itself as a regional leader in workplace safety and promoting the adoption of SCORE methodologies to other SOEs in China.

## Institutional-level impact and sustainability

### Institutional Partners (IPs)

In China, the implementation of the SCORE program is currently led by two key partners: the SCORE Academy<sup>25</sup> and the International Exchange and Cooperation Centre (IECC)<sup>26</sup>, each targeting different categories of companies. The SCORE Academy focuses on engaging lead buyers and their global supply chain, encouraging them to adopt SCORE Training as a supplier development tool. Meanwhile, the IECC collaborates with provincial and municipal governments to support the implementation of the SCORE Training for state-owned enterprises and SMEs in the domestic market.

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<sup>25</sup> Established in 2019 as part of SCORE China's sustainability strategy, the SCORE Academy serves as a national centre of excellence to promote SCORE Training, certify consultants and trainers, and ensure adherence to SCORE standards.

<sup>26</sup> The IECC operates as a key institute under the MEM, managing international cooperation, programme implementation, and training activities in the field of emergency management. Since 2014, the IECC has been leading the implementation of the SCORE project in China, fostering collaboration between the MEM and the ILO.



## 1. Sustainability of SCORE service delivery

In the period following the end of ILO SCORE Programme funding in China, **the two key implementation partners continued to successfully deliver SCORE Training, though not without challenges.**

**The SCORE Academy continues to deliver SCORE Training through its network of trainers, organises promotional meetings with global brands, and develops new training programmes to expand its reach.** SCORE Academy provides both online and on-site training, reaching a significant number of SMEs and participants<sup>27</sup>. The academy also facilitated experience-sharing workshops for each project, typically at least once or twice during the project's timeline to foster knowledge exchange among enterprises.

**However, the SCORE Academy faces considerable challenges to its sustainability, largely due to its dependence on funding from lead buyers.** If these lead buyers reduce their support or shift production away from China, SMEs may lack the incentive to invest in improvement programmes, posing a risk to the long-term viability of SCORE Academy. This issue is compounded by the limited demand from SMEs, who are often unwilling to pay for external training—especially when free government programmes are available.

Additionally, the SCORE Academy collaborates with about ten consulting firms responsible for promoting SCORE Training within their networks and independently deliver SCORE Training for lead buyers. While these firms handle the direct implementation, SCORE Academy ensures training quality. Service providers like Leverage have expanded SCORE Training's reach beyond China to Southeast Asia and countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh. Yet, interviews suggest that **for most private service providers, SCORE Training remains a secondary element**—offered as an add-on rather than a core aspect of their training services.

**The SCORE Academy has expanded its training into Southeast Asia to meet demand from Chinese companies and lead buyers in the region.** In Indonesia, Chinese expert trainers introduced the SCORE methodology within Chinese-operated manufacturing zones, with local trainers managing the delivery. In Viet Nam, where the SCORE Training has a decade-long presence, the Academy collaborates directly with local implementers to deliver training for Amazon. Additionally, the ILO is considering implementing SCORE Training in Mongolia as part of a youth employment initiative.

**On the other hand, to date, the IECC, in partnership with provincial and local governments, has trained over 1,800 enterprises — mainly SMEs — on workplace cooperation and safety improvements.** The programme has expanded across provinces including Shanxi, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Hunan, and Beijing Municipality. Interview insights indicate that MEM has recognised the unique value of SCORE Training's approach, particularly in engaging all levels of staff in safety

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<sup>27</sup> In 2022, SCORE Academy provided training for 26 SMEs through 43 on-site sessions, reaching over 1,041 participants, and trained 52 new consultants. In 2023, SCORE Academy expanded its reach further by delivering 50 on-site training sessions to 32 SMEs, involving 1,705 participants. Additionally, consulting services during 171 factory visits benefited 2,920 participants, and 184 participants completed newly developed online courses.



management. **Unlike traditional punitive management methods in China, SCORE Training fosters a "blameless culture" that encourages proactive employee involvement**, resulting in significant improvements in safety, energy use, site management, and product quality. This holistic impact has led MEM to **continue supporting and promoting SCORE Training in both the medium and long term**.

**The IECC's expansion plan for SCORE Training, aimed at ensuring long-term sustainability and scalability**, involves (1) setting examples through pilot projects and hosting promotional seminars to overcome initial resistance from Chinese SMEs; (2) building local trainer capacity through a Training of Trainers (ToT) model, collaborating with local and provincial governments, as well as their close network of 4-5 expert trainers; and (3) transitioning to a self-sustaining model where companies fund their own training after initial support, guided by locally trained experts. A two-year evaluation cycle will ensure quality and adherence to the SCORE methodology, with MEM offering certification to companies that successfully adopt these practices, potentially earning them benefits like reduced insurance premiums from local government.

## 2. Funding of the SCORE Training

As previously discussed, there are two streams of funding in China: one from lead buyers and the other from the government. These streams are managed separately by the SCORE Academy and the IECC, with no interaction or collaboration between them.

### Lead buyers

**Lead buyers continue to show interest in SCORE Training.** During the SECO-NORAD funded period, several lead buyers were engaged. For instance, one lead buyer, funded by the German government, successfully trained around 20 suppliers in Guangzhou, enhancing SCORE Training's visibility. Since 2020, SCORE Training has also partnered with major brands aligning with their shift from auditing to deeper supplier development. For instance, in the last three years, one lead buyer has trained 31 factories in China and expanded its efforts to include 15 SMEs in India, 3 in Viet Nam, and 1 in Indonesia, while another extended its training from China to Viet Nam, demonstrating the SCORE Training's effectiveness.

Interview insights indicate that **while the SCORE Training's current funding from lead buyers can sustain it in the short to medium term, long-term sustainability of the SCORE Academy requires a new approach**. One option is to leverage social audits, mandatory for many enterprises in China, positioning SCORE Training as a tool to help suppliers meet audit requirements and attract lead buyers. **Another option is to offer paid training services to SMEs, but this faces challenges** due to competition from free or subsidised government programs and SMEs' preference for straightforward, productivity-focused options like Lean Manufacturing.

A lead buyer noted benefits from SCORE Training, such as improved efficiency, cost savings, better health and safety, and lower turnover. However, **barriers to long-term engagement include a frequently changing of suppliers, insufficient evidence of SCORE Training's impact compared to other training options, and limited supplier capacity to sustain practices independently**. Engagement challenges also stem from gaps in OSH knowledge, and limited availability of SCORE service providers in some countries. To address these, the lead buyer suggests enhancing



scalability through digital tools, adopting a modular programme design, and providing long-term guidance with clear milestones for suppliers.

### Governments

Since 2021, the MEM's funding model for SCORE Training has shifted significantly. Approximately 95% of funding now comes from provincial and municipal governments, while some larger companies have opted for self-financing, recognising the SCORE Training's long-term benefits in safety and productivity. As discussed, **their long-term strategy will mark a transition towards more local and company-driven funding for SCORE Training implementation.**

**MEM's provision of free SCORE Training has created conflict with independent trainers by disrupting the market for paid services.** By focusing on OSH, MEM dominates this area, leaving other areas such as leadership and HR training to private trainers, who face limited opportunities. MEM's emphasis on large enterprises and government-funded projects further restricts private trainers' access to SMEs, which cannot afford training without subsidies. Despite this competition, **collaboration is possible in niche areas beyond MEM's core focus**, such as specialised SCORE Training modules or global supply chains.

### 3. Adaptation of the SCORE Training

**The SCORE Academy has adapted and innovated its offerings to better address the evolving demands of Chinese companies.** During COVID-19, an online training platform was developed to deliver all five modules interactively, maintaining engagement despite limitations to in-person interactions. The SCORE Academy also creates tailored materials for lead buyers, such as CSR manager training, to strengthen relationships with key decision-makers.

In terms of content, interviewees highlighted several additions to the traditional modules, including the "Worker Voice" project, which helps companies implement structured grievance and feedback systems, and the Supervisory Skills Training (SST) module, inspired by the ILO's Better Work program, which aims to enhance supervisors' management and communication skills. The SCORE+FIT<sup>28</sup> focuses on improving factory-specific processes for greater efficiency, while the SCORE Plus programme integrates digitalisation and worker engagement to align with changing industry demands. Such adaptation has been well-received by clients. It also has offered SCORE Basic in response to client requests of shorter courses since 2022. To ensure sustainability, SCORE Training is strategically expanding into new areas, including climate action and just transition, to align with emerging trends in supply chain sustainability.

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<sup>28</sup> SCORE+FIT combines the SCORE programme with the ILO's Factory Improvement Toolset (FIT), developed by SCORE Academy. FIT, funded by the Swedish government under the Decent Work in Garment Supply Chains Asia project, aims to improve factories affordably in areas such as productivity, working conditions, relationships, and environmental practices. Each FIT module involves a team working together for about 2.5 hours with minimal disruption to production, allowing enterprises to customise interventions to their specific needs. There are currently 74 modules available at the ILO's Learning Hub. Source: <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/factory-improvement-toolset-fit-pilot-programme-pakistans-textile-and-ready>



On the other hand, the IECC primarily relies on traditional SCORE Training with minimal adaptation. They have suggested that the ILO update the SCORE Training materials—particularly the data and case studies—to keep them relevant and compelling.

#### 4. Performance and position in the training industry

Interviewees highlighted the **SCORE Training's four-phase structure—pre-assessment, customised in-house training, on-site consultancy, and long-term follow-up—as a key competitive advantage**. This comprehensive approach sets SCORE Training apart from competitors that only offer standalone training sessions. The **SCORE Training's pricing is also competitive, especially in China**, while providing substantial long-term value for SMEs. However, SCORE Training primarily depends on funding from lead buyers or government subsidies, as most SMEs lack the financial capacity for such extensive services independently.

**Consequently, even with its comparative advantages, the market for SCORE Training is limited, as not all brands are interested in the programme.** SCORE Training is generally focused on larger brands committed to long-term supplier development, allowing service providers and independent trainers to find their niche without significant competition. SMEs, however, often prefer training that delivers immediate productivity gains over SCORE Training's broader worker engagement approach. Many SMEs also opt for alternatives like Lean Manufacturing, which focus solely on productivity, making it challenging for SCORE Training to attract SMEs.

#### 5. SCORE certified trainers

As of 2024, the country has 10 expert trainers with approximately two specialising in each module, and 122 pending trainers waiting to be certified<sup>29</sup>, (ILO SCORE M&E Database, August 2024), **reflecting efforts to expand the trainer pipeline in China**. For most expert trainers, providing training is their main professional activity, with many relying on the SCORE Academy as their primary source of opportunities. One interviewee indicated that around one-third of their professional engagements involve SCORE Training, highlighting the consistent demand for their SCORE Training services.

However, interview insights reveal **that the rigorous certification process for SCORE trainers—taking three to six months and requiring both going through a Training of trainers (ToT) and then delivering a full SCORE Training module to a company to demonstrate their capability—can be discouraging, slowing the pipeline of new trainers despite maintaining high quality standards**. To address this, the SCORE Academy introduced a three-tiered trainer structure to improve accessibility. The structure includes expert trainers at the top, regular SCORE-certified trainers delivering programs to enterprises, and entry-level consultants. Trainers can first become certified as consultants through a simpler, faster process before advancing to full ILO SCORE

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<sup>29</sup> SCORE Academy has established its own database with a Member Centre, meaning SCORE trainers no longer report to the ILO SCORE M&E database. This shift explains why the ILO database now shows only 10 Expert Trainers, with the status of other Trainers listed as Pending Approval or Expired.



Training certification. This approach allows quicker engagement and offers flexibility in training delivery, catering to different budgets and needs.

### 3.3.2. Colombia

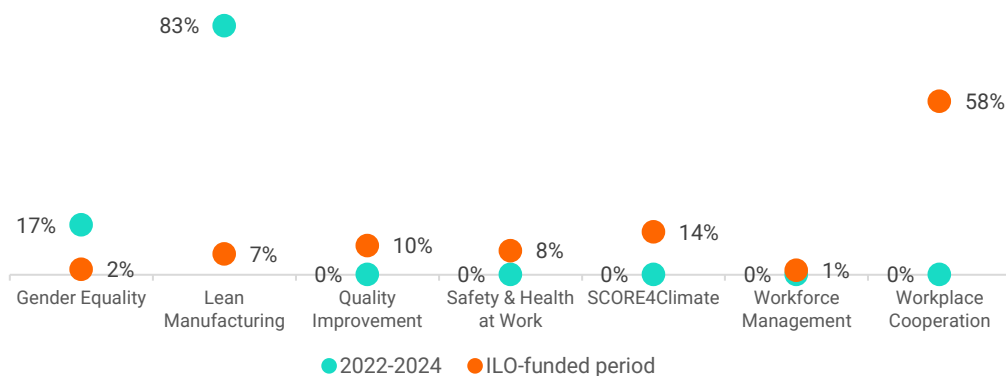
## SCORE Programme in Colombia

### SCORE Training

During the 2010-2021 period, the SCORE programme trained 242 SMEs and 74,384 employees in Colombia, with 54% of participants being women and 60% being workers. Target sectors included textiles, floriculture, services, security, construction, the supply chain of the oil, gas and cement, jewellery, food processing, plastic, and packaging. Enterprises trained employed an average of 307 workers and underwent 1.59 SCORE Training modules on average.

During the SECO-NORAD funded period (Figure 24), Workplace Cooperation accounted for 58% of modules delivered, with other modules remaining minimal. In contrast, during the 2022-2024 period, Lean Manufacturing represented 84% of delivered modules, while the Gender Equality module expanded its share from 2% to 17%. During this same period, deliveries of Workplace Cooperation and all other modules declined sharply to 0%. The sharp reduction in the Workplace Cooperation and other modules may be due to fewer new SMEs implementing SCORE Training, while existing SMEs that had already completed such modules and decide to focus on other specialization units.

Figure 24: SCORE Training Modules delivered (% of total modules implemented)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

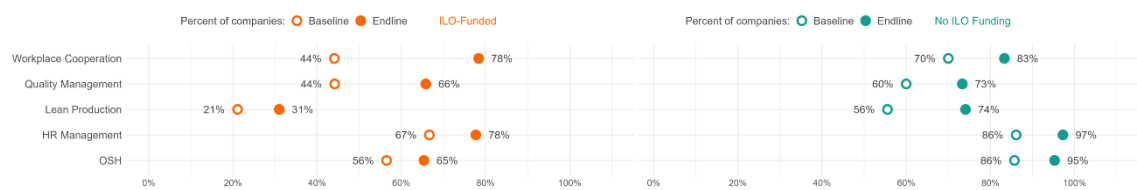


# SME-level impact and sustainability

## Improvements in management practices

Improvements in SMEs' adoption of management practices after training are evident across all indicators in both periods. While the SECO-NORAD funded period is characterized by lower baseline levels and significant increases, the 2022-2024 period suggests more specialised training, where enterprises with higher baseline levels achieved improvements exceeding 70% across all areas, with HR and OSH near full adoption.

Figure 25: Improvements in SMEs' management practices adoption: Baseline (pre-SCORE Training) vs Endline (post-SCORE Training)



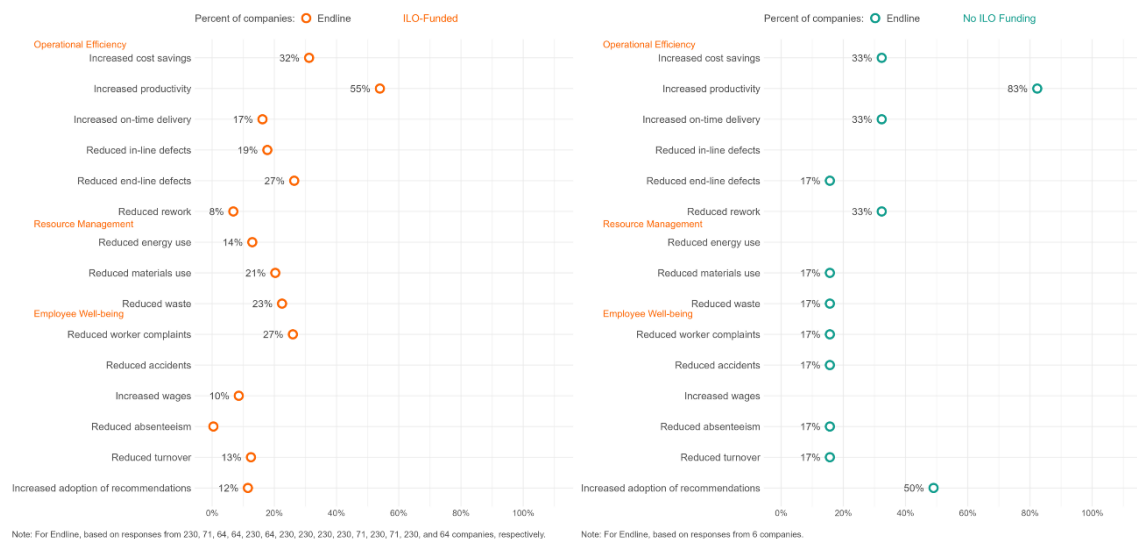
Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

## Impact of the SCORE Training

While many KPIs show modest changes, **increased productivity stands out as the most significant gain, particularly during the non-SECO-NORAD funded period.** Additionally, during this second period, there were substantial improvements in reduced rework and increased adoption of recommendations, indicating a marked increase in positive changes (Figure 26).

Figure 26: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training



Note: For Endline, based on responses from 230, 71, 64, 64, 230, 64, 230, 230, 230, 71, 230, 71, 230, and 64 companies, respectively.

Note: For Endline, based on responses from 6 companies.



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

## Institutional-level impact and sustainability

### Institutional Partners (IPs)

In Colombia, the SCORE programme relied on a range of partners to drive its implementation and expansion. Alianzas por el Desarrollo, a private sector organisation, played a crucial role in promoting and delivering SCORE Training. Additionally, collaborations were established with key public entities like the International Centre for Productivity (ICP) in Cali and the Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá (CCB). These **public institutions were integral in scaling up the program and adapting it to local needs**, ensuring that the training reached a broader set of enterprises, particularly in sectors such as manufacturing and agro-processing.

Despite these partnerships, **there was no unified strategy among the organisations involved, which led to fragmented implementation efforts**. Each partner pursued independent priorities and pricing structures, which in the view of the interviewee, diluted the effectiveness of SCORE Training implementation in the Colombian market.

#### 1. Sustainability of SCORE Training service delivery

Until 2021, the SCORE programme relied heavily on ILO (SECO and NORAD) funding, which facilitated both the training of trainers and the delivery of the program to enterprises. However, when this funding ceased in, **the sustainability of the SCORE Training faced significant challenges in Colombia**.

During the 2022-2024 period, there was a notable decline in the number of SCORE Training implementations. Interviewee insights suggested that without a central guiding institution, such as the ILO, the SCORE Training lacked the promotional and operational support needed to keep it thriving. **The absence of ILO's influence meant that it was harder for the private implementers to secure engagement with government ministries or attract new businesses**. Those companies already familiar with the SCORE Training continued implementing it, but new clients were harder to reach.

The **lack of coordinated promotion and the absence of a standardised pricing model were significant challenges for its sustainability**, especially after the ILO's direct involvement ended in 2021. Different implementing partners, such as Alianzas por el Desarrollo and the Chamber of Commerce, each developed their own independent pricing structures, leading to inconsistent pricing for the same service. As a result, some organizations offered SCORE Training at a very high cost, while others provided it at a significantly lower price. **This discrepancy made it difficult for companies to understand the value of the SCORE Training, and the lack of a unified marketing effort further diluted its visibility**.

Also, the interviewee mentioned challenges arising from the change in government in 2022 and related reforms, such as tax reforms. **These political shifts may have created uncertainty for**



**businesses, leading to reduced confidence and impacting their willingness to invest in trainings like SCORE Training.**

In this context, efforts to implement the SCORE Training became fragmented, with various partners such as ICP integrating the SCORE Training into their broader consultancy services. However, without a unified strategy, the impact was diluted, and the delivery became inconsistent.

## **2. Funding of the SCORE Training**

Like other countries, **the funding for SCORE Training in Colombia has faced significant challenges since 2021**. While some support was provided through government programs like Factories for Productivity (Fábricas de Productividad) and partnerships with lead buyers such as Efigaz, these efforts were inconsistent and lacked long-term sustainability.

After 2021, **the search of private sector trainers for alternative funding through local chambers of commerce and international donors remained in the early stages, with political and financial barriers further complicating their ability to secure reliable financial support.**

### **Lead buyers**

**During the 2018-2019 period, there was strong demand for SCORE Training through lead buyers** who aimed to improve their supply chain efficiency by integrating SCORE Training. However, this collaboration did not fully expand to all supply chains. After 2021, the demand for SCORE Training through lead buyers dropped sharply, mainly due to the cessation of ILO funding and the lack of promotion, which severely impacted the sustainability of the SCORE Training.

According to interviewees, while lead buyers saw the benefits of SCORE Training, they did not continue to expanding the program across their entire supply chains due to **changes in the economic landscape and financial limitations**, limiting its reach and impact. This selective approach, combined with the economic uncertainties faced by businesses during and after the pandemic, hindered the development of a more sustainable funding relationship with lead buyers.

### **Governments**

Prior to 2021, The Colombian government played a role in funding the SCORE Training through programs like Factories for Productivity (Fábricas de Productividad), which aimed to enhance productivity in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). However, **the government's financial support was inconsistent, with long gaps between disbursements, making it difficult for implementers to plan effectively.**

Although the government was instrumental in launching some of these initiatives, **there was no formal long-term strategy to ensure consistent financial backing for the SCORE Training after ILO funding ended in 2021**. As a result, the SCORE Trainings struggled to maintain scale, and interviewee expressed concerns that without a structured government commitment, sustaining SCORE Trainings at a national level remained challenging.



### 3. Adaptation of the SCORE Training

In Colombia, the adaptation of SCORE Training was seen a crucial element for its success across sectors such as manufacturing and supply chains. According to the interviewee, **the customization of modules like Workplace Cooperation and Health and Safety into longer, comprehensive training plans helped address operational challenges faced by companies like Efigas**. These adaptations enabled enterprises to improve internal processes incrementally. The interviewee described the SCORE Training as “a wonder” in terms of adaptability, offering flexibility for both large and small enterprises to achieve gradual results.

The interviewee emphasised that **while SCORE Training materials remained flexible, its further adaptation to evolving needs, such as digitalisation, was constrained by a lack of resources**. Despite these challenges, the interviewee believed that SCORE Training materials and methodology could still be adapted to various contexts.

### 4. Performance and position in the training industry

In Colombia, **SCORE Training initially positioned itself as a unique training solution**, offering a structured approach to workplace cooperation, health and safety, and lean production. According to the interviewee, **the SCORE Training’s adaptability and short-term results gave it a competitive advantage over other methodologies**, such as Lean Six Sigma, which often required more extended periods to show results. SCORE Training was praised for helping companies make incremental improvements, particularly smaller enterprises, by offering practical, step-by-step training that quickly translated into tangible outcomes.

This fragmented approach weakened the demand for SCORE Training, as businesses were unclear about the benefits and hesitant to invest in it. **The decline in promotion, coupled with varying prices, caused a gradual reduction in demand for SCORE Training services post-2021**.

Moreover, **without the backing of ILO or structured promotion, the SCORE Training struggled to compete with other established methodologies like ISO certifications**, which are more recognizable and offered more immediate value to companies aiming for international standards.

### 5. SCORE certified trainers

**Colombia is facing significant challenges in maintaining a pool of certified trainers**. The majority of trainers in Colombia (80%) have expired certifications, with 90 trainers in this category. Only a small percentage remain certified, with 6 certified trainers (5%) and 5 expert-level trainers (4%) (ILO SCORE M&E Database, August 2024). Many trainers have lost their certification due to the lack of continued program implementation post-2021. As noted, the program saw a steep decline in funding and active participation, causing many trainers to let their certifications expire. **This imbalance may significantly affect the program’s capacity for future**.

**Without consistent opportunities for re-certification or new implementations, it will be difficult to maintain the level of expertise once available**. Many trainers have also shifted their focus to other projects due to the lack of consistent work under SCORE Training.



### 3.3.3. Ghana

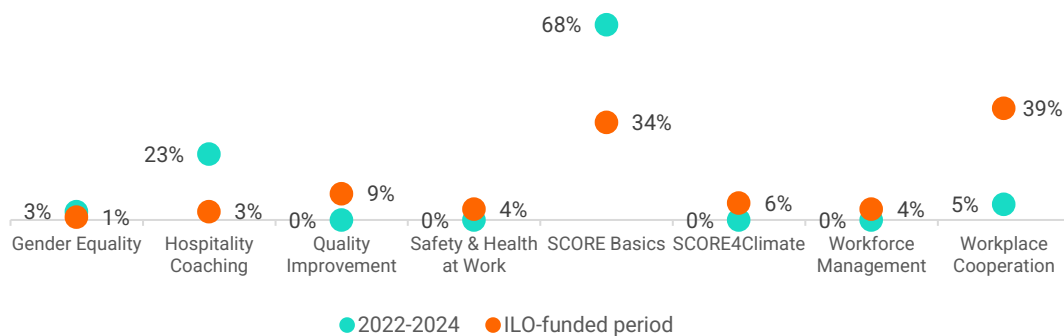
## SCORE Programme in Ghana

### SCORE Training

During the period 2011-2021, the SCORE program in Ghana trained 420 SMEs and 15,345 employees, with 64% of participants identified as workers but only one in three of participants being women (34%). Target sectors included Manufacturing and Hospitality. On average, SMEs trained employed 37 workers and underwent 1.53 SCORE modules.

During the SECO-NORAD funded period (Figure 27), the Workplace Cooperation module constituted 39% of delivered modules, while SCORE Basics accounted for 34%. All other modules were marginal, each representing less than 10% of total module delivery. In contrast, between 2022 and 2024, the proportion of SCORE Basics modules nearly doubled, and the share of hospitality modules rose significantly. Meanwhile, delivery of the Workplace Cooperation module declined substantially, while other modules remained relatively stable with modest increases. Reflecting a broader trend seen in other countries, the Workplace Cooperation module lost prominence during the 2022–2024 period, as other specialised modules gained ground.

Figure 27: SCORE Training Modules delivered (% of total modules implemented)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)



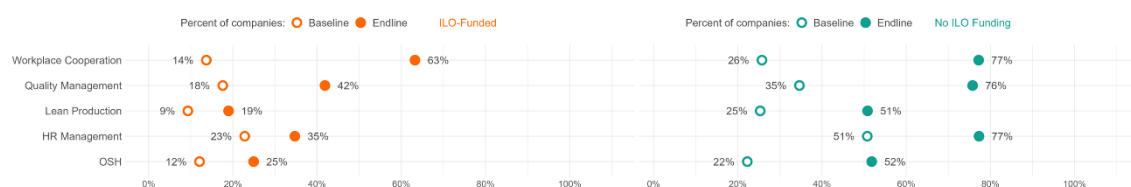
## SME-level impact and sustainability

### Improvements in management practices<sup>30</sup>

In both periods studied, improvements in SMEs' management practices after SCORE Training are evident (Figure 28). The Workplace Cooperation module, often considered the core module of SCORE Training, saw significant increases in both periods. However, the 2022-2024 period shows greater improvements across all other modules.

One reason behind this trend may be that **the adaptation of SCORE Training modules by implementing partners may have played a key role in improving the results over the two periods.** Moreover, during the post-ILO funded phase, **the SCORE Training became integrated into a wider framework of micro-level interventions within the "Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work" project.** This allows enterprises to not only benefit from SCORE Programme's core training but also from complementary productivity enhancing measures at the micro, meso and macro levels.

Figure 28: Improvements in SMEs' management practices adoption: Baseline (pre-SCORE Training) vs Endline (post-SCORE Training)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

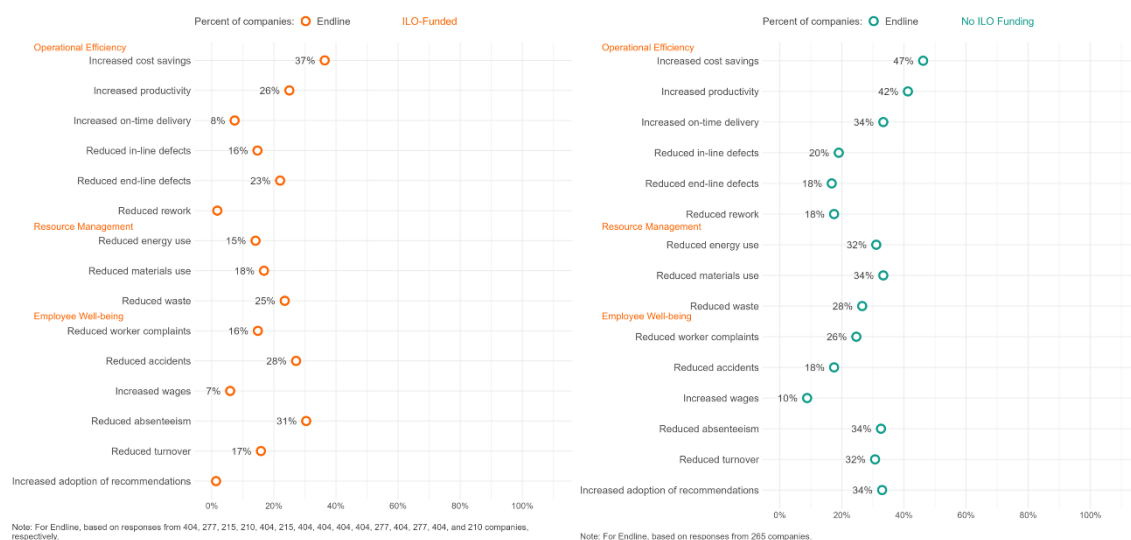
### Impact of the SCORE Training

Similarly, Figure 29 shows that changes in KPIs since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training have been significant and positive in both periods. Once again, the post-2021 period depicts greater improvements in nearly all KPIs, particularly those related to operational efficiency and resource management, with only a few showing lower improvements compared to the first period.

<sup>30</sup> According to interview: Although some implementing partners continue to collect data, there are concerns about the long-term reliability and consistency of post-2021 data. Not all trainers and partners may be collecting data at the same standard as during the ILO's involvement, leading to gaps in monitoring progress and assessing impact.



Figure 29: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

## Institutional-level impact and sustainability

### Institutional Partners (IPs)

In Ghana, the SCORE program worked with both public and private sector organizations. Key partners included the Management Development and Productivity Institute (MDPI), SCORE Training Solutions Ghana (STSG), and Sekondi-Takoradi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (STCCI). Public institutions, like the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, also supported the program. **MDPI was the only public institution directly involved in training delivery while the majority of implementing partners were private sector actors.**

### 1. Sustainability of SCORE Service Delivery

**As of 2021, the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) committed EUR 200,000 to the SCORE initiative in Ghana, playing a crucial role in sustaining the program's operations following the conclusion of the NORAD-SECO funded period that same year.** This has allowed MDPI to train over 500 enterprises post-2021, ensuring the continuation in SCORE Training. Private sector partners, particularly STSG and STCCI, continued to operate independently, providing SCORE Training on their own or under donor initiatives. In 2023-24, the ILO Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work Programme (PE4DW) began collaborating with SCORE trainers to provide training to beneficiary firms. The network has now expanded to Tamale, with six new trainers joining.



However, private sector funding remained limited, with most enterprises relying on donor or other external support. In this context, implementers like MDPI and STSG have developed their own models for delivering SCORE Training without direct ILO support. They have managed to sustain SCORE Training implementation with GIZ funding and maintain their independence.

The implementation of SCORE Training remains operational in Ghana, with independent trainers and implementing partners now operating with greater autonomy. This approach, intentionally adopted due to the lack of public funding, involved supporting trainers in independently selling their services to SMEs and other donors. **While this model fosters flexibility and adaptability, one interviewee noted that the absence of a permanent supervisory body may hinder the sustainability and quality of SCORE Training by limiting coordination and consistency across all implementing partners.**

## 2. Funding of the SCORE Training

**The absence of a clear long-term financial strategy is regarded as a significant challenge for the continued sustainability of SCORE Training in Ghana.** While GIZ's financial support has been instrumental in keeping the program operational post-2021, concerns remain about the limited engagement from lead buyers, the private sector, and the government. Public funding for such training programs is not yet available in Ghana, and with the industry primarily focused on natural resources, there is limited interest from lead buyers in supporting initiatives like this. In this context, exploring alternative donor funding and adopting a market-driven approach emerged as the most viable solutions. However, without more diverse and consistent funding sources, potential gaps in financial support may jeopardize the program's long-term continuity.

### Lead buyers

**The engagement from lead buyers remained limited, and no large-scale or consistent funding emerged.** This is likely due to Ghana's relatively limited role in global supply chains beyond the export of raw materials. There were efforts to create a funding mix, seeking support from development partners to balance the financial requirements, but this approach only achieved partial success, with private sector interest remaining inconsistent. As a result, the approach focused on private sector involvement did not fully materialize as a sustainable funding solution, with lead buyers' contributions to the program mostly occurring on an ad-hoc basis rather than becoming a major pillar of financial sustainability.

### Government

The Ghanaian government, through various public institutions, has also been involved in supporting SCORE Training. The Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Tourism have provided support in various capacities. Although these ministries offered institutional backing, **direct financial contributions from the government for SCORE Training have been limited.**



## Private sector

There has been **limited private sector funding** for SCORE Training, although some individual enterprises have occasionally financed their own training. These cases, however, remain exceptions rather than the norm.

### 3. Adaptation of the SCORE Training

**The adaptation of SCORE Training to local needs is seen as crucial and has been necessary for its continued relevance, according to interviewees.** Ghanaian partners, especially STSG, have customized SCORE Training to address the specific challenges faced by local enterprises in sectors such as manufacturing and agro-processing. These adaptations included adjustments to accommodate the varying levels of technical capability and resource availability of SMEs in these sectors. For example, in manufacturing, SCORE Training was tailored to help enterprises adopt more streamlined production processes, while in agro-processing, modules were adapted to focus on productivity improvements that were feasible within resource-constrained environments.

While the adaptation of SCORE Training by certified trainers is encouraged, the interviewee highlighted concerns that **some trainers have modified the content or structure of the training without preserving its core elements, raising questions about its overall quality.** The interviewee recommended the need to consult with the ILO or other partners to ensure any adaptations align with the SCORE Training standards and it's not done arbitrarily.

*"the adaptation should follow a framework" – ILO Officer*

### 4. Performance and Position in the Training Industry

**The SCORE programme has significantly enhanced the reputation and market position of training organisations partners like MDPI and STSG in Ghana's business development services market.** Both organizations experienced increased demand for SCORE Training, particularly in the manufacturing sector, as enterprises recognized the program's quality. This rise in demand helped boost their visibility and client base.

**The bottom-up demand for SCORE Training remains strong also, with enterprises recognizing the value of SCORE Training,** particularly in terms of improving productivity and workplace practices.

However, **sustaining the SCORE Training visibility and long-term success in the training landscape requires stronger marketing strategies and more robust financial support.** While some efforts have been made to promote SCORE Training through social media and digital banners, these efforts have been described during the interviews as insufficient for maintaining long-term interest and awareness. According to the interviews, the absence of a continuous and strategic marketing approach among the implementation partners means that the SCORE Training is only advertised occasionally, either when funding is available or when an enterprise shows interest, rather than having a standing advertisement that runs consistently year-round. In this regard, **the interviewee suggested to develop stronger online platforms,** such as enhanced



websites with clear application processes for SCORE Training to maintain consistent demand and sustain the momentum built thus far.

### 5. SCORE Certified Trainers

In Ghana, the majority of certified trainers remain active, accounting for 59% (33 trainers). Expert-level trainers represent 16% (9 trainers), while only 11% (6 trainers) have expired certifications (ILO SCORE M&E Database, August 2024).

Before 2021, with ILO and donor support from NORAD and SECO, the certification and supervision of SCORE trainers were closely monitored. MDPI and implementing partners like STSG ensured that trainers adhered to the SCORE Training methodology through regular certification, refresher courses, and quality checks. The ILO's direct involvement provided structured oversight, maintaining consistency in training delivery across all partners.

Post-2021, while the certification of trainers still requires the submission of all supporting documents to the ILO headquarters, **the interviewee emphasized the increasing importance of periodic capacity-building efforts, such as refresher training for trainers and the introduction of updated modules.**

## 3.3.4. India

### SCORE Programme in India

#### SCORE Training

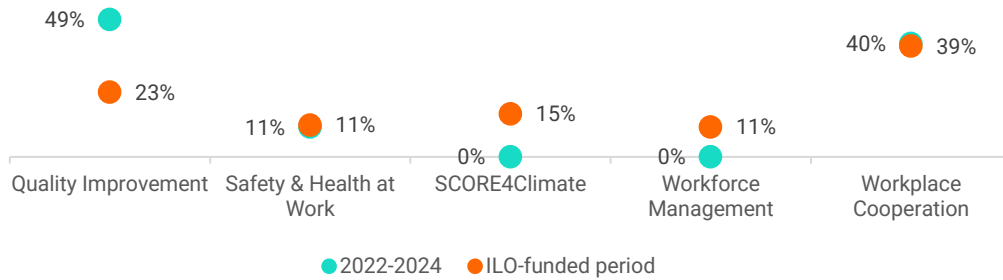
During the period 2010-2018, the SCORE programme trained 101 SMEs and 1,473 employees, of whom 37% were workers and 10% were women (Table 2). The percentage of female participants was significantly lower compared to other countries, reflecting the broader trend of low female participation in the workforce in India.

The programme targeted sectors such as automotive components, electronics, fabrication, and readymade garments, with the average SME employing 73 workers. Interview insights confirmed that the enterprises involved in India are predominantly SMEs, unlike in some other countries where micro-enterprises are more common.

Indian enterprises, on average, engaged with three modules, more than in other countries. During the SECO-NORAD funded period (2010-2018), Workplace Cooperation constituted 39% of modules delivered, while Quality Improvement accounted for 23%. The SCORE4Climate module represented 15%, reflecting growing environmental awareness, and both Safety & Health at Work and Workforce Management each formed 11% of total delivery. Since 2018, Workplace Cooperation and Quality Management remained the most frequently delivered modules, at 40% and 49%, respectively. Globally, SCORE Programme has expanded its offerings to include several thematic modules beyond the initial five core modules. However, in India, as noted in an interview, the original five core modules continue to be predominantly utilised.



Figure 30: SCORE Training Modules delivered (% of total modules implemented)

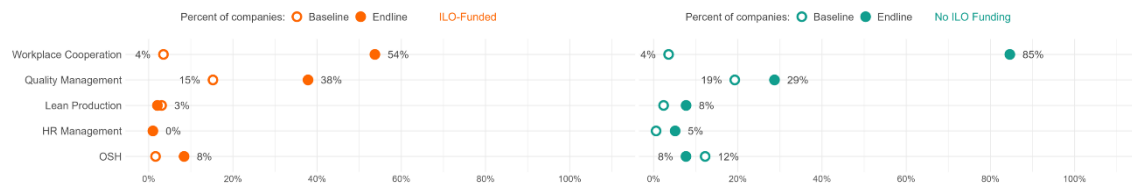


Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

## SME-level impact and sustainability

### Improvements in management practices

Figure 31: Improvements in SMEs' management practices adoption: Baseline (pre-SCORE Training) vs Endline (post-SCORE Training)



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

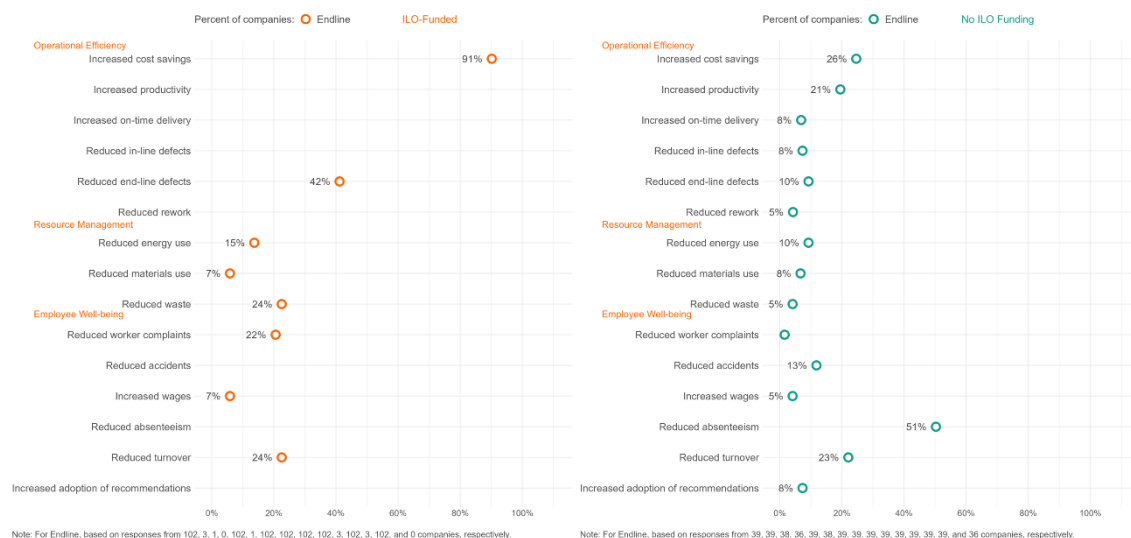
Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

As seen in Figure 31, during the SECO-NORAD funded period 2010-2018, there was a significant increase in the adoption of new management practices among enterprises, particularly in Workplace Cooperation and Quality Management, where adoption rates surged by almost 14-fold and 3-fold, respectively. Improvement in other areas was less notable. Since 2019, the trend appears similar, however, there were more substantial improvements in areas like Lean Production and HR Management, although the proportion of companies adopting these practices remains relatively small, with less than one in ten companies implementing them.

### Impact of the SCORE Training



Figure 32: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

Between 2010 and 2018, the most notable impact was on operational efficiency, with 91% of companies reporting increased productivity and 42% achieving reductions in in-line defects. Improvements in employee well-being saw modest gains, with approximately a quarter of the companies successfully reducing worker complaints and turnover. Resource management had the least progress, with about a quarter of companies reducing waste and roughly one tenth achieving reductions in energy and material use. However, other KPIs in these areas showed no improvement, indicating that **most SMEs in India may have encountered similar challenges and opted to address the more easily achievable improvement objectives first.**

The period following the end of ILO's support presents a different narrative. More than half of the companies reported reduced absenteeism, while only a quarter noted improvements in cost savings and productivity. Additionally, there were enhancements across all KPIs, suggesting that **companies during this period may have pursued a broader array of improvement projects, particularly those related to worker wellbeing,** resulting in a more diverse range of benefits.

Interview insights reflect similar observations. Initially, SMEs resist aspects of the SCORE program like worker-manager dialogue, especially due to high employee turnover and the presence of migrant workers in India. However, once tangible benefits such as reduced defects and cost savings become apparent, acceptance grows. **The SCORE Training's impact is notably significant in establishing robust management systems that enhance quality control and productivity, which paves the way for introducing softer topics like gender equality once immediate business improvements are observed.**

## Institutional-level impact and sustainability



## Institutional Partners (IPs)

During the SECO-NORAD funded period, the SCORE programme collaborated and capacitated many implementing partners, including Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), Ambattur Industrial Estate Manufacturers Association (AIEMA), Ahmednagar Auto & Engineering Association (AAEA), and SME-Technology Development Centre (SME-TDC). These organisations partnered with private consultancy firms and independent trainers to deliver the SCORE Training.

SCORE India at that time also facilitated the creation of the Association for Promotion of Competitive and Responsible Enterprises, which aimed to promote, market, and implement SCORE Trainings after the project concluded in India. However, its impact remained minimal.

### 1. Sustainability of SCORE service delivery

As observed by the former ILO SCORE coordinator, **leadership has proven to be a crucial factor in the sustainability of SCORE Training**. When key individuals—such as those within government agencies who champion SCORE Training—transition to other roles or organizations, the initiative often stalls. Without dedicated leaders or organisations to drive the agenda, the program’s momentum weakens, leading to declining interest from consultancy firms, trainers, lead buyers, and donors. As of 2024, there is no funding from the government, lead buyers, or other donors to sustain SCORE Training.

While some private training providers or consultancy firms may continue to use elements of the SCORE methodology or content, and market it under different names, it is difficult to speak of sustainability when SCORE Training itself is no longer directly associated with these efforts. One interviewee voiced **concerns about the long-term sustainability of the SCORE Training, particularly in light of the growing popularity of new Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks and certifications**. These alternatives are more attractive to businesses because they offer quicker, more tangible returns and come with recognised certifications, unlike SCORE Training, which only provides a certificate of participation. The absence of a formal certification makes SCORE Training harder to market, as companies often prefer programmes that offer a clear, credentialed outcome to demonstrate compliance or progress. The perceived quicker impact and clear alignment with global trends make ESG frameworks more attractive to companies and investors, thereby overshadowing the slower, long-term benefits that SCORE Training offers. This shift in priorities could further diminish SCORE Training’s relevance unless it adapts to the evolving market demands.

### 2. Funding of the SCORE Training

During the SECO-NORAD funded period, the Indian government, through various public sector institutions, supported SCORE initiatives. However, in the later period, funding for SCORE Training in India primarily came from donors like KOICA and lead buyers like Amazon.



## Governments

In 2018, the SCORE Training methodology was integrated into India's publicly funded Lean Manufacturing Competitiveness Scheme (LMCS, which was part of the National Manufacturing Competitiveness Programme (NMCP) comprising seven schemes under the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MoSME). Many trainings were carried out under this scheme. In 2020, SCORE Training continued under the MoSME's "Make in India" initiative, with FICCI coordinating SCORE trainers across India. However, due to policy changes and bureaucratic hurdles, the scheme has become an unreliable funding source, making it difficult for trainers and SMEs to access.

According to an interview, while the scheme remains available today, evolving guidelines and a complex approval process have hindered long-term support. **Interest in the SCORE Training fades without continuous promotion, especially as government champions move on to other roles.** As a result, businesses are less inclined to pursue this funding, and trainers face difficulties navigating the system without external support from the ILO or another coordinating body.

## Lead buyers

Although several major buyers expressed interest at the end of the SECO-NORAD funded period, only one lead buyer proceeded to sponsor and contract FICCI to train 20 of its suppliers in 2019-2020. Other multinational corporations, such as Hyundai or Suzuki, have their own supplier development programs that cover similar ground, making SCORE Training less competitive. **The potential for securing funding from both Indian and international brands remained limited.**

## Other donors

In 2018, the SCORE programme submitted concept notes to potential donors, including KOICA, EU-India, and various national organizations, seeking further funding. This led to KOICA committing USD 2.3 million to the ILO's Promoting Sustainable Enterprises in India (PSEI) project (2020-2022), with part of the funds allocated to deliver SCORE Training to SMEs and promote productivity and improved working conditions to the government and public. However, **without a coordinating body to promote the SCORE Training and secure future funding, its continued use in PSEI is at risk of discontinuation, and its adoption in other donor programmes is unlikely to materialise.**

### 3. Adaptation of the SCORE Training

In India, while the five core modules of SCORE Training were predominantly in use, **the training methodology, especially data collection was adapted to fit the country's highly competitive business environment.** For example, the original international monitoring system, which relied on binary (yes/no) data collection, proved ineffective. Instead, the focus shifted to a more comprehensive quantitative data collection, as detailed data was considered essential for enterprises to differentiate themselves from competitors and meet the expectations of government and corporate partners.



Additionally, **sector-specific customisation was crucial during the SECO-NORAD funded period.** Different industries, such as shrimp processing and automobile manufacturing, required highly tailored SCORE Training content. Generic modules were often inadequate for sectors already exposed to advanced management techniques like Kaizen and Lean Manufacturing.

**SCORE Training in India has not been restructured into a new, marketable package, as seen in other countries.** This could be attributed to the maturity of the training market and the presence of more advanced programmes that address specific emerging issues. As a result, rather than customising SCORE Training, it may be more practical for organisations to adopt entirely new training programmes that better meet current demands.

#### 4. Performance and position in the training industry

As one interviewee noted, the professional training industry in India is highly competitive. India's business development services (BDS) providers must constantly compete with numerous other training and consultancy programs. SCORE Training must therefore be continuously marketed and promoted to maintain visibility. The environment is dynamic, and **trainers, often working independently, are incentivised to promote their own businesses or alternative programs, leading to SCORE Training losing traction over time.**

Despite the significant challenges SCORE Training faces in India's competitive market—such as the lack of certification and the fast-paced nature of business development—its robust data collection methodology remains a critical asset. **In a market where granular, quantitative data is highly valued by corporate buyers and government agencies, this strength can be leveraged as a unique selling point.** The ability to deliver measurable, data-driven outcomes gives SCORE Training an edge in proving its effectiveness. However, SCORE Training's content struggles to keep pace with the rapidly evolving landscape of training programmes in India, which are frequently updated to address emerging business needs and trends. **Without continuous content innovation and alignment with current market demands, SCORE Training risks falling behind.**

#### 5. SCORE certified trainers

Currently, there are only four registered SCORE trainers and no expert trainers, with three more awaiting approval, and eight trainers have let their licenses expire (ILO SCORE M&E Database, August 2024). This decline in active trainers highlights **the diminishing interest in SCORE Training and poses a significant challenge to SCORE Training's sustainability in India.**



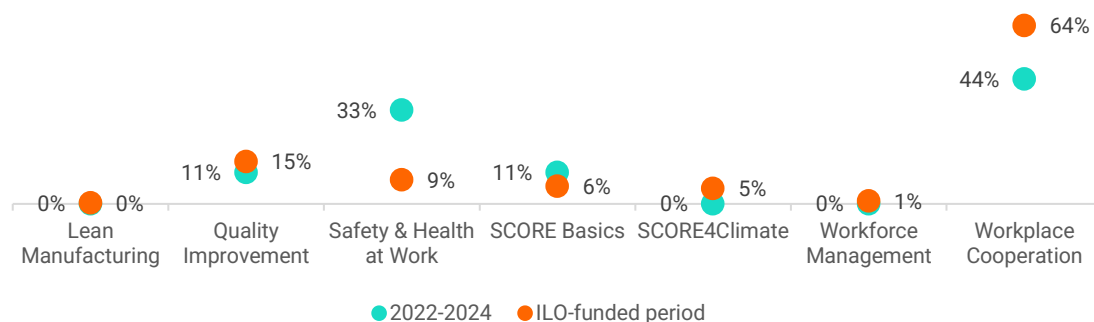
### 3.3.5. Viet Nam

## SCORE Programme in Viet Nam

### SCORE Training

During the period 2011-2021, the SCORE programme trained 277 SMEs and 2,755 employees, of whom 31% were women and 57% were workers (Table 2). The programme targeted sectors such as wood processing, garment, mechanics, and supporting industries, with the average SME employing 516 workers - significantly larger than the typical SME in Viet Nam and other countries, reflecting the labour-intensive nature of these industries. During 2011-2021 (Figure 33), on average, the Workplace Cooperation module made up 61% of modules delivered in Vietnam, while Quality Improvement represented 17% and OSH accounted for 9%. In the period thereafter, since 2022, the share of Workplace Cooperation modules has declined to 44%, while the proportion of OSH modules has risen to 33%.

Figure 33: SCORE Training Modules delivered (% of total modules implemented)



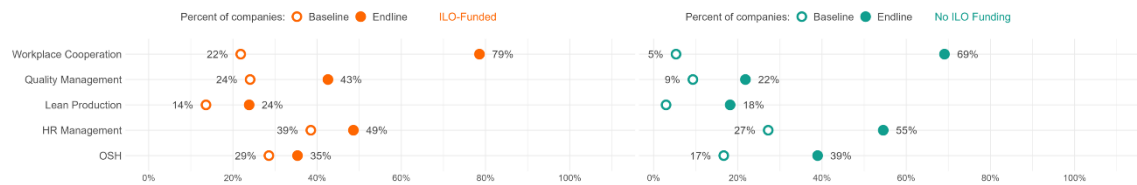
Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)



# SME-level impact and sustainability

## Improvements in management practices

Figure 34: Improvements in SMEs' management practices adoption: Baseline (pre-SCORE Training) vs Endline (post-SCORE Training)



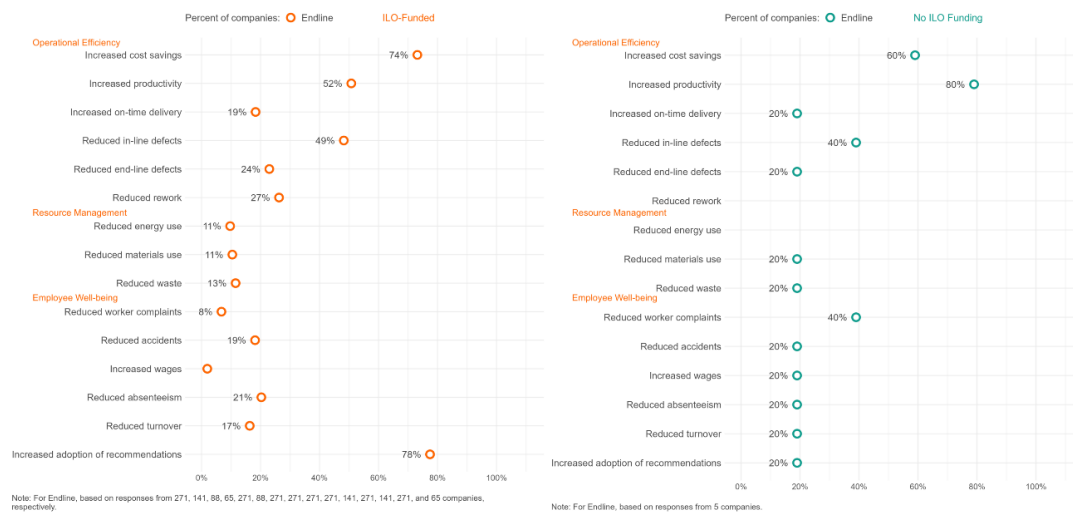
Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

During the SECO-NORAD funded period 2011-2021 (Figure 34), **there was a notable increase in the adoption of new management practices among enterprises, especially in Workplace Cooperation and Quality Management.** Adoption rates for Workplace Cooperation soared to 79%, more than tripling the earlier rate, while Quality Management nearly doubled, with 43% of companies adopting new practices in this area. Improvements in other areas were also significant, with increases ranging from 1.5 to two-fold. In the period since 2022, companies in the SCORE Training started with significantly lower baselines, leading to more pronounced improvements across all areas. However, despite these improvements, the final adoption levels were similar to those in the previous period, except for Quality Management where only a fifth of the companies adopted the practices, a decrease from 43% in the earlier period.

## Impact of the SCORE Training

Figure 35: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training



Note: For Endline, based on responses from 271, 141, 88, 65, 271, 88, 271, 271, 271, 141, 271, 141, 271, and 65 companies, respectively.

Note: For Endline, based on responses from 5 companies.



Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Note: ILO-funded refers to the period when SMEs and institutional partners received support from the ILO through SECO-NORAD funding.

Between 2011 and 2021, the SCORE Training led to significant improvements in operational efficiency, with 74% of companies reporting cost savings and 52% noting increased productivity. While 78% of companies adopted recommendations to enhance employee well-being, only 8% observed a reduction in worker complaints, and 20% reported fewer accidents, turnovers, and instances of absenteeism. Progress in resource management was minimal, with only 10% of companies managing to reduce waste, energy, and material use. This pattern mirrors trends in other countries where **operational efficiency is typically the most noticeable impact of companies participating in SCORE Training.**

The period following the end of ILO's support (2021-2024) showed a continuation of earlier trends. However, with only five companies reporting endline results, it's challenging to assert these findings as representative of this later period. Once ILO stopped supporting the SCORE Training in Viet Nam, data collection was no longer emphasised and took a lower priority.

Interview insights reveal that **enterprises, particularly in the wood processing sector, continue to apply and institutionalize the improvements learned through the SCORE Training.** Practices such as daily production meetings, improved workflow management, and sustainable packaging solutions have been adopted widely. Additionally, **the SCORE Training coaching methodology continues to be highly valued by companies, even if the SCORE Training brand itself is less recognised.** Unlike traditional consultancy models that focus on audits and direct solutions, SCORE Training adopts a coaching-based approach, guiding enterprises to form internal improvement teams that identify and solve their own challenges. This empowers companies to develop self-sustaining problem-solving skills and building long-term internal capacity. By involving employees in decision-making, SCORE Training fosters a culture of continuous improvement and engagement, ensuring progress continues beyond external support. The principles of continuous improvement and the tools introduced through SCORE Training are still actively used by these enterprises, embedding lasting change.

**An unexpected impact of the SCORE programme, as highlighted by the former ILO SCORE project coordinator, is its role in improving connectivity between SMEs and Business Development Services (BDS).** A key barrier for Viet Nam's SMEs is their limited awareness and access to BDS. SCORE Programme addresses this by linking enterprises with certified trainers and BDS providers, thereby breaking down barriers of awareness and trust. By providing a standardised engagement process, SCORE Programme helps SMEs recognise the value of external consultancy, building their confidence in BDS and increasing their willingness to invest in these services for future growth.

## Institutional-level impact and sustainability

### Institutional Partners (IPs)

During the SECO-NORAD funded period, the SCORE programme employed distinct strategies in Southern and Northern Viet Nam. In the South, it partnered with the Viet Nam Chamber of



Commerce and Industry (VCCI) to adopt a market-driven sustainability approach, including charging fees to SMEs for training services. In contrast, the North focused on collaborating with public training providers like the Technical Assistance Center for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME TAC), under the Ministry of Planning and Investment, that focused on serving SMEs. Additionally, SCORE programmed also worked with the Industrial Development Center (IDC) under the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) to deliver SCORE Training. Additional partners such as the Handicraft and Wood Processing Association of Chi Minh City (HAWA), Binh Duong Furniture Association (BIFA), Binh Dinh Forestry Product Association (FPA), and Center for Supporting Industries Development (CSID) also contributed but played secondary roles in the delivery of SCORE Training.

### 1. Sustainability of SCORE Training service delivery

After ILO's support ended in 2021, **SCORE Training evolved from a stand-alone initiative to being integrated into programmes led by key partners.** Before 2021, partner primarily acted as facilitators, organising training sessions under ILO's structure and oversight. Post-2021, these organisations became the main drivers, fully incorporating SCORE Training into their business models. They now embed SCORE Training methodology into broader capacity-building activities, including coaching, training of trainers (ToT), and enterprise improvement (EI) teams to promote sustainable practices. This transition has enabled partners to adopt a flexible, coaching-based approach, independently managing training programmes and tailoring SCORE Training tools to meet their specific needs.

For instance, VCCI continues to integrate SCORE Training into its capacity-building portfolio, offering enterprises a baseline assessment to select the most relevant modules based on their priorities. Their portfolio, however, increasingly focuses on market-driven and sector-specific programmes. TAC, on the other hand, has shifted from generic classroom training to using SCORE Training's coaching methodology for SME development. HAWA has moved from SCORE-based training to organising technical discussions on topics such as digitalisation, leveraging their SCORE Training credibility to diversify services. The Viet Nam Productivity Institute (VNPI), under the Ministry of Science and Technology, as part of the Productivity Ecosystem for Decent Work project, has integrated the SCORE Training coaching model into its green productivity programmes, focusing on energy efficiency and waste management, which will take place in 2024 and 2025.

Although the SCORE programme aimed to build long-term capacity within partner organisations, results have been inconsistent. **The ability of these organisations to consistently deliver high-quality training often hinges on leadership stability and external factors such as political changes.** For example, VCCI's capacity to effectively implement SCORE Training has fluctuated with changes in Viet Nam's political landscape and the varying importance attributed to VCCI by government leaders. When VCCI is valued by political leaders, its effectiveness in delivering SCORE Training is enhanced, whereas reduced political support leads to diminished impact. Business Support Organisations like the Wood Processing Association also saw their effectiveness wane following leadership transitions, highlighting the critical role stable leadership plays in maintaining training quality.



The sustained momentum of SCORE Training and methodology in Viet Nam can be attributed to (1) the flexible implementation by partners, allowing for local adaptation while maintaining core SCORE Training principles, and (2) the alignment with new ILO initiatives like the Productivity Ecosystem Program, which provided ongoing funding and opportunities to promote SCORE Training. This combination has kept SCORE Training relevant and active in Viet Nam, ensuring continued impact and engagement.

## 2. Funding of the SCORE Training

Since 2022, partners like VCCI and TAC have taken on a larger financial responsibility. As a result, many partners began running self-funded or co-funded programs, incorporating elements of SCORE Training. Enterprises now often pay for training and consultancy services, though they still benefit from the affordable fees that result from shared costs between SMEs and partners. **This shift allowed for greater sustainability, as partners began to see SCORE Training as a core part of their service offerings rather than an externally funded project.**

### Governments

The SCORE programme in Viet Nam demonstrated the effectiveness of a public-private co-funding model for SME training, which has since influenced broader government policy on SME support. This model, where SMEs and the government share consultancy costs, ensures that SMEs continue to access high-quality training. Leveraging SCORE Training's success, SME TAC, under the Ministry of Planning and Investment, successfully advocated for the inclusion of this model and formalisation of a national network of SME consultants in Decree 80/2021/ND-CP. Effective from 15 October 2021, Decree 80 incorporates the flexible public-private support concept, increasing funding thresholds and making it easier for SMEs to invest in long-term consultancy<sup>31</sup>. This institutionalisation ensures the SCORE programme's positive impact continues beyond its initial scope, paving the way for potential funding schemes to support future SCORE-inspired training for SMEs.

### Lead buyers

During the SECO-NORAD funded period, the SCORE programme engaged with several major lead buyers through events and collaborations. Despite initial interest, **sustained engagement with lead buyers was limited**. VCCI HCM delivered SCORE Training for suppliers of a lead buyer with 100% cost recovery and for two others with 75% cost recovery. Additionally, another lead buyer signed an implementation agreement with SME TAC to provide SCORE Training for its suppliers, with TAC collaborating with the SCORE Academy in China to facilitate these trainings in 2021.

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<sup>31</sup> Under Decree 80, support for SMEs has increased significantly, both in percentage and amount. Micro-enterprises can receive up to 100% of contract value, with a maximum of VND50 million (or VND70 million for woman-owned or social enterprises), compared to VND3 million under Decree 39. Small enterprises can receive up to 50% support, with a maximum of VND100 million (VND150 million for woman-owned or social enterprises), an increase from 30% and VND5 million under Decree 39. Medium enterprises can receive 30% of contract value, up to VND150 million (VND200 million for specific categories), compared to 10% and VND10 million previously. Source: <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=d79898ac-6407-4869-9485-4f5860d79386>



### 3. Adaptation of the SCORE Training

In Viet Nam, **SCORE Training has evolved with sector-specific adaptations and innovations.** During the SECO-NORAD funded period, SCORE Training was mainly a general productivity training programme applicable across sectors, with limited sector-specific content. Post-2021, significant adaptations were made, **especially in wood processing and environmental sustainability.** Partners developed customised materials for the wood sector, including targeted case studies and real-world examples. New modules on green production and environmental management, such as waste reduction and energy efficiency, were integrated to address growing sustainability demands and global standards. The rise of digitalisation and green technology also spurred the development of new modules focused on challenges like water management and energy-efficient production.

### 4. Performance and position in the training industry

Before 2021, SCORE Training operated with relatively little competition, providing unique consultancy-based training to SMEs in Viet Nam. However, after 2021, the market landscape shifted significantly with increased competition, driven by the growth of new programmes and online training platforms, particularly in the wake of COVID-19. **This rise in competing offerings, especially in areas like green production and digitalisation, challenged SCORE Training's market position.** To remain relevant, SCORE Training implementation partners had to adapt by integrating modern elements such as digital tools and online training, ensuring their services kept pace with the evolving demands of the training market while maintaining the quality and impact of their original methodology.

On the other hand, interview insights suggest that **SCORE Programme has played a key role in helping business support organisations and associations build credibility and trust among member enterprises, which has strengthened their position in the training market.** This trust, vital for ensuring future participation, stems from the consistent results delivered by SCORE-certified trainers, whether in productivity gains or in adopting green production practices. The programme's structured approach allows businesses to see real, measurable improvements, which enhances the credibility of both the trainers and the training itself. By fostering long-term relationships, SCORE Training methodology has enabled partners and associations to be seen as reliable providers of high-quality consultancy services, securing a competitive advantage in an increasingly crowded training market.

### 5. SCORE certified trainers

As of 2024, the country has 5 expert trainers and 6 certified trainers. Many former trainers have let their licenses expire (61%) (ILO SCORE M&E Database, August 2024). Interview insights suggest that **active trainers continue to deliver SCORE Training in collaboration with partner organisations like VCCI and TAC, ensuring quality and consistency.** While these trainers operate independently, they rely on partnerships with larger organisations for organising training sessions and expanding outreach to enterprises, highlighting the importance of collaboration for effective programme delivery.



## 3.4. SCORE Training as ILO service

### 1. Global outlook

In 2021, the SCORE programme initiated an ongoing transformation, evolving from a model funded by NORAD and SECO to a more decentralized approach with the integration of SCORE Training as a core ILO service to constituents. **This change occurred within a broader shift in the policy landscape towards more holistic interventions to enhance productivity and decent work**, with policies promoting measures at the micro-, meso-, and macro- levels. The transition demanded a restructuring of the programme and reflects a significant strategic shift, increasingly reliant on partnerships, local governments and private entities to ensure sustainable organisational structures and funding.

#### *Spotlight 11: Main characteristics of the transition from the HQs perspective*

**Decentralization of implementation:** The transition involves moving from a centrally funded and managed model to a more decentralized approach, where implementation is increasingly driven by local partners and national trainers.

**HQ Human resources:** The transition requires dedicated staff to manage the program effectively. While the previous model had significant staffing resources in HQs, the new approach emphasizes the need for a smaller, agile team that can oversee the decentralized implementation while providing necessary backstopping support.

**Better adaptation to local needs:** The decentralized approach aims to be more responsive to specific regional demands, while maintaining its relevance and increasing its effectiveness.

**Maintaining quality in decentralized implementation:** A decentralized model places more responsibility on national trainers and partners, which can lead to inconsistencies in implementation. Ensuring quality control and consistency across countries is difficult, especially as local partners have different capacities and experiences.

Despite the transition away from large-scale funding from SECO and NORAD, **bottom-up demand for the SCORE Training remains strong** according to interviewees. This is driven by ILO field offices, national governments, lead buyers and SMEs. In fact, **SCORE Training is currently implemented in many countries that are not or were previously included in the SECO/NORAD-funded program**, such as Brazil, China, Ecuador, Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Mauritius, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, South Africa.

For instance, in Albania, under the “Business Partnerships and Solutions for SDGs” project, SCORE Training was piloted in Albania’s textile, clothing, leather and footwear sectors to help enterprises align production with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the EU Green Agenda in 2023. In Brazil, over the 2020-2024 period, SCORE Training is being implemented as part of the “Improved productivity and working conditions for small and medium enterprises in Sao Paulo”, funded by the Brazilian government.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> See more: ILO Development Cooperation annual progress report. Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work: Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises Programme (SCORE) - Phase IV.



## 2. SCORE as an ILO service

The SCORE Training has become a key enterprise training service within the ILO, aimed at enhancing social dialogue, safety, and productivity among SMEs. According to interviewees, its core strength lies in transforming abstract ILO principles—such as decent work and sustainable enterprise development—into practical strategies that enterprises can implement effectively (see Spotlight 1).

Nonetheless, interviewees noted that while the SCORE Training has demonstrated tangible results, **its significantly narrower scope and resources compared to ILO flagship programmes might make it less visible and perceived as a smaller tool within the ILO's larger strategic landscape.** Furthermore, **competition can arise within the ILO itself**, as different teams address similar workplace cooperation and other themes covered by SCORE Training. For instance, the Social Dialogue team conducts its own training on workplace cooperation, which at times limit opportunities to utilise SCORE Training.

Despite these efforts, the transition away from large-scale donor funding has not been straightforward. Interviewees pointed out that, while there has been progress in integrating SCORE Training into some ongoing ILO priorities and initiatives, the need to secure consistent funding remains critical. As a result, **the ILO SCORE Programme and MSME branch in the ILO Headquarters is exploring opportunities for deeper integration into the ILO's regular budget and pursuing new funding streams through partnerships with national governments, private sector entities, and development agencies.**

## 3. Future outlook and main challenges

The decentralization of the SCORE Training increasingly relies on national trainers and local partners by giving them greater ownership over the training's implementation. This shift is aimed at reducing dependence on ILO staff, allowing national trainers to adapt the training according to their specific contexts. According to interviewees, this model has been effective, especially as it encourages trainers to take more responsibility, thereby fostering local ownership and ensuring that the programme remains relevant without continuous external support. However, our field observations highlight challenges related to the sustainable implementation of SCORE Training at the country level.

SCORE Programme becomes SCORE Training, an ILO Training and Consulting approach and tool. **SCORE Training can be implemented as a stand-alone intervention or integrated into broader frameworks, such as the Productivity Ecosystems approach, aligning with the evolving trend toward more holistic approaches to productivity and decent work.** SCORE Programme differs from other flagship ILO programmes in that it is primarily a training and coaching tool, whereas other programmes like Better Work may have broader policy and sectoral components. In this context, SCORE Training is increasingly being integrated into broader productivity enhancement strategies and programmes, allowing for synergies with other initiatives focused on improving both productivity and decent work. For example, there is an ongoing effort to align SCORE Programme with Better Work's objectives, making SCORE Training a complementary tool for enhancing productivity and decent work standards in global supply chains. This type of



integration may require broader coordination and adapting the modules to fit into larger frameworks, which can be complex and resource intensive.

**SCORE programme is aiming at becoming less dependent on a few large external donors, though securing long-term financial sustainability remains an unresolved challenge.** The programme has actively sought diversify its funding sources by presenting SCORE Training as a scalable and impactful tool. According to interviewees, one key strategy involves positioning SCORE Training within broader ILO initiatives, aligning it with global discussions on productivity, decent work, and supply chain resilience. This approach is intended to attract new donors and partners by demonstrating how the SCORE Training contributes to addressing wider challenges in the global economy.

**The continuous development and adaptation of training modules is seen as instrumental to meet current and future demands.** Interviews highlighted the introduction of new modules like **SCORE for Climate**, which focuses on **circular economy, resource efficiency, and clean production**, as a major step toward addressing evolving challenges. As noted in the interviews, this module has been successful and widely demanded, having been translated into several languages and implemented in multiple countries.

However, numerous interviewees stressed the need to update existing training materials as well as creating new ones that address other pressing issues, such as digitalization **to ensure that the SCORE Training remains a valuable tool for SMEs in today's rapidly changing landscape**

One of the key strategies has been creating a **global network of trainers that facilitates the exchange of knowledge and best practices**. This global community will not only help trainers remain connected but also provides them with a platform to share innovations and challenges. However, many country level partners and trainers are not aware of the activities of the network, one potential reason being that the global network offers services primarily in English.

In addition to creating a global community, **the SCORE programme aims at strengthening local capacity** by equipping trainers with the resources and autonomy to adapt the SCORE Training. Interviewees noted the organisation of two to three online training activities and webinars each year, where trainers from different countries can exchange knowledge and ideas. These exchanges are seen as vital for addressing regional challenges and ensuring that SCORE Training remains flexible and adaptable to local contexts while maintaining its core principles. However, **further efforts are necessary to enhance and sustain local capacity beyond simply expanding the trainer pipeline.**



## 4. Lessons learned

One of the aims of the evaluation is to extract key lessons learned and good practices<sup>33</sup>. The following six insights are drawn from the findings and analysis regarding the sustainability and impact of SCORE Training across the seven countries. It is important to point out that this evaluation primarily focuses on assessing sustainability, impacts, and contributing factors within the specific contexts evaluated. While some external factors are highlighted, these insights are largely context-specific and may not be universally applicable.

When considering external validity, it is crucial to recognise the conditions under which these learnings could be transferred to other contexts. Institutional sustainability strategies should be adapted to align with the interests of local governments and the private sector, as well as the country's integration into global supply chains. Context-specific factors, such as regulatory environments, market dynamics, and existing industrial practices, play a significant role in determining the relevance and success of these strategies elsewhere.

**Lesson learned 1: The absence of capable lead organisation(s) in some countries to consistently coordinate and promote SCORE Training greatly undermines the sustainability of both its delivery and impact.**

In Peru, Colombia, Ghana, and India, the lack of a central, accountable body has led to fragmented implementation, inconsistent quality, and limited outreach. For instance, in Peru, unclear guidelines and roles within the trainers' association hindered effective collaboration, while in India, efforts to integrate SCORE Training into government schemes were hindered by policy changes and bureaucratic obstacles, making funding inaccessible without a coordinating body to guide and support these processes. In contrast, countries with strong lead organisations, such as BEDO in Indonesia, SCORE Academy and IECC in China, and SME TAC and VCCI in Viet Nam, demonstrate how effective leadership is crucial for sustaining and scaling SCORE Training. These organisations have embedded SCORE Training into their core services, aligned with local policies, secured diverse funding, and maintained a robust trainer pipeline, resulting in consistent implementation and adaptability to local needs.

**Lesson learned 2: Lead buyer engagement as a strategy is only effective in large, high-potential markets where SMEs are integrated into extensive supply chains, supported by multiple lead buyers or major brands. It is neither universally applicable nor sufficient to ensure long-term sustainability on its own.**

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<sup>33</sup> The ILO defines lessons learned as “an observation from project or programme experience which can be translated into relevant, beneficial knowledge by establishing clear causal factors and effects. It focuses on a specific design, activity, process, or decision and may provide either positive or negative insights on operational effectiveness and efficiency, impact on the achievement of outcomes, or influence on sustainability. The lesson should indicate, where possible, how it contributes to 1) reducing or eliminating deficiencies; or 2) building successful and sustainable practice and performance. A lesson learned may become an emerging good practice when it additionally shows proven results or benefits and is determined to be worthwhile for replication or up-scaling.”



During the SECO-NORAD funded period, lead buyer engagement was relatively successful in countries like China and Peru. In China, market demand and an established supply chain structure attracted multinational companies that were eager to improve supplier standards. In Peru, the strategy succeeded mainly due to the hiring of a lead buyer manager with strong industry connections, particularly in the fishing and mining sectors, who effectively communicated the benefits of SCORE Training. However, long-term success depends on having a strong coordinating body or individual to ensure continuity after ILO support ends. When the manager left in Peru, engagement with lead buyers dwindled due to the lack of such continuity and lack of interest. In China, although companies like Amazon and Apple have continued engagement, their contribution to the sustainability of SCORE Training remains limited due to small scale. For instance, Amazon funded the training of 50 enterprises across China, India, Viet Nam, and Indonesia since 2019. This is modest compared to government-led training programmes like the Jakarta government's training of over 600 SMEs and IECC's support of more than 1,800 SMEs in China. Ultimately, embedding SCORE Training into national or regional government policies and SME training programmes has proven to be a far more impactful and scalable approach for achieving sustainable outcomes.

**Lesson learned 3: A lack of consistent relationship and ongoing support between the ILO and lead implementation organisations, both within and across countries, represents a missed opportunity and negatively impacts long-term sustainability.**

In Indonesia, China, and Viet Nam, continued engagement has often relied on personal relationships or the proactive efforts of individual organisations, rather than consistent, systematic support from ILO. To improve sustainability, interview insights suggest that ILO should establish structured support mechanisms—such as international exchange programmes for fostering practical business insights and cross-country connections, as well as industry-specific conferences and workshops. These initiatives would promote cohesive learning, facilitate networking, and ensure that SCORE Programme's goals and standards are uniformly implemented across all participating countries.

**Lesson learned 4: The flexibility to adapt SCORE and SCORE-inspired training – including changes to content, duration, module focus, and delivery format – while preserving the core principles of (1) SCORE Training methodology and (2) fostering workplace cooperation and worker engagement, has been key to maintaining its relevance across diverse contexts.**

In countries like Indonesia, Peru, China, and Ghana, SCORE-inspired adaptations (e.g., SCORE Plus, SCORE+FIT, and iCare) have evolved to meet specific local needs. These adaptations still keep key elements like worker participation and cooperative problem-solving while adding tailored topics such as sustainability, digitalisation, and fair trade. This approach allows SCORE and SCORE-inspired initiatives to cater effectively to different lead buyers, industries and client sizes, including micro and small enterprises, while ensuring that worker engagement remains central. Furthermore, examples from Indonesia and China (e.g. Unparplus platform, OPTIMA app, SCORE Academy platform) demonstrate how digitalisation of SCORE Training could further enhance accessibility, efficiency, and scalability. However, maintaining a structured adaptation framework is essential to preserve the core values of SCORE Training – enhancing productivity



through worker engagement and empowerment –without compromising quality and consistency across diverse contexts.

**Good Practice 1: Enhance flexibility of the SCORE trainer certification process to strengthen the trainer pipeline**

The length and intensity of the SCORE trainer certification process often deter potential trainers, especially due to the limited opportunities to earn income during and immediately after certification. To address these challenges, the SCORE Academy in China revised the certification structure from the ILO’s original two-tier model to a three-tiered approach: expert trainers, regular SCORE-certified trainers, and entry-level consultants. Entry-level consultants now undergo a simplified, less time-intensive process, enabling them to engage with SCORE Training sooner, gain hands-on experience, and start earning income faster. This flexible pathway allows trainers to progress through the system at their own pace, making the journey more feasible and sustainable. Introduce flexibility in SCORE certification through tiered progression not only reduces financial and time barriers but also helps build a robust, diverse, and qualified pool of trainers.

**Good Practice 2: Introduce a certification process to motivate companies and enhance market competitiveness**

Certification serves as a strong incentive for companies to engage with SCORE Training by providing recognition for their efforts in improving workplace safety and management practices. In China, the MEM and the IECC issue certificates to companies that demonstrate sustained progress after two years of SCORE Training participation (these certificates feature the SCORE Programme logo, but do not carry the ILO branding, in line with ILO licence agreement for SCORE Training). This recognition aims to boost competitiveness, particularly for companies involved in international supply chains, by validating their adherence to global standards. Establishing a structured certification pathway helps motivate participation, provides validation, and enhances the visibility of SCORE-trained companies in the marketplace.



## 5. Conclusions

We use a four-point rating system to provide a structured evaluation of the impact and sustainability of the SCORE Training at the SME level and the institutional level, namely “Very high”, “High”, “Moderate”, and “Limited”. The evidence confidence for these ratings is assessed using a separate scale—Strong, Moderate, Weak, or No Evidence—to reflect the robustness and reliability of the supporting data (see Annex 4 for more details):

	SME-level sustainability	SME-level impact	Institutional-level impact and sustainability	Strength of evidence
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>Moderate-High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate-High</b>	<b>Strong</b>
	<p>Indonesia’s SME-level sustainability shows positive outcomes, with only a 4 percentage point drop in management practice adoption post-training until now.</p> <p>Interview insights suggest that many enterprises have successfully scaled and maintained practices like Lean Production and Workplace Cooperation.</p> <p>However, cultural resistance and inconsistent adoption, particularly in areas like OSH, continue to pose challenges to achieving full sustainability.</p>	<p>Indonesia’s SME-level impact has been quite high with about half the companies reporting positive improvement (average cross KPIs), largely attributed to the SCORE Training programme.</p> <p>Qualitative feedback from SME owners and workers further highlights SCORE Training’s contribution to enhanced collaboration, increased satisfaction, and the adoption of lean practices, all of which have led to significant improvements in operational efficiency and overall business growth.</p>	<p>Key Ips like BEDO and SMI have successfully integrated SCORE Training into their core services, continuing the programme beyond ILO support. BEDO, for instance, now independently markets SCORE Training, while SMI has expanded outreach through government collaboration.</p> <p>However, the level of sustained activity varies among Ips, with some reducing or ceasing SCORE services due to perceived limited commercial benefits.</p>	<p>The confidence level is high due to comprehensive triangulation of evidence, including M&amp;E data, SME survey, company data, document reviews, and interviews. These sources provide consistent findings across SME-level sustainability, impact, and institutional sustainability.</p>
<b>Peru</b>	<b>Moderate-High</b>	<b>Moderate-High</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Strong</b>
	<p>Peru’s SMEs have largely sustained management practices following SCORE Training, with only a 7 percentage point decline in adoption rates since training.</p> <p>Many SMEs have successfully embedded practices like 5S, notice boards, and employee suggestion schemes into daily operations, showing positive cultural integration.</p> <p>However, declining motivation over time and resource constraints limit full sustainability, particularly in upgrading worker facilities and maintaining long-term improvements.</p>	<p>38% of enterprises report positive improvements in KPIs such as operational efficiency, resource management, and employee well-being following SCORE Training.</p> <p>Qualitative feedback from SME owners highlights SCORE Training’s role in enhancing worker-management cooperation, improving workspace organisation, and fostering proactive communication, which have collectively led to better efficiency and a more positive workplace culture, despite slower progress in areas like Lean Production.</p>	<p>The institutional-level sustainability is limited due to fragmentation since ILO funding ended in 2021. With no clear lead institution, key government partners like CITEs (affiliated with PRODUCE) have had mixed success—some CITEs effectively integrated SCORE Training, while others struggled; and the MTPE has discontinued SCORE Training delivery since 2023.</p> <p>The Business Development Center of Santo Toribio University (USAT) and independent trainers have continued their efforts, but most lead buyers, Fab Lab, and other private implementers have ceased their involvement.</p> <p>Funding has shifted to localised, private sources, posing cost challenges for micro and small enterprises, while the trainers’ association</p>	<p>The rating is high as evidence is triangulated across multiple sources, such as M&amp;E data, SME surveys, and interviews. Findings align well across different metrics, particularly SME-level sustainability and impact.</p>



			has remained largely inactive and poorly coordinated.	
China*	High	N/A	High	Moderate
	<p>Approximately 95% of companies continue the adoption of SCORE Training practices post-training. Companies have not only maintained but also expanded these practices, integrating them across various divisions, branches, and subsidiaries.</p> <p>Larger companies, such as CICO, have institutionalised SCORE Training as a core part of their operational strategy, embedding safety and continuous improvement in daily practices.</p> <p>These efforts have resulted in long-term sustainability and scalability, supported by both leadership buy-in and employee-driven initiatives, ensuring continuous gains in productivity and operational efficiency.</p>		<p>The two key partners – the SCORE Academy and the IECC – are operating independently to continue SCORE Training. The SCORE Academy engages lead buyers and has expanded internationally but faces sustainability risks due to reliance on these buyers and limited SME demand.</p> <p>Conversely, IECC, with the backing of the Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM) and local government support, has successfully trained over 1,800 enterprises, ensuring consistent delivery.</p> <p>The sustainability of the SCORE Academy relies on diversifying funding sources and expanding markets, while MEM's support secures long-term stability for IECC's training efforts.</p>	Moderate confidence reflects robust document review and interviews on institutional level, but limited and inconsistent M&E data.
Colombia*	Moderate-High	N/A	Limited	Weak
	<p>There were improvements seen in the adoption of management practices, especially during the 2022-2024 period where more specialised training led to over 70% improvement across all areas, with HR and OSH nearing full adoption.</p>		<p>There is the fragmented continuation of SCORE Training post-2021 in Colombia. The absence of a coordinated strategy among partners like Alianzas por el Desarrollo, CIP, and the Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá has led to inconsistent promotion and engagement, limiting the programme's reach. Inconsistent government funding and waning support from lead buyers have further undermined sustainability, and political changes have made central leadership and coordinated action challenging.</p>	<p>For these four countries, evidence is considered weak due to reliance solely on one or two interviews in each country and document review, combined with inconsistent or limited M&amp;E data.</p>
Ghana*	Moderate-High	N/A	Moderate	
	<p>The rating reflects significant improvements in SMEs' management practices adoption rate following SCORE Training, particularly during the post-2021 period (up to 77%).</p>		<p>GIZ funding has become the only source that has enabled continued SCORE Training delivery, training over 500 enterprises. While SCORE Training was initially delivered through collaborations with public and private institutions, such as MDPI, STSG, and STCCI, the absence of a central supervisory body, insufficient private sector and government contributions, and limited support from lead buyers have</p>	



			led to an overall decline in institutional sustainability.
India*	Moderate	N/A	Limited
	During 2010-2018, there was a significant increase in the adoption of new management practices among enterprises, particularly in Workplace Cooperation and Quality Management, where adoption rates surged by almost 14-fold and 3-fold, respectively. Improvement in other areas was less notable. In the later period, the trend appears similar, however, there were more substantial improvements in areas like Lean Production and HR Management, although the proportion of companies adopting these practices remains relatively small, with less than one in ten companies implementing them.		There was a significant decline in SCORE Training activities after the end of ILO support. The absence of sustained leadership and funding has hindered continuity. The Association for Promotion of Competitive and Responsible Enterprises, created to continue SCORE Training efforts, has had minimal influence, while early support from government programmes and private backers like Amazon has largely diminished. Without formal certification or continuous promotion, SCORE Training has struggled to compete against other frameworks like ESG, which are more appealing in terms of market recognition and quicker returns.
Viet Nam*	Moderate-High	N/A	Moderate - High
	The rating reflects significant improvements due to SCORE Training, especially in Workplace Cooperation, which saw adoption soar to 79%, and Quality Management, which more than doubled. 74% of companies reported cost savings, and 52% saw increased productivity. Improvements were evident in operational efficiency and employee engagement, particularly in sectors like wood processing, where practices were institutionalised for long-term gains.		The rating reflects sustained efforts by key partners like VCCI and SME TAC, which have integrated SCORE Training into broader capacity-building programmes. While funding has moved to self- and co-funded models, and there has been ongoing collaboration with major brands like Amazon and Adidas, the limited engagement of lead buyers post-2021 and challenges due to political shifts have impacted institutional continuity. Flexible implementation and alignment with new ILO initiatives have helped maintain some level of momentum.
SCORE Training as ILO service	The SCORE Training has become a key enterprise capacity-building service within the ILO, aimed at enhancing social dialogue, safety, and productivity among SMEs. In 2021, the SCORE programme initiated an ongoing transformation, evolving from a model funded by NORAD and SECO to a more decentralized approach. This new framework requires national trainers and local partners to take ownership of the training's implementation, identify more sustainable financing strategies, and improve knowledge exchanges globally. While demand for the SCORE Training remains strong, especially from local governments and supply chain partners, securing sustainable funding and updating training materials are ongoing challenges. Efforts to integrate SCORE Training with broader initiatives like Better Work show promise for expanding its impact and aligning it with global productivity and decent work goals.		

Note: \* are drawn from the ILO database, focusing on adoption rates immediately following SCORE Training rather than current figures. Since 2021, the available data on the adoption rate has also become less reliable and robust, hence we supplemented the findings with insights from interviews and desk research. Consequently, these ratings should be interpreted with caution.



## 6. Recommendations

As SECO-NORAD funding concludes in 2024, the following recommendations are essential for guiding the direction of ongoing and future country projects under new funding partnerships. During this transition, these insights will play a key role in ensuring the sustainability and adaptability of SCORE Training, helping it maintain its value and align with the objectives of both existing and prospective partners.

**Recommendation 1: Focus on selecting and capacitating a few key lead implementation partners; and emphasise embedding SCORE Training into national and regional policy frameworks for sustained and scalable impact**

Addressees	Priority	Resources	Timing
ILO Country Office	High	High	Medium to long term

*Justification:* The evaluation findings have highlighted that the absence of a capable lead organisation has significantly undermined the sustainability and impact of SCORE Training in many countries (see Lesson learned 1). Additionally, while engaging private sector and lead buyers is a valuable strategy, its impact tends to be limited in scale (see Lesson learned 2). This highlights the value of embedding SCORE Training into national and regional policy frameworks or training programmes led by public government partners, where SCORE Training can be a key component of their SME development toolkit.

*Possible actions:* Actions to implement this recommendation could entail:

- **Identify and empower lead implementation organisations:** Select capable lead partners – public or private – based on the specific country context. These partners should be responsible for SCORE Training delivery coordination, funding, and quality control. In certain cases, establishing both a public and a private lead partner can help leverage their unique strengths, ensuring collaboration mechanisms are in place for coherence.
- **Create a multi-stakeholder partnership to support lead partners:** Establish a partnership involving government agencies, private sector organisations, civil society, and international bodies to support both public and private lead implementation partners. This collaboration will enhance coordination, share responsibilities, pool resources, and bring diverse perspectives to strengthen SCORE Training's implementation and ensure alignment of objectives across sectors.
- **Tailored approaches for public and private partners:** Recognise that public entities operate within government structures while private partners follow market demands. Tailor capacity-building activities to harness the specific strengths of each sector, optimising their contributions.
- **Integrate SCORE Training into national and regional policies:** Align SCORE Training with national or regional SME development policies to secure public funding and embed it within broader development goals. Formal agreements with government entities can



ensure SCORE Training becomes an official part of SME development strategies, sustaining support even during leadership changes.

- **Embed SCORE Training within lead organisations’ frameworks:** Integrate SCORE Training into the core strategies of lead implementation organisations, making it an institutional priority beyond individual leadership changes. Secure board-level commitments to formalise SCORE Training as a core service, maintaining alignment despite leadership shifts.
- **Strengthen stakeholder advocacy:** Promote support among government officials, SME beneficiaries, and partner organisations to ensure sustained commitment, particularly during leadership transitions. Identify internal champions within lead organisations to maintain focus and drive consistent advocacy for SCORE Training.
- **Establish structured support and coordination:** Develop centralised coordination mechanisms to avoid fragmented implementation and ensure quality control across implementers. This approach will facilitate scaling and alignment with national SME policies, providing continuity beyond ILO funding.

**Recommendation 2: Continue to provide systematic support for active implementation partners for long-term sustainability and foster cross-country collaboration and consistent implementation of SCORE Training**

Addressees	Priority	Resources	Timing
ILO HQ	High	Medium to High	Medium to long term

*Justification:* The lack of systematic and ongoing support from the ILO to implementation organisations undermines long-term sustainability, as engagement often relies on individual efforts rather than cohesive, structured support mechanisms (see Lesson learned 3).

*Possible actions:* Actions to implement this recommendation could entail:

- **Establish a global network of implementation partners and trainers:** Develop a structured global network for implementation partners and trainers to share knowledge, best practices, and challenges, as part of the ILO’s key strategies. This network should facilitate both online and offline collaboration, allowing implementation partners across countries to share innovations and support each other consistently. An online platform with forums, chat features, and downloadable materials will help partners stay informed and connected. Periodic webinars or conferences on emerging topics will also help maintain up-to-date knowledge across the community.
- **Regional and international exchange programmes:** Organise regular regional and international exchange visits for SCORE trainers, SME owners, and implementing partners to observe successful practices in action. These exchanges foster practical learning, enhance cross-country relationships, and contribute to the consistency and quality of SCORE Training.



- **Consistent, strategic engagement:** Maintain ongoing communication between the ILO and lead implementation organisations through designated ILO liaison officers. This ensures consistent support and helps sustain relationships beyond individual changes in leadership. Formalised communication channels will minimise disruptions during transitions, ensuring continuous engagement.

**Recommendation 3: Establish a structured adaptation framework for SCORE Training to enable flexibility while preserving its core competitive advantage**

Addressees	Priority	Resources	Timing
ILO HQ	Medium	Low to Medium	Short to Medium term

*Justification:* The flexibility to adapt SCORE and SCORE-inspired training has been essential for maintaining its relevance across diverse contexts (see Lesson learned 4). However, without a structured framework for adaptation, there is a risk of diverging too far from the core principles of the SCORE Training, including its methodology and the focus on workplace cooperation and worker engagement.

*Possible actions:* Actions to implement this recommendation could entail:

- **Develop adaptation guidelines:** Create guidelines outlining acceptable adaptations for SCORE Training content, duration, and focus areas. These guidelines should balance flexibility for local adaptation while ensuring that key elements of the SCORE Training – such as worker engagement and workplace cooperation – remain intact. These guidelines should be applicable to both ILO staff and implementing partners.
- **Capacity-building workshops for adaptation:** Conduct workshops for implementing partners on effectively adapting the SCORE Training. These workshops should include examples of successful adaptations, tools for local needs assessment, and guidance to maintain the core SCORE Training objectives.
- **Foster peer learning through adaptation showcases:** Organise annual events or virtual meetings where partners can present their adaptations and discuss outcomes. These showcases will help disseminate successful adaptation practices and create a platform for partners to learn from each other, thus enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of SCORE Training across various contexts.
- **Leverage digital tools:** Integrate e-learning platforms, virtual workshops, and mobile applications to facilitate adaptation and increase accessibility for SMEs, particularly in remote areas. Digitalisation can reduce costs, offer flexible learning schedules, and improve data collection, monitoring, and feedback, ensuring consistent quality and continuous improvement.



**Recommendation 4: Enhance incentives for company participation in SCORE Training by aligning it with recognized standards and providing meaningful recognition for trained companies**

Addressees	Priority	Resources	Timing
ILO HQ	Medium	Low to Medium	Short to Medium term

*Justification:* To increase company participation, incentives must be tangible and directly relevant to business objectives. Aligning SCORE Training with widely recognized standards (e.g., ISO, Fair Trade, B-Corp) and international frameworks like the UN SDGs can enhance its perceived value. Furthermore, providing meaningful recognition for companies successfully implementing SCORE Training practices will increase motivation, visibility, and marketability for those companies.

*Possible actions:* Actions to implement this recommendation could entail:

- **Align with recognised standards:** Collaborate with organizations like ISO, Fair Trade, and B-Corp to position SCORE Training as a foundational tool that helps companies progress toward these well-recognised certifications. SCORE Training can serve as an initial step to help businesses implement management practices that align with these standards, thereby easing their journey towards achieving certification. Aligning SCORE Training with frameworks like the UN SDGs will also emphasise its role in sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.
- **SCORE Champions database:** Develop a "SCORE Champions" database to recognize SMEs that have demonstrated excellence in implementing SCORE Training. This would serve as a central platform where lead buyers, brands, and other stakeholders can discover top-performing SMEs for potential supply chain partnerships, providing recognition and visibility akin to informal certification.
- **Keep training materials updated:** Regularly update SCORE Training materials to reflect current industry trends, regulatory changes, and new social compliance requirements to maintain relevance and continue supporting companies in meeting broader strategic goals.



# Annex 1: SCORE Programme ToC

Version: SCORE ME guide revised Version 3.0 Final Draft.docx  
Colour-coding: Orange: Direct results (output/outcome), Teal: Impact

Figure 1: Enterprise Level Theory of Change

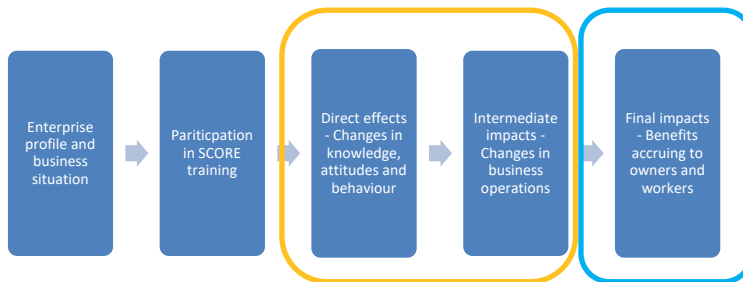
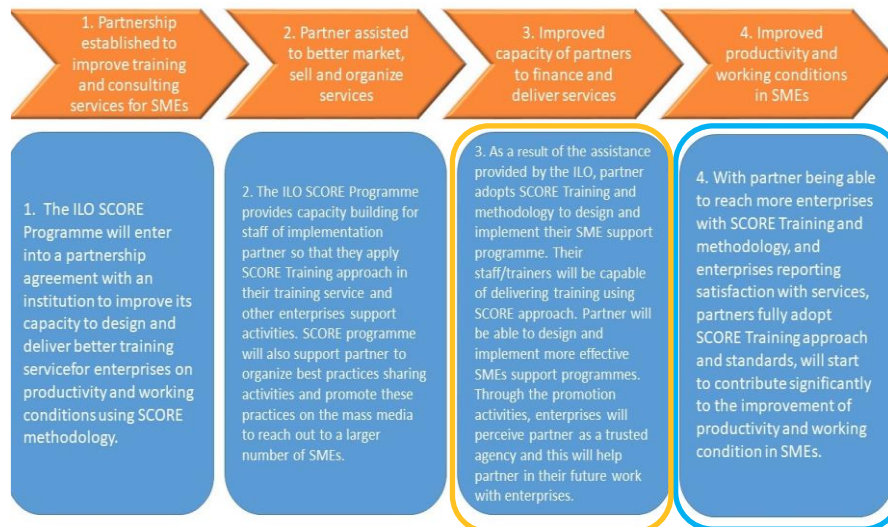


Figure 1: Institutional Level Theory of Change





# Annex 2: Evaluation questions

<b>Evaluation questions</b>
<b>Sustainability – SME</b>
<b>EQ1:</b> To what extent have the changed production / management practices among companies that participated in SCORE Training been sustained?
<b>EQ2:</b> To what extent have practices been upscaled / replicated to other departments / sister companies?
<b>EQ3:</b> To what extent is there an increased interest in developing own capacity? <u>Note:</u> Evaluation question of secondary priority.
<b>Sustainability – Implementing Partners</b>
<b>EQ4:</b> To what extent do IP continue and expand providing SCORE-like services (i.e., similar services for same type of clients)?
<b>EQ5:</b> To what extent are IP sustaining the technical, financial / commercial, and organisational practices / behaviours that were initiated by the SCORE programme?
<b>EQ6:</b> To what extent has the provision of SCORE Training affected the IP's performance and position in the market? <u>Note:</u> Evaluation question of secondary priority.
<b>Sustainability – Government and Lead Buyers</b>
<b>EQ7:</b> To what extent have government actors continued to support (financially or otherwise) SCORE-like services?
<b>EQ8:</b> To what extent have lead buyers continued to support (financial or otherwise) SCORE-like services?
<b>Sustainability – ILO</b>
<b>EQ9:</b> To what extent is the ILO offering SCORE Training as one of its key SME services – why (not)?
<b>Impact</b>
<b>EQ10:</b> How have the participating companies developed (performance, growth)? To what extent can this development be linked to the SCORE Training?
<b>EQ11:</b> Are there additional / unforeseen benefits attributed to the SCORE programme?



# Annex 3: Interviewees

## Indonesia

Institution	Name	Position	Location
<b>Former ILO SCORE Coordinator / Manager</b>			
ILO Indonesia	Januar Rustandie	Former ILO SCORE Manager	Online
<b>Trainers</b>			
	Jeff Kristianto	Expert Trainer	Bali
	Maria Satiaputri	Trainer	
	Samanta Aisyah Sam	Trainer	
	Adinindyah	Trainer	
	Fitria Werdiningsih	Trainer	
	Zanny Chandra	Trainer	
	Dwi Setio Widodo	Translator, Trainer	
	Yvonne Patty	Trainer	
	Irene Setiawaty	Trainer	
	AA Sg Ratih Amelia	Trainer	
	Komang Mila (online)	Trainer	
	Riris Simanjutak (online)	Trainer	
Windu Sinaga (online)	Trainer		
<b>Implementation Partners</b>			
Business & Export Development Organization (BEDO)	Jeff Kristianto	Master Trainer SCORE< Bedo chair	Surabaya
Semut Merah Indonesia (SMI)	Isnanto Wirowedmojo	Chair	Online
Parahyangan University	Triyana Iskandarsjah	SCORE Unpar Coordinator	Online
Forum Fair Trade Indonesia	Netty Febriana	Chair	Online
<b>SMEs</b>			
Spa Factory Bali	Maria Satiaputri	Owner	Bali
	Wiwini Adi Arwini	PPIC	
	Gede Bagia	Operational Manager	
Bali Sarong	Samanta Aisyah Sam	Owner	Bali
	Deni	PPIC	
Bali Interio	Rosada Talib	Owner	Bali



Sheo Home Living	Ayu Anandari	Owner	Bali
	Reza Monoarfa	Owner	
Multi Manao	Kevin Setiawan	General Manager	Surabaya
Sandez Yard	To be researched	Administrative Manager	
Multi Manao Improvement team	Hadi	Employee	
	Totok	Employee	
	Yohanes	Employee	
	Lasiadi	Employee	
Pt Sunwoo Garment Indonesia	Isnaini F.M.	Compliance Manager	Online
<b>Lead buyers</b>			
William Sonoma Indonesia	Budi Budiono	Sustainable Manager	Surabaya
Linax Limited NZ / Orba Shoes	"Ilonka Patricia Moningka		Online
<b>Government</b>			
Pusat Pengembangan Produktifitas Daerah - Jakarta province (Center of Productivity)	M. Tsani Annafari	Head of Jakarta Productivity	Online
	Tri Cahyo Wibowo	Instructor in Productivity	

## Peru

Institution	Name	Position	Location
<b>Former ILO SCORE Coordinator / Manager</b>			
ILO Peru	Hernan Zeballos	Former ILO SCORE Coordinator	Online
<b>Trainers</b>			
	Liz Arteaga	Trainer	Lima
	Lourdes Gómez	Trainer	
	Roxana Conopuma	Trainer	
	Ysabel Laura	Trainer	
	Giannina Castro	Trainer	
	José Rodríguez	Trainer	
	Dante Supo	Trainer	
	Pedro Ordonez	Trainer	
	Johnny Aliaga	Expert Trainer	
	Javier Taípe	Expert Trainer	
	Francis Paredes	Expert Trainer	
<b>Government / Implementation Partner</b>			



Ministry of Employment	Denissela DeVetori		Lima
	Eliana Medina		
	Julio Pino		
	Ana Saravia		
CITE Madera	Irma Samanés	Project Manager	Lima
	Jorge Lescano	Project Manager	
	Ismael Barros Aguilar	Coordinator of Productive Support	
	Claudio Fritsch	Head of Development and Innovation	
CITE Calzado	Sandra González Valencia	Interim Director	Arequipa
	Clara Cagua	Quality Specialist	
<b>SMEs</b>			
Corporación Victorino García Collantes	Miguel Garcia	General Manager	Lima
	Ángela	Administrator	
Ana Mejía Textil	Ana Mejía	Owner	Lima
Bakus	Two interiveweese		Lima
Portalámparas SAC	Sergio Ordoñez	Commercial Manager	Lima
	Miguel Ascoe	Technical Manager	
	Sebastián Ortoñez	Responsible for Digitalization	
	Andrónico Macho	Operations Coordinator	
Fenix	Owner		Lima
Austral	Innovation manager		Lima
Sandez Yard	Administrative Manager		Arequipa
Hawani	Daisy Lozano Notalla	General Manager	Arequipa
	Yossimar		

## Others

Institution	Name	Position	Location
ILO	Dragan Radic	Chief of SME Branch	Online
ILO	Marlen de la Chaux	Technical Officer, Productivity and Working Conditions	
ILO	Cheryl Chan	Technical Officer, SME Productivity and Green Business	
ILO Ghana	Onoma Asiedu	Former ILO SCORE Coordinator	
ILO India	Bhadra Sudipta	Former ILO SCORE Coordinator	



ILO Viet Nam	Phung Duc Hoang	Former ILO SCORE Coordinator
Alianzas por el Desarrollo	Oscar Andrés	Private implementer (Colombia)
	Michael Elkin	Former SCORE Global programme manager
SCORE Academy	Zhang Xubiao	Coordinator and expert trainer
SCORE Academy	Zhang Jun	Expert trainer
CICO	Jintu Rao	Vice President
IECC	Liu Xiaobing	Division Director
Amazon Social Responsibility	Zac Li	Senior Portfolio Manager
	Enxue Wang	Senior Portfolio Manager
	Tri Cahyo Wibowo	Instructor in Productivity



# Annex 4: Rating criteria

## Impact and sustainability rating

	SME-level impact and sustainability	IP-level impact and sustainability
1 - Limited Impact / Sustainability	<p>Minimal change in production/management practices adoption.</p> <p>Practices not upscaled or replicated beyond initial scope.</p> <p>Little to no interest in capacity building.</p> <p>Minimal change in KPIs.</p>	<p>Implementing partners (IP) provide limited or no SCORE-like services.</p> <p>Minimal engagement from government and lead buyers.</p>
2 - Moderate Impact / Sustainability	<p>Some retention of practices, but inconsistent adoption.</p> <p>Limited replication of practices to other departments.</p> <p>Moderate interest in capacity building, with preliminary action.</p> <p>Some improvement in KPIs.</p>	<p>Implementing partners offer SCORE-like services at a restricted scale.</p> <p>Government and lead buyers show irregular and limited support.</p>
3 - High Impact / Sustainability	<p>Sustained improvements across most areas of the SME.</p> <p>Practices replicated/upscaled in multiple departments.</p> <p>Interest and initial steps towards capacity building</p> <p>Significant improvement in KPIs.</p>	<p>Implementing partners have expanded SCORE-like services beyond the initial client base.</p> <p>Consistent support from government and lead buyers.</p>
4 - Very High Impact / Sustainability	<p>Full adoption of improved practices in all key areas.</p> <p>Widespread replication across departments/sister companies.</p> <p>Strong commitment and action towards building internal capacity.</p> <p>Very significant improvement in KPIs.</p>	<p>Implementing partners widely offer SCORE-like services, sustaining improvements.</p> <p>Strong and ongoing support from government and lead buyers.</p>



## Strength of evidence rating

Rating	Definition	Rationale
<b>Strong</b>	Evidence is comprehensive, triangulated from multiple sources (quantitative data, qualitative feedback, document review, and interviews) and shows consistent findings.	Consistent findings across diverse sources ensure reliability and robustness of conclusions.
<b>Moderate</b>	Evidence is partially triangulated, based on limited sources, or includes some inconsistencies.	Partial triangulation provides reasonable confidence, though inconsistencies or missing data exist.
<b>Weak</b>	Evidence is sparse, relies on anecdotal data, or lacks corroboration from other sources.	Minimal triangulation and inconsistent M&E data undermine the reliability of findings.
<b>No Evidence</b>	No credible or relevant data is available to support conclusions.	The absence of data precludes any valid assessment or interpretation.



# Annex 5: SCORE Management practices

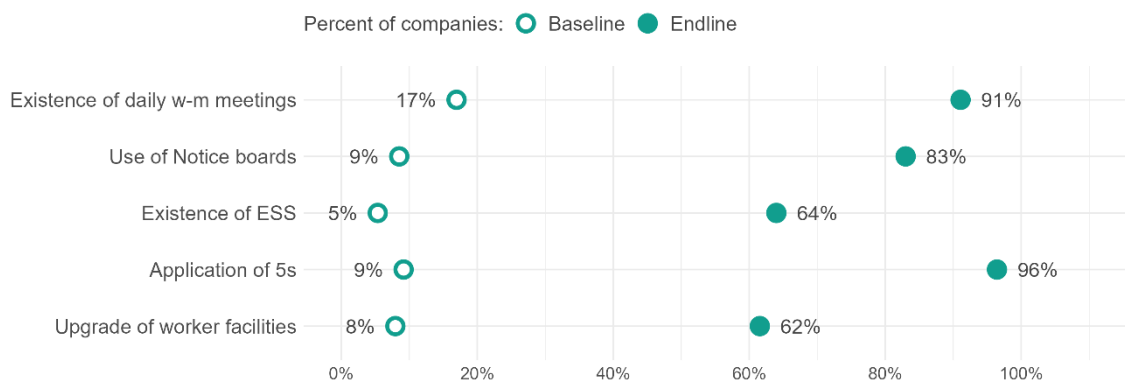
SCORE Management Practices	
Workplace Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Existence of daily worker management meetings</li><li>• Use of notice boards</li><li>• Existence of Employee Suggestion Scheme (ESS)</li><li>• Application of 5s</li><li>• Upgrade of worker facilities</li></ul>
Quality Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collect customer feedback</li><li>• Existence of Quality Policy</li><li>• Systematic analysis of defect causes</li><li>• Quality info shared with employees</li><li>• Use of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)</li></ul>
Clean/Lean Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring of resource use</li><li>• Process to reduce materials usage</li><li>• Process to reduce energy consumption</li><li>• Existence of machine maintenance</li><li>• Productivity is measured</li><li>• Target established after measuring cycle time</li><li>• Concept of Takt Time is used</li><li>• Process to improve workflow</li><li>• Line balancing is performed to even workload</li></ul>
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rewards for good performance</li><li>• At least minimum wage is paid</li><li>• Overtime is paid correctly</li><li>• Working hours are within legal limits</li><li>• Workers are trained regularly</li><li>• Existence of complaint procedure</li></ul>
Occupational Safety and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Existence of worker management OSH Committee</li><li>• Existence of OSH Policy</li><li>• Use of risk assessments</li><li>• Emergency exit routes</li><li>• Use of PPE</li><li>• Accidents and near misses are tracked</li><li>• Root cause analysis of accidents</li></ul>



# Annex 6: Additional assessments for Indonesia

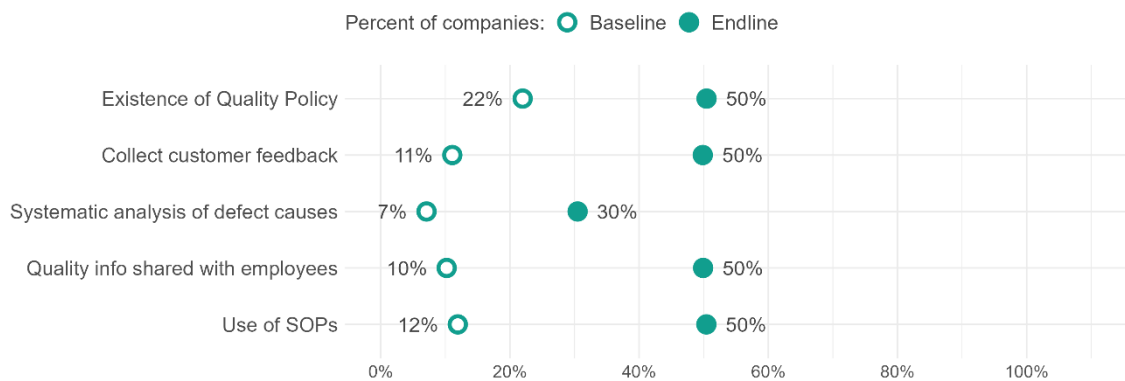
Figure 36: Improvements in SMEs' management practices (Baseline – Endline)

## Workplace Cooperation



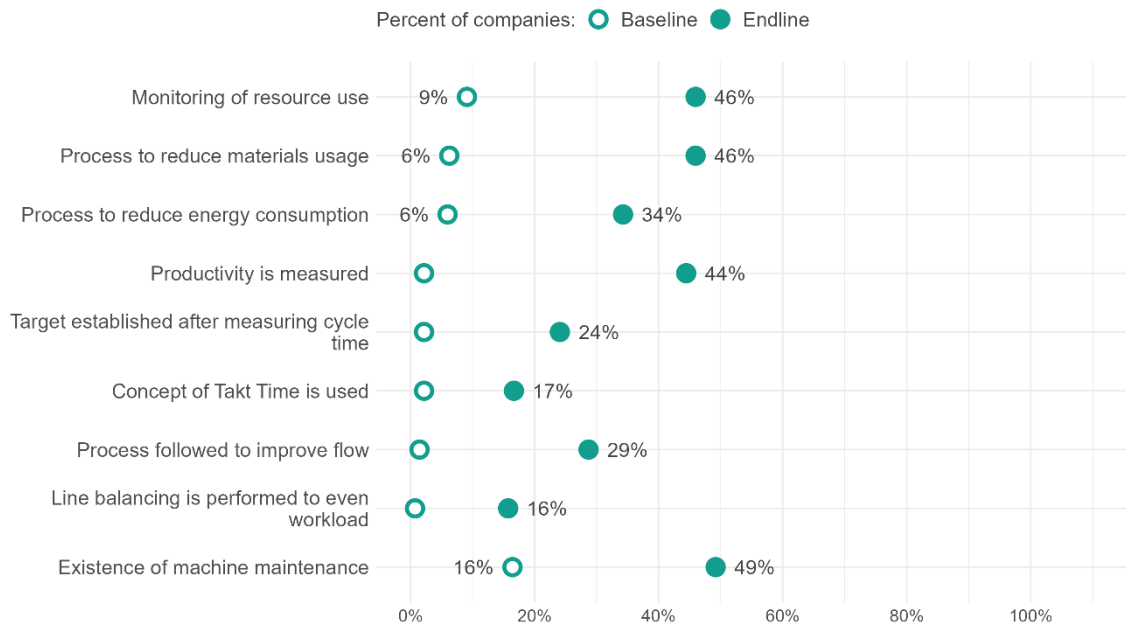
Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 578, 352, 578, 578, and 352 companies, respectively. For Endline, based on responses from 561, 359, 561, 561, and 359 companies, respectively.

## Quality Management



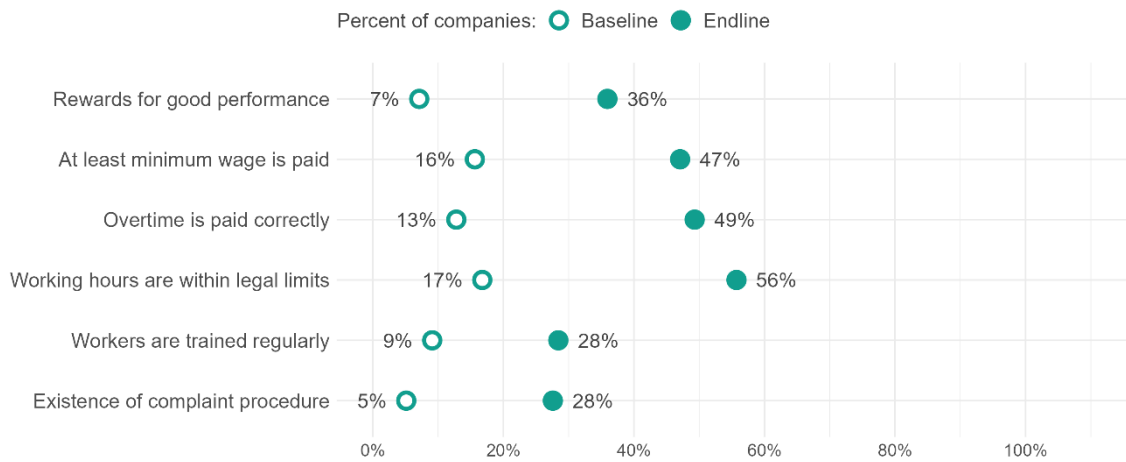
Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 578, 352, 578, 578, and 352 companies, respectively. For Endline, based on responses from 561, 359, 561, 561, and 359 companies, respectively.

## Lean Production



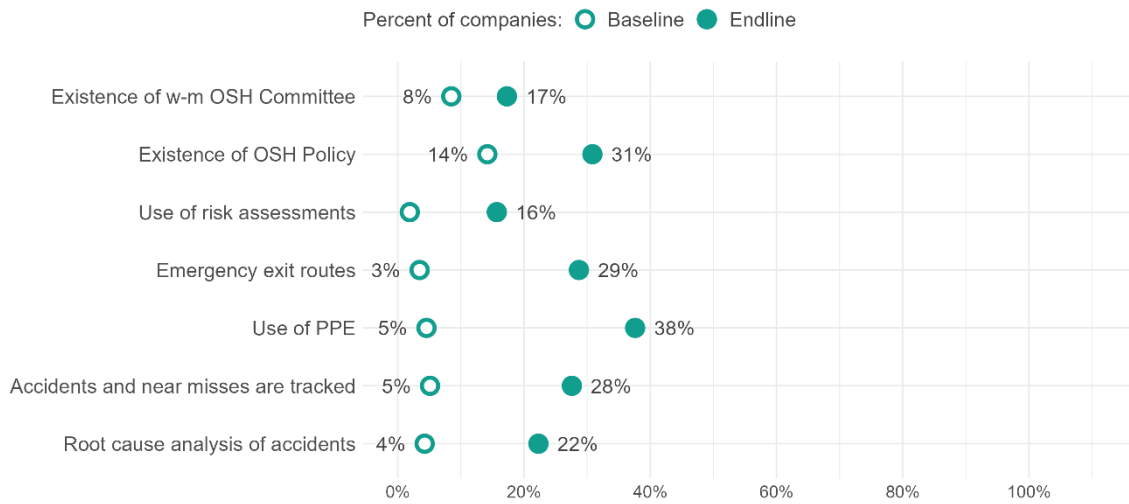
Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 352, 352, 352, 138, 138, 138, 138, 138, and 578 companies, respectively. For Endline, based on responses from 359, 359, 359, 108, 108, 108, 108, 108, and 561 companies, respectively.

## HR Management



Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 352 companies. For Endline, based on responses from 359 companies.

## OSH

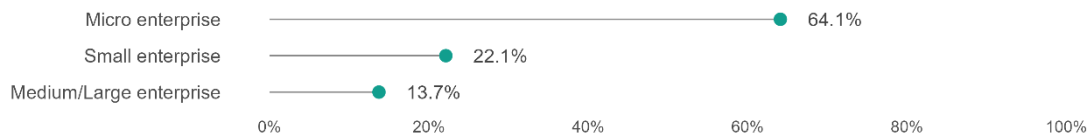


Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 578, 578, 578, 578, 352, 352, and 352 companies, respectively. For Endline, based on responses from 561, 561, 561, 561, 359, 359, and 359 companies, respectively.

Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Figure 37: Characteristics of the Indonesian enterprises participated in the survey (July 2024)

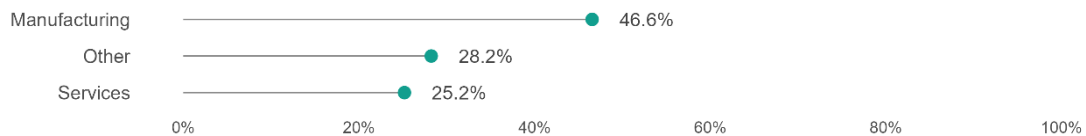
### Company size



Note: Based on the responses of 131 companies.

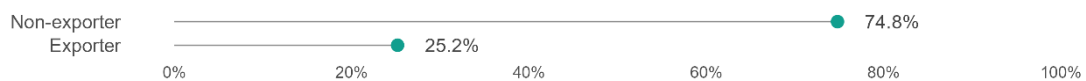
Note: Different countries have developed definitions of smaller enterprises that are tailored to their specific contexts and needs. In this report, we categorized SMEs according to the common ILO definition: Micro (fewer than 10 employees), Small (11-50 employees), Medium (51-250 employees), and Large (over 250 employees).

### Sector



Note: Based on the responses of 131 companies.

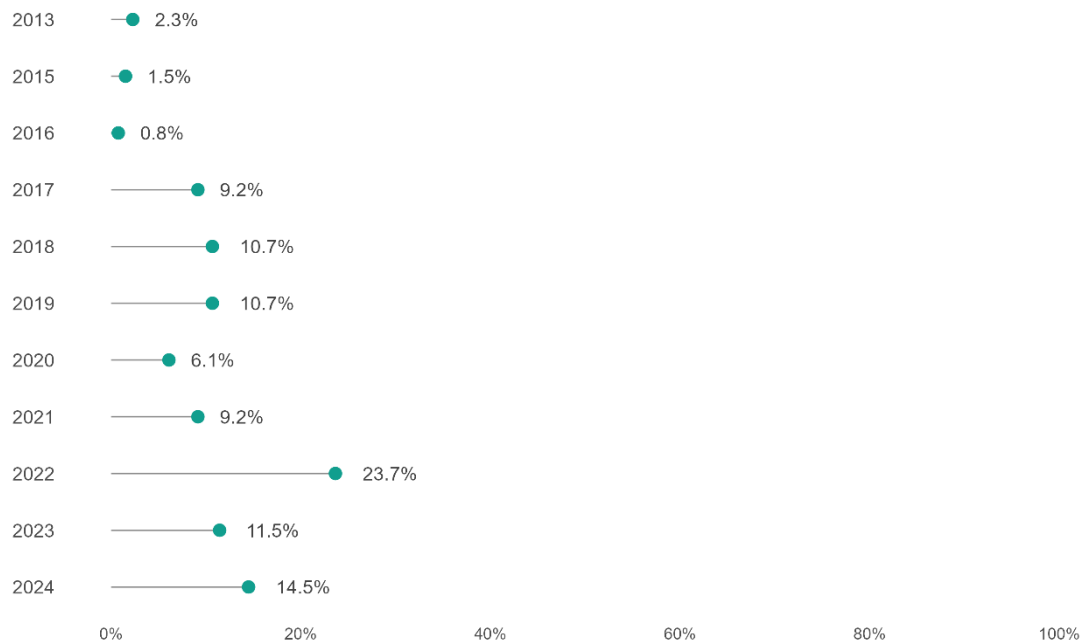
### Exporter vs Non-exporter



Note: Based on the responses of 131 companies.

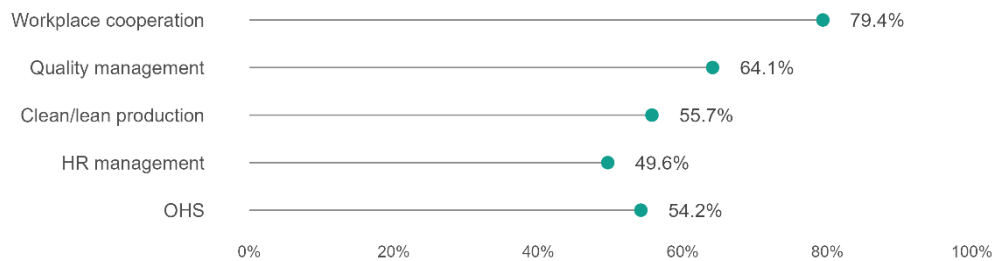


## Training Year



Note: Based on the responses of 131 companies.

## Areas where improvement projects were implemented

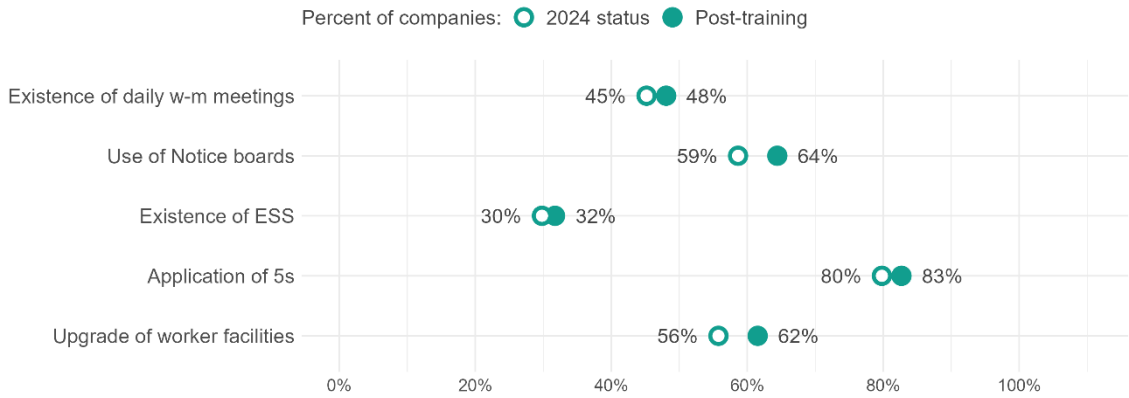


Note: Based on the responses of 131 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

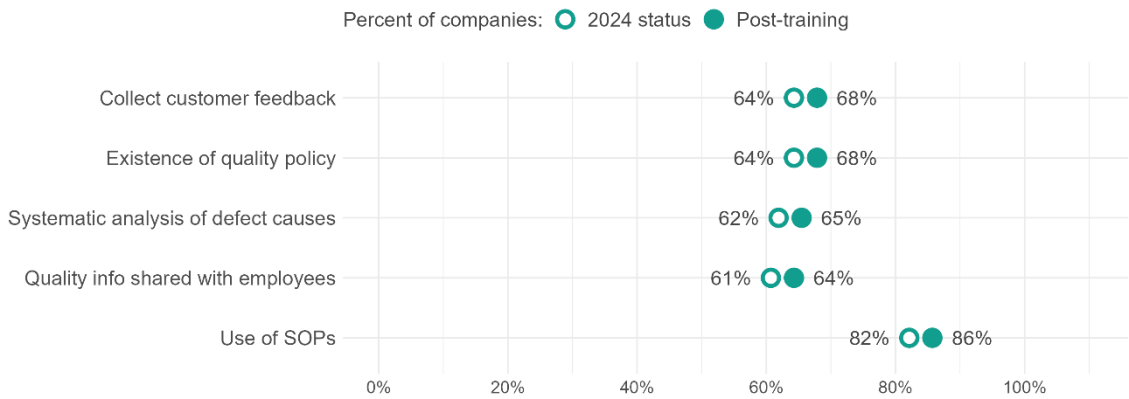
Figure 38: Sustainability of SMEs' management practices adoption (Post-training- 2024)

## Workplace Cooperation



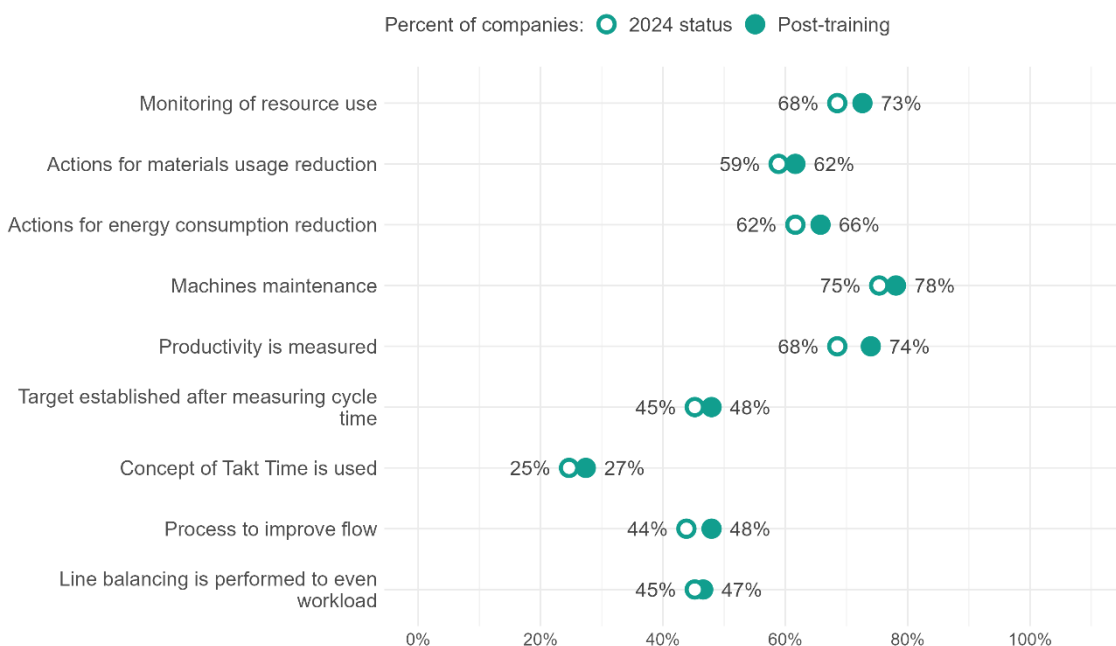
Note: For 2024 status, based on responses from 104 companies. For Post-training, based on responses from 104 companies.

### Quality Management



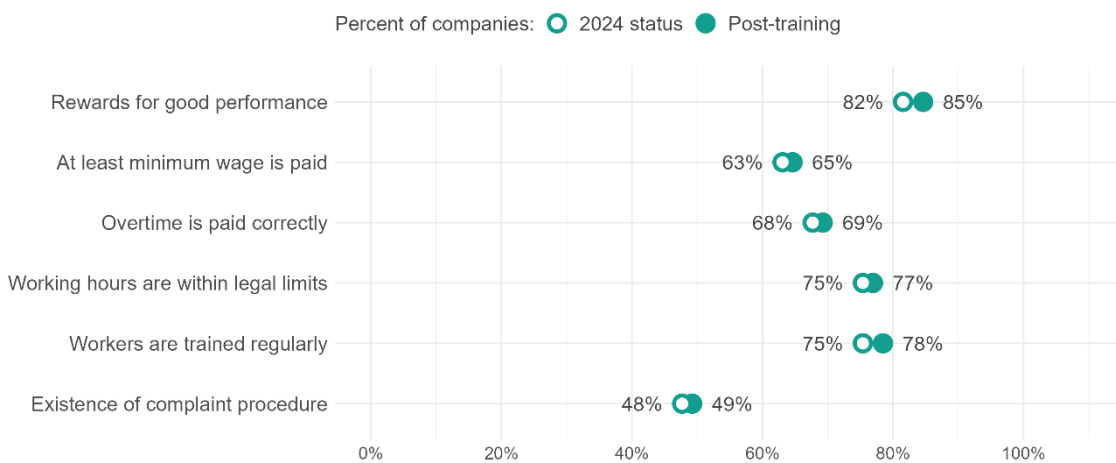
Note: For 2024 status, based on responses from 84 companies. For Post-training, based on responses from 84 companies.

### Lean Production



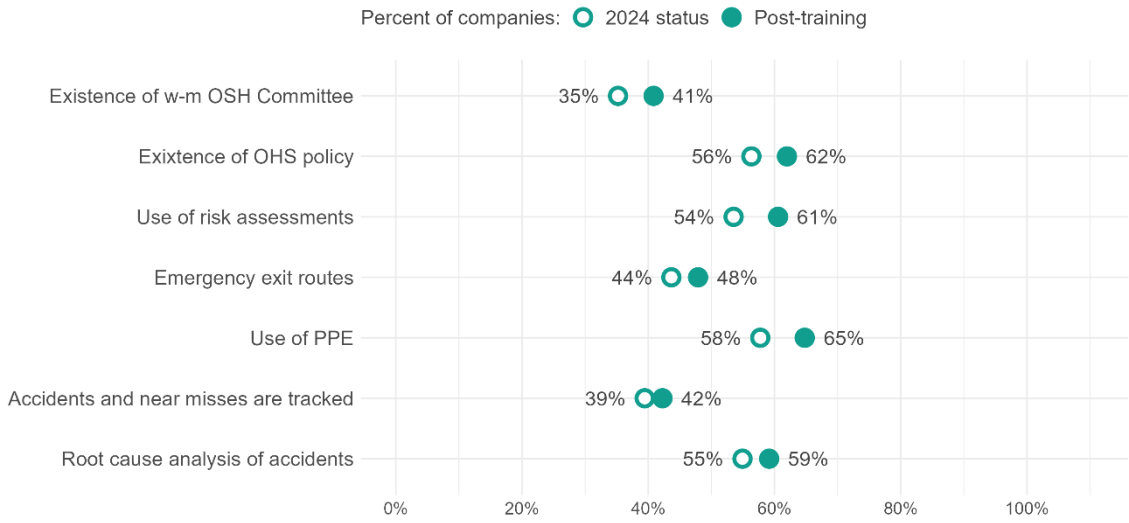
Note: For 2024 status, based on responses from 73 companies. For Post-training, based on responses from 73 companies.

## HR Management



Note: For 2024 status, based on responses from 65 companies. For Post-training, based on responses from 65 companies.

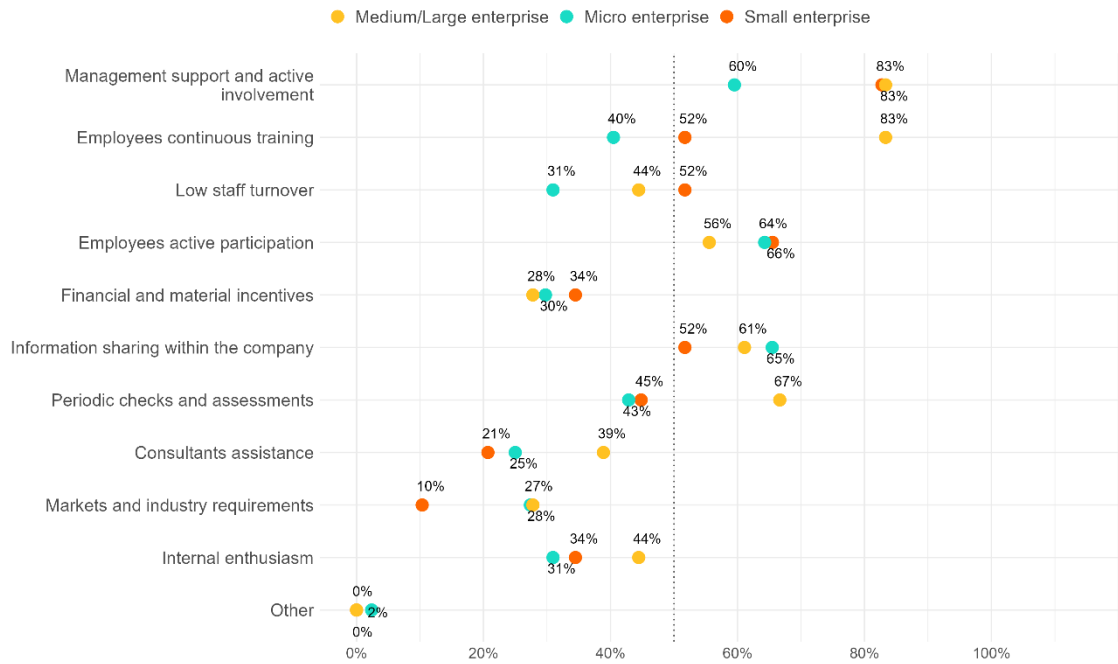
## OSH



Note: For 2024 status, based on responses from 71 companies. For Post-training, based on responses from 71 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Figure 39: Contributing factors to sustaining management practices, breakdown by firm size

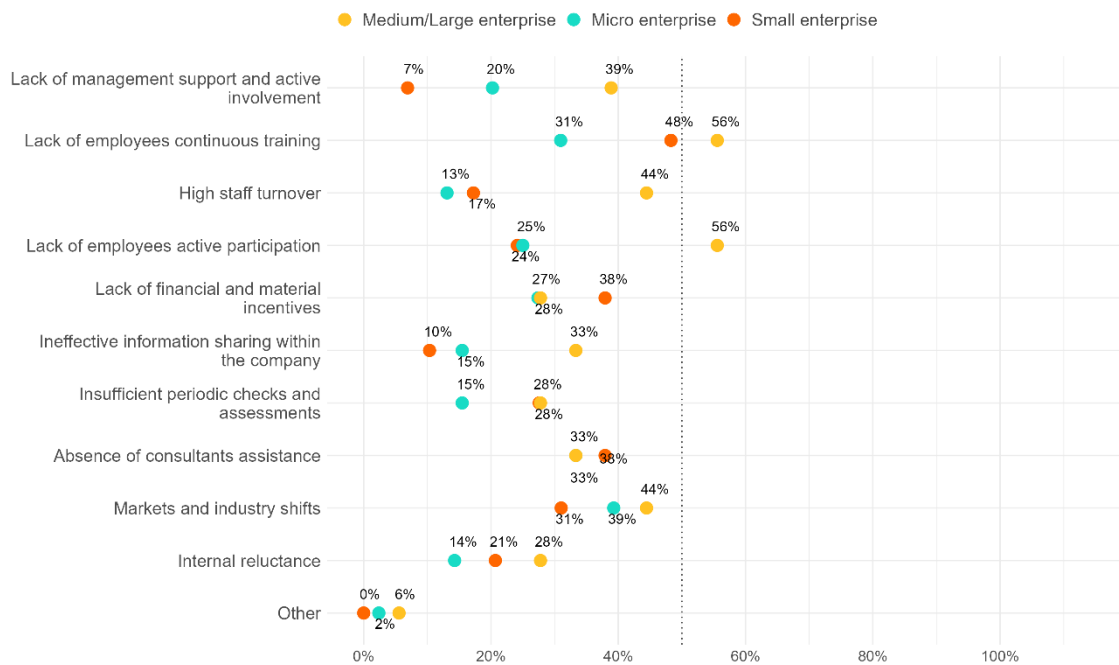


Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 18 companies. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 84 companies. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 29 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



Figure 40: Hindering factors to sustaining management practices, breakdown by size

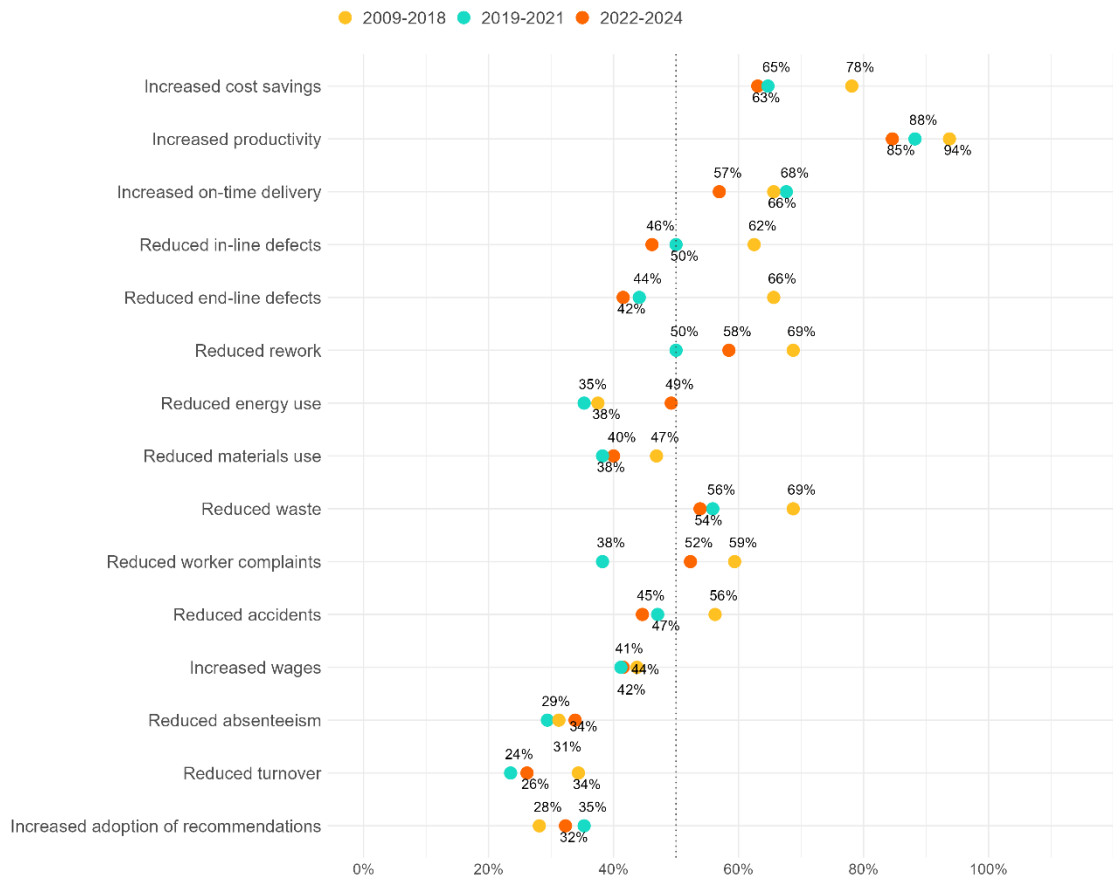


Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 18 companies. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 84 companies. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 29 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



Figure 41: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training, breakdown by training period

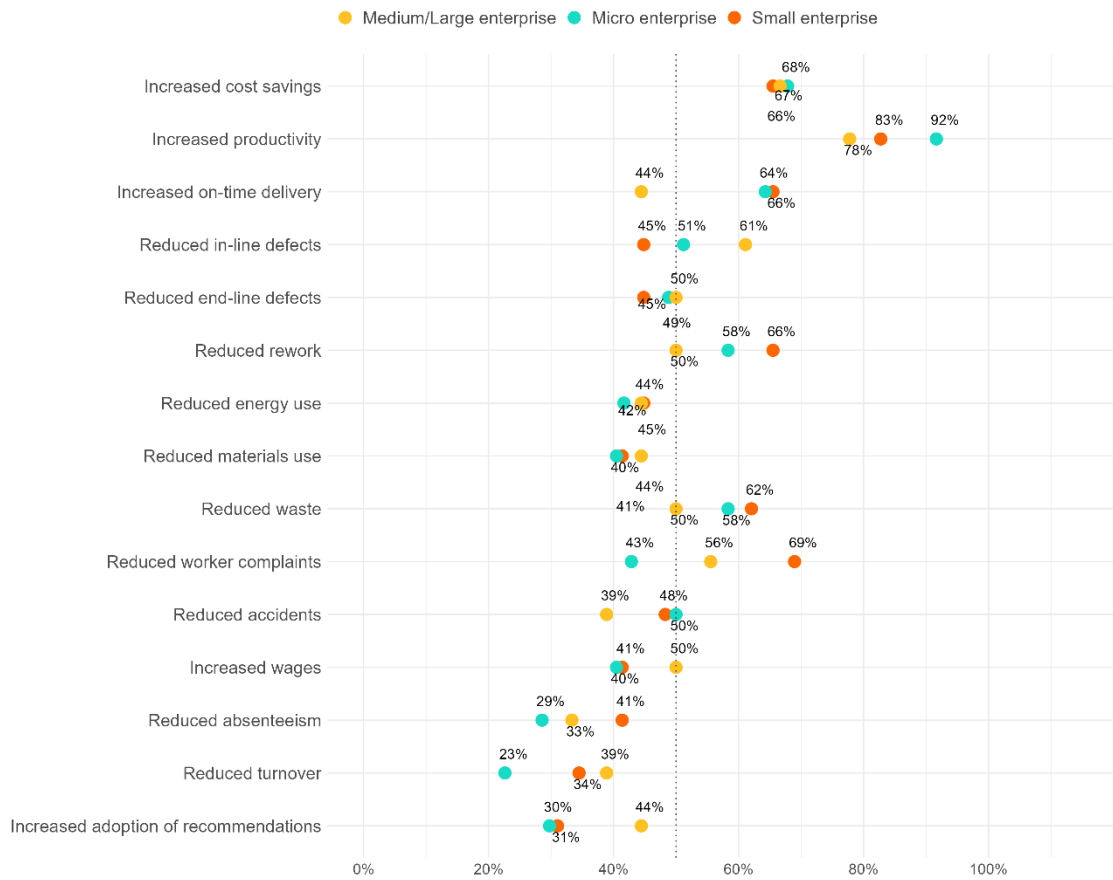


Note: For 2009-2018, based on responses from 32 companies. For 2019-2021, based on responses from 34 companies. For 2022-2024, based on responses from 65 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



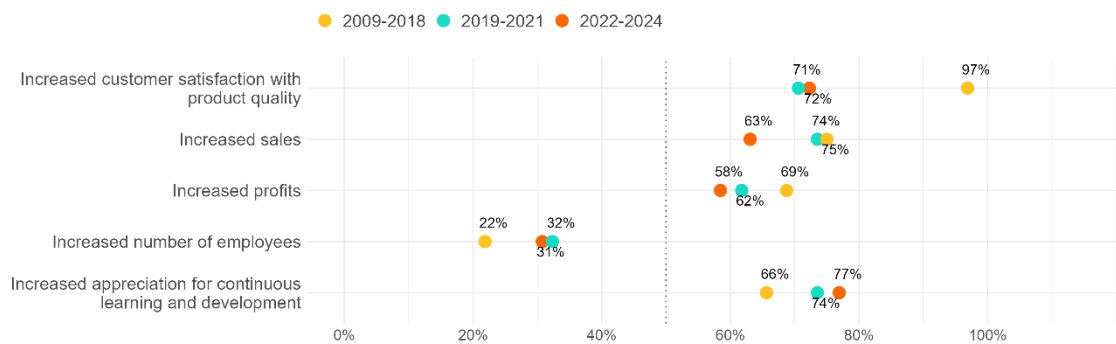
Figure 42: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training, breakdown by firm size



Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 18 companies. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 84 companies. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 29 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Figure 43: Impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs' performances, breakdown by training period

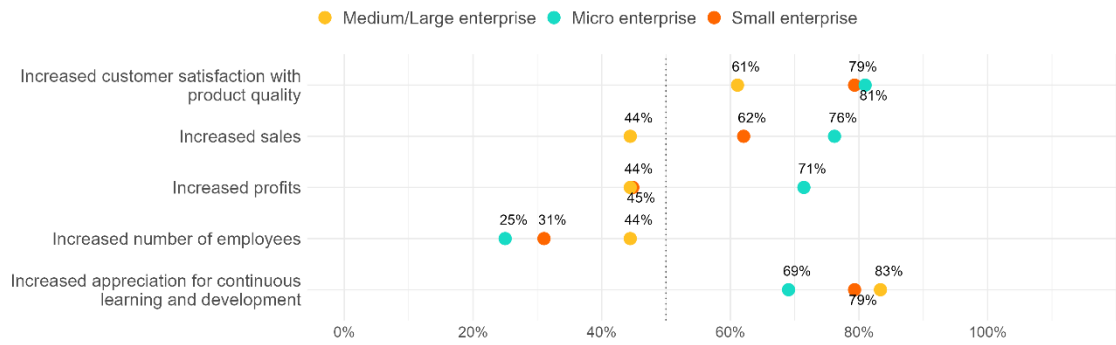


Note: For 2009-2018, based on responses from 32 companies. For 2019-2021, based on responses from 34 companies. For 2022-2024, based on responses from 65 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



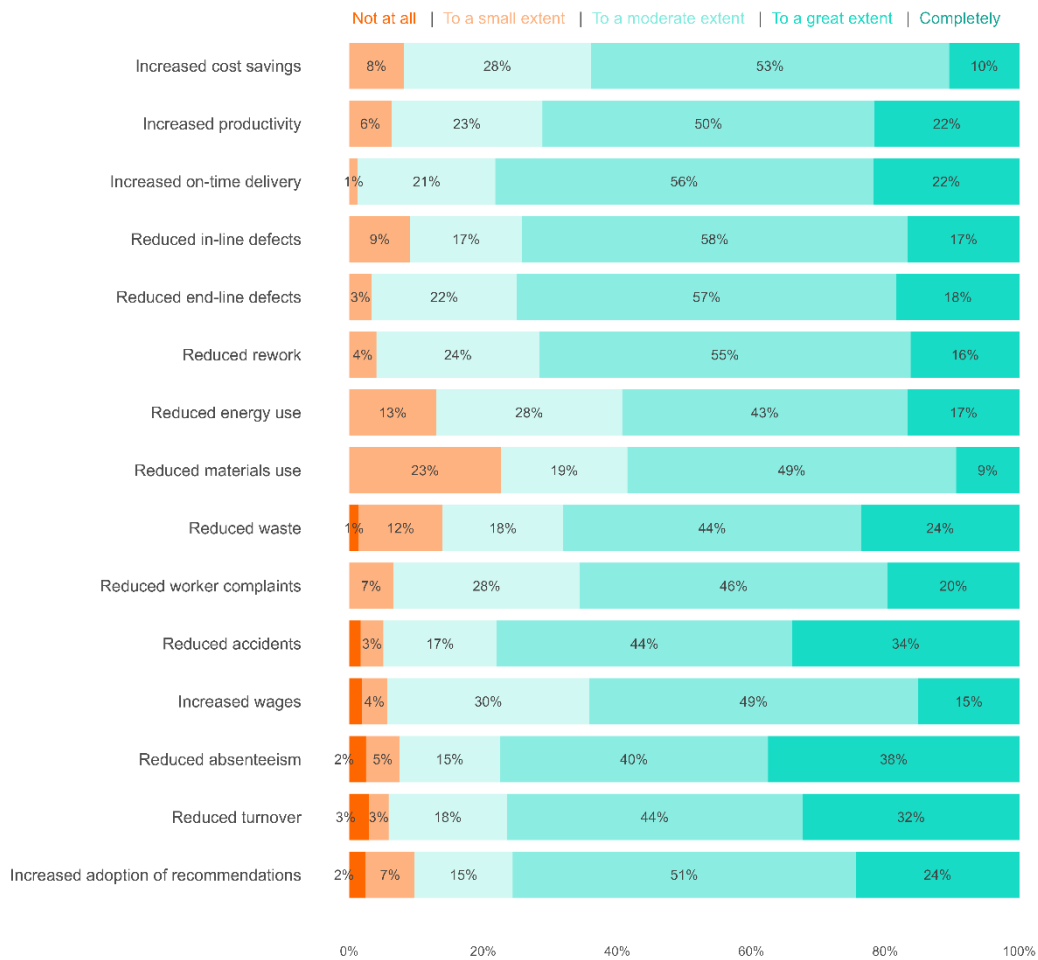
Figure 44: Impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs' performances, breakdown by firm size



Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 18 companies. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 84 companies. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 29 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Figure 45: Contribution of the SCORE Training on observed KPIs

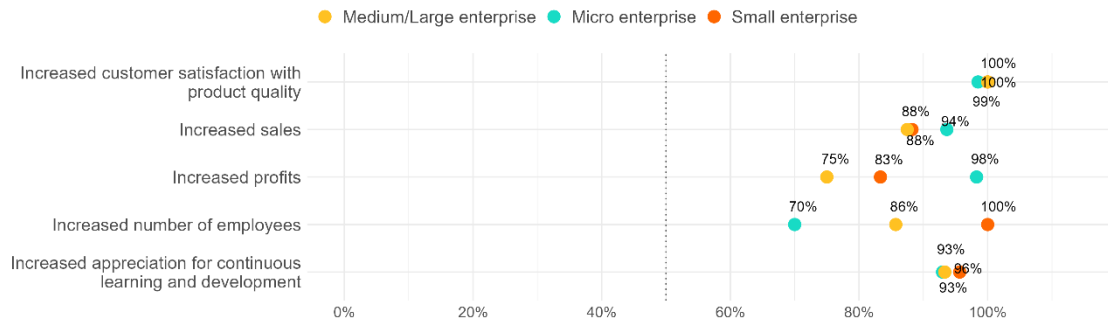


Note: Based on responses from 86, 111, 78, 66, 60, 74, 54, 53, 72, 61, 59, 53, 40, 34, and 41 companies, respectively.



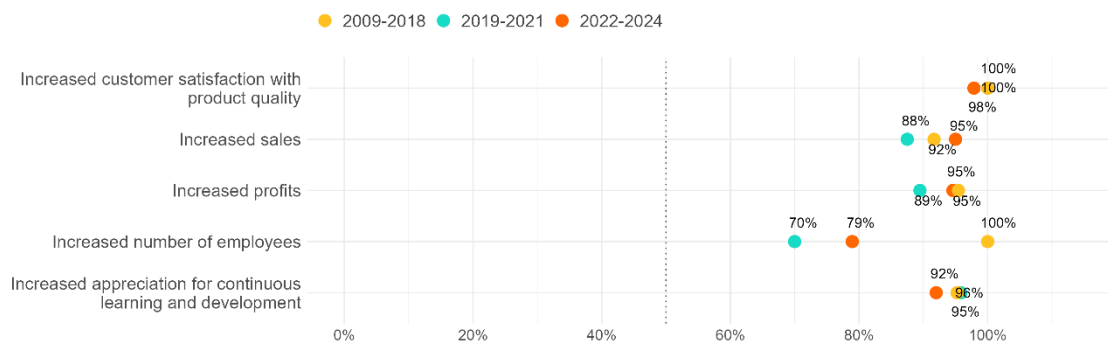
Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Figure 46: Contribution of the SCORE Training on observed impact, breakdown by firm size



Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 11, 8, 8, 7, and 15 companies, respectively. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 67, 63, 58, 20, and 57 companies, respectively. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 23, 17, 12, 9, and 23 companies, respectively.

Figure 47: Contribution of the SCORE Training on observed impact, breakdown by training period



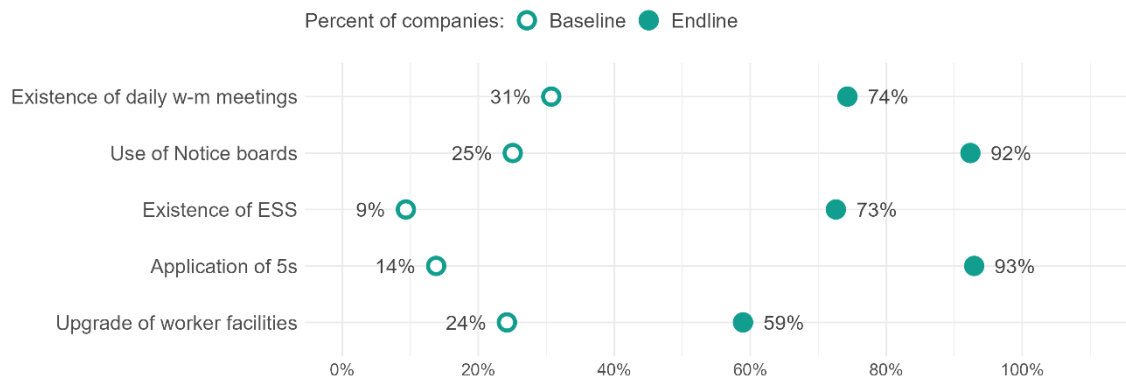
Note: For 2009-2018, based on responses from 31, 24, 22, 7, and 21 companies, respectively. For 2019-2021, based on responses from 23, 24, 19, 10, and 24 companies, respectively. For 2022-2024, based on responses from 47, 40, 37, 19, and 50 companies, respectively.



# Annex 7: Additional assessments for Peru

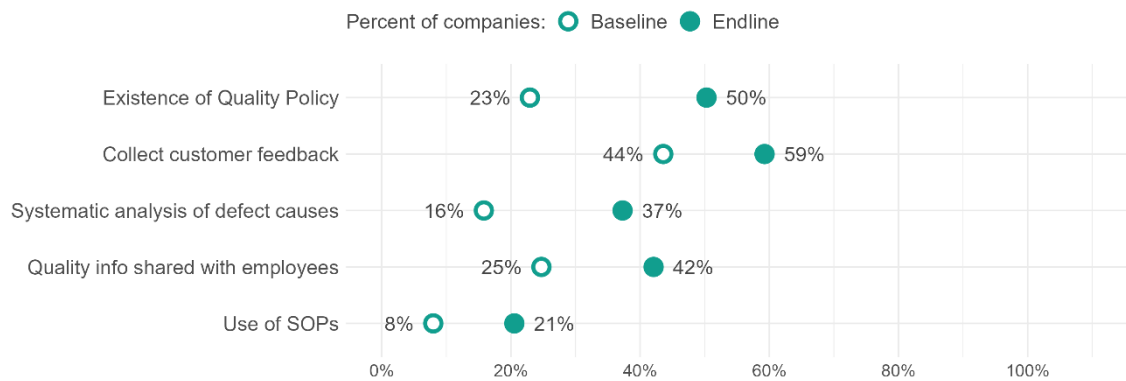
Figure 48: Improvements in SMEs' management practices (Baseline – Endline)

## Workplace Cooperation



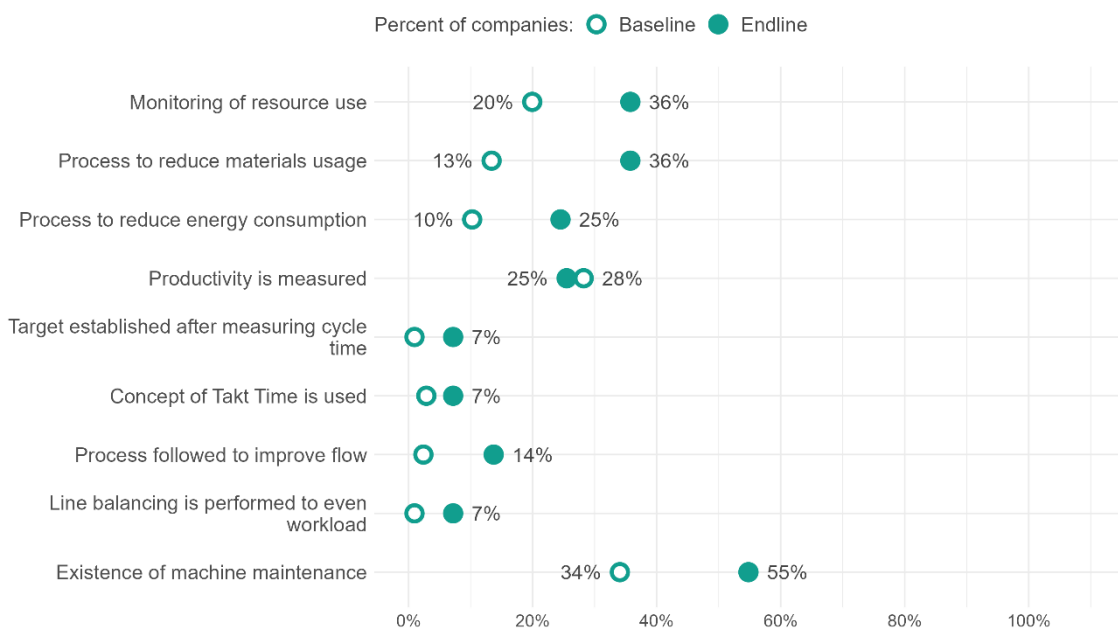
Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 449, 351, 449, 449, and 351 companies, respectively. For Endline, based on responses from 354, 302, 354, 354, and 302 companies, respectively.

## Quality Management



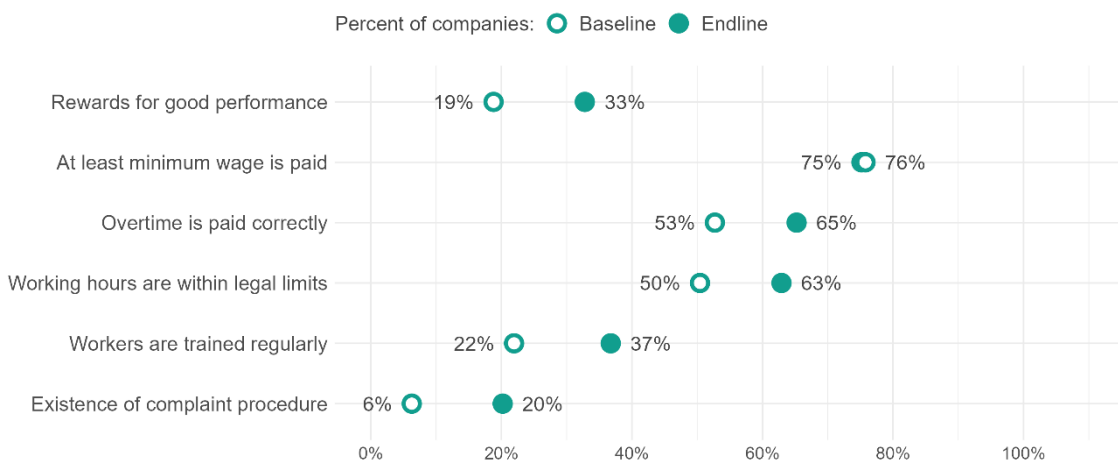
Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 449, 351, 449, 449, and 351 companies, respectively. For Endline, based on responses from 354, 302, 354, 354, and 302 companies, respectively.

## Lean Production



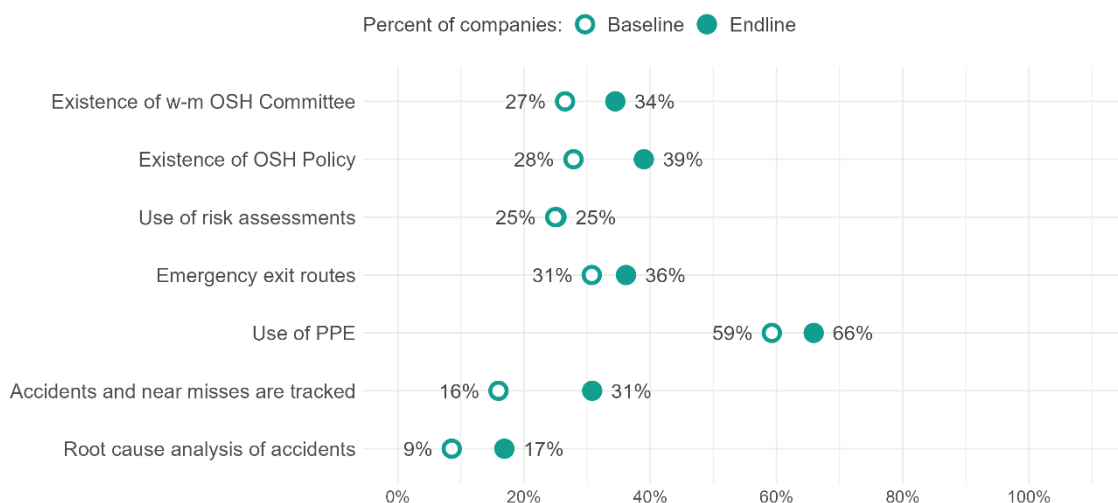
Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 351, 351, 351, 209, 209, 209, 209, 209, and 449 companies, respectively. For Endline, based on responses from 302, 302, 302, 153, 153, 153, 153, 153, and 354 companies, respectively.

## HR Management



Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 351 companies. For Endline, based on responses from 302 companies.

## OSH

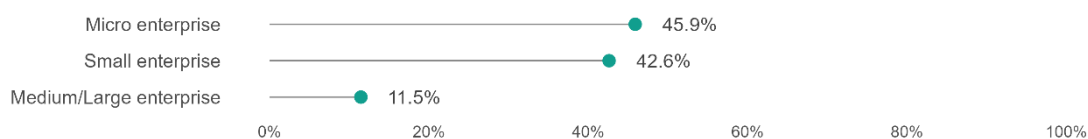


Note: For Baseline, based on responses from 449, 449, 449, 449, 351, 351, and 351 companies, respectively. For Endline, based on responses from 354, 354, 354, 354, 302, 302, and 302 companies, respectively.

Source: The ILO's SCORE M&E Database (August 2024)

Figure 49: Characteristics of the Peruvian enterprises participated in the survey (July 2024)

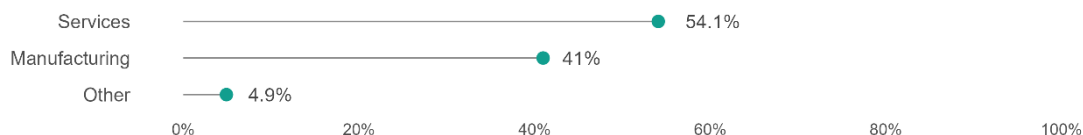
### Company size



Note: Based on the responses of 61 companies.

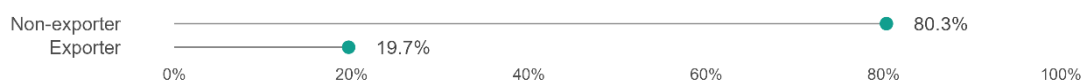
Note: Different countries have developed definitions of smaller enterprises that are tailored to their specific contexts and needs. In this report, we categorized SMEs according to the common ILO definition: Micro (fewer than 10 employees), Small (11-50 employees), Medium (51-250 employees), and Large (over 250 employees).

### Sector



Note: Based on the responses of 61 companies.

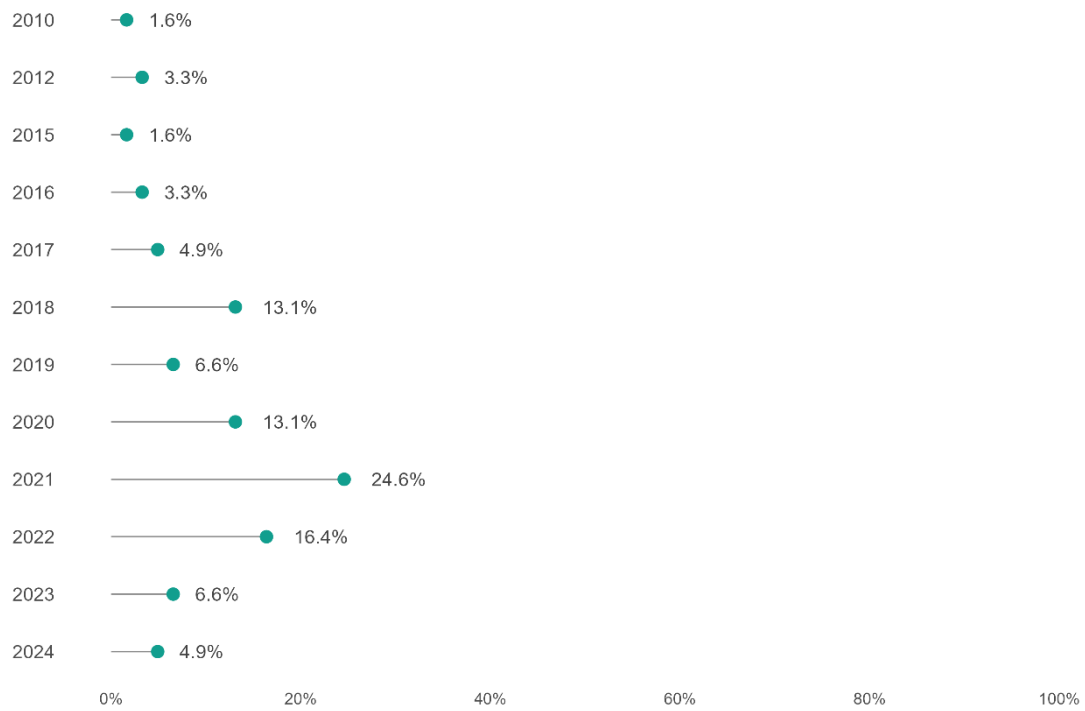
### Exporter vs Non-exporter



Note: Based on the responses of 61 companies.

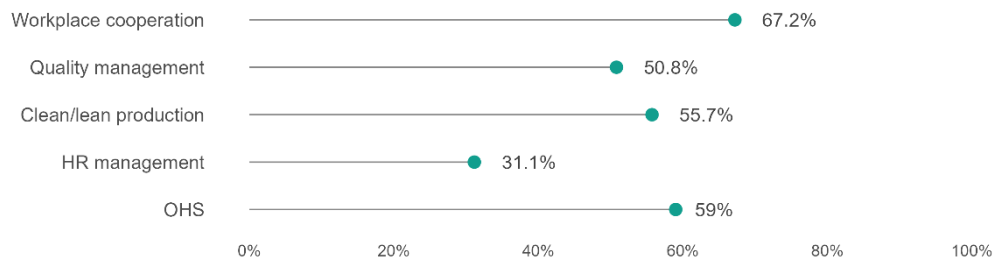


## Training Year



Note: Based on the responses of 61 companies.

## Areas where improvement projects were implemented

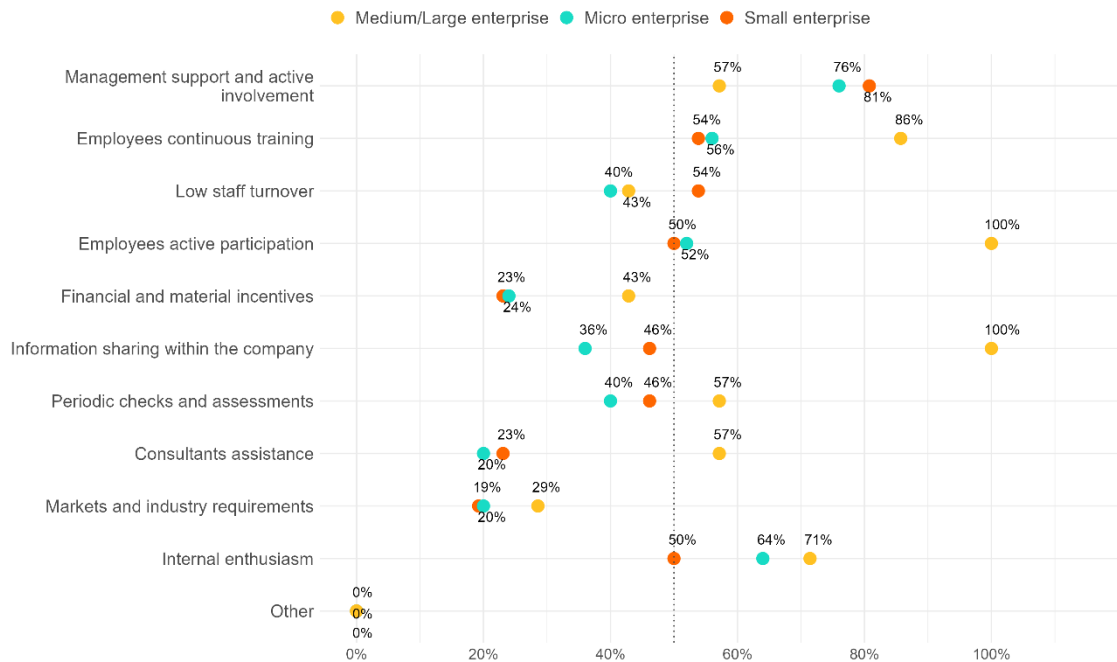


Note: Based on the responses of 61 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



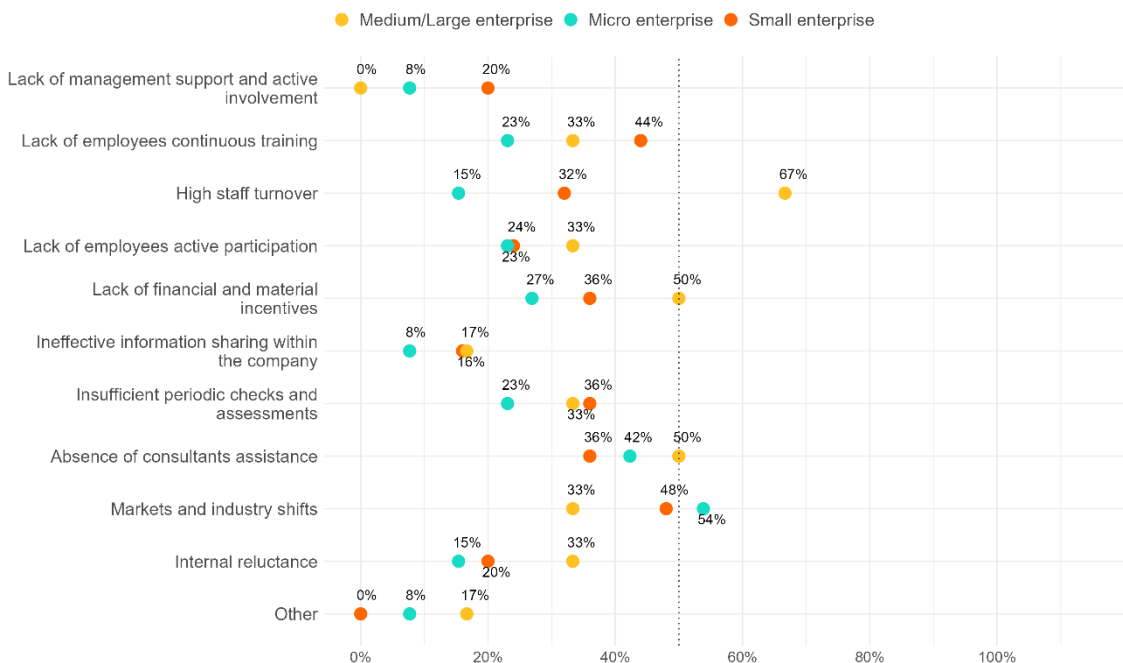
Figure 50: Contributing factors to sustaining management practices, breakdown by firm size



Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 7 companies. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 25 companies. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 26 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Figure 51: Hindering factors to sustaining management practices, breakdown by firm size



Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 6 companies. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 26 companies. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 25 companies.



Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Figure 52: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training, breakdown by training period

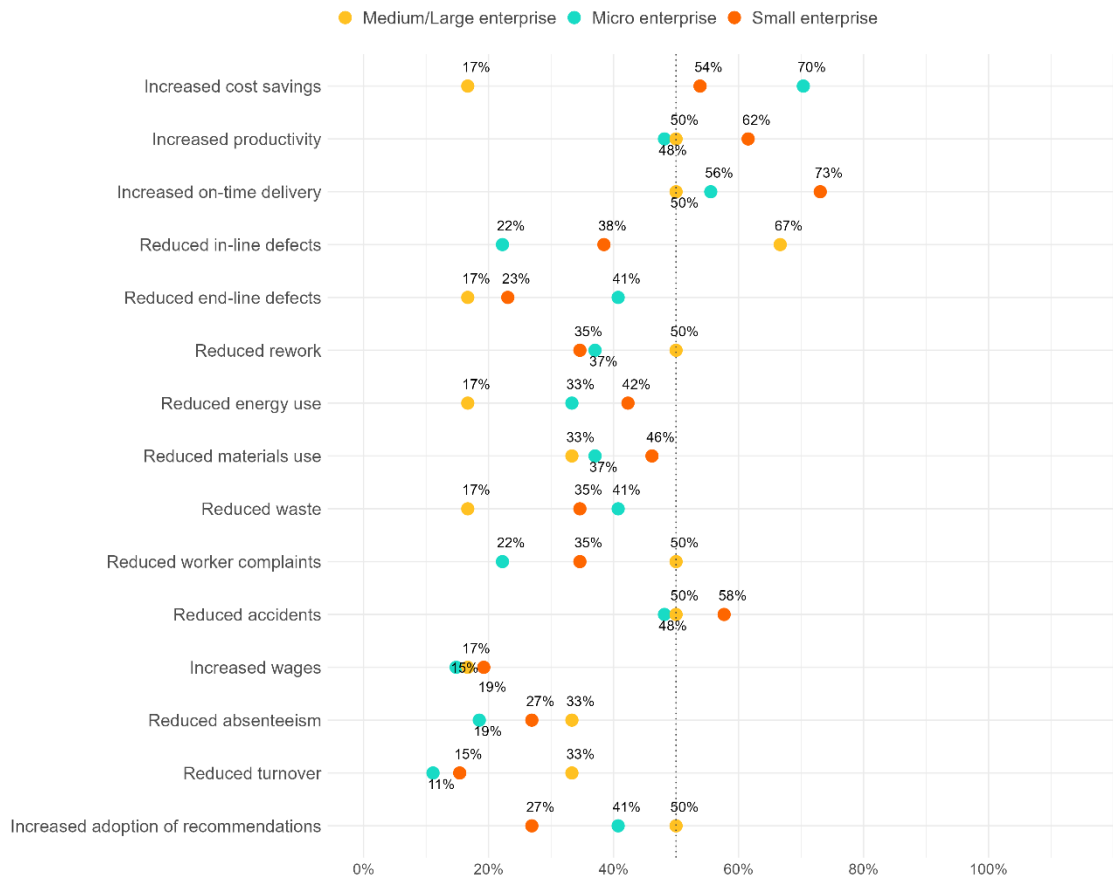


Note: For 2009-2018, based on responses from 17 companies. For 2019-2021, based on responses from 25 companies. For 2022-2024, based on responses from 17 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)



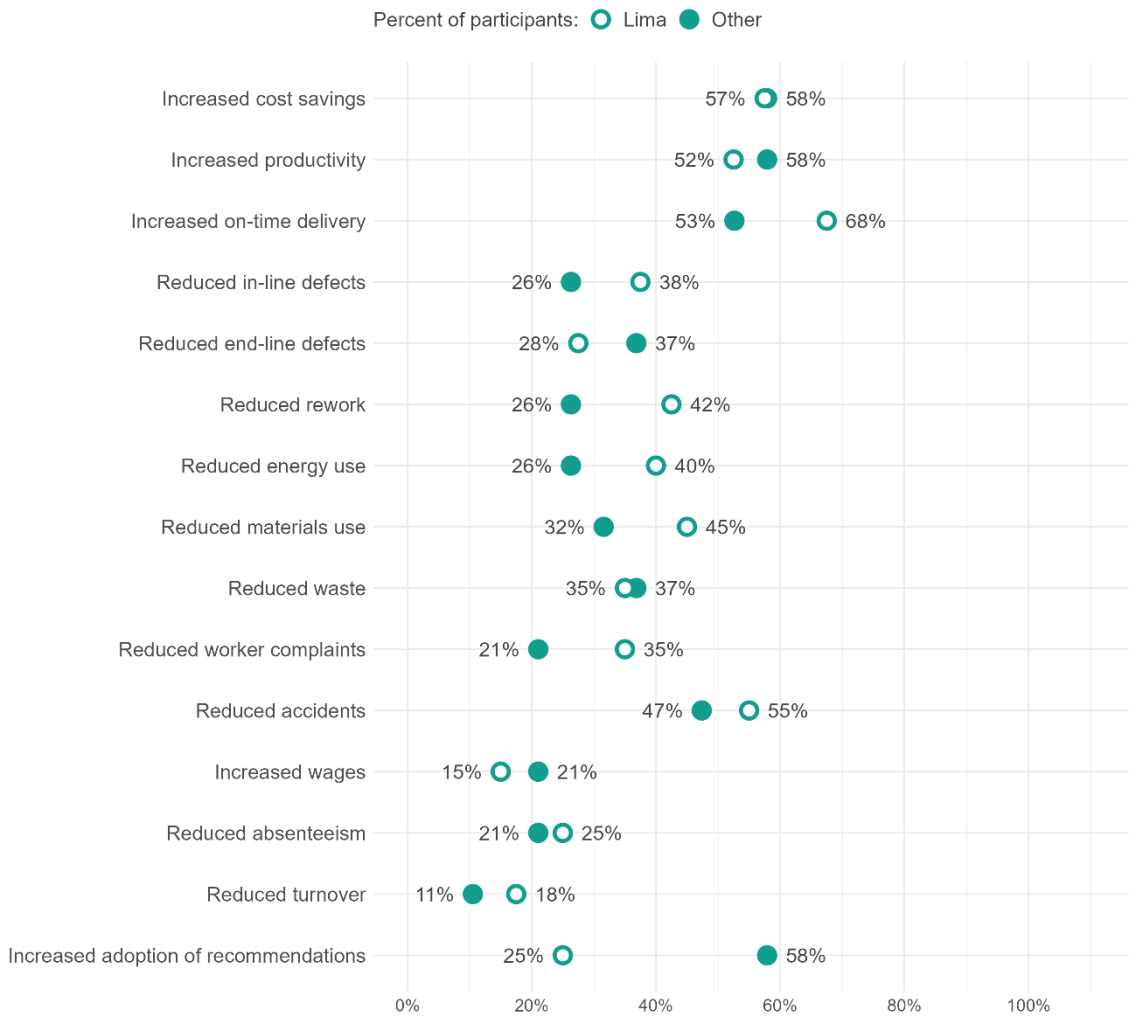
Figure 53: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training, breakdown by firm size



Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 6 companies. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 27 companies. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 26 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

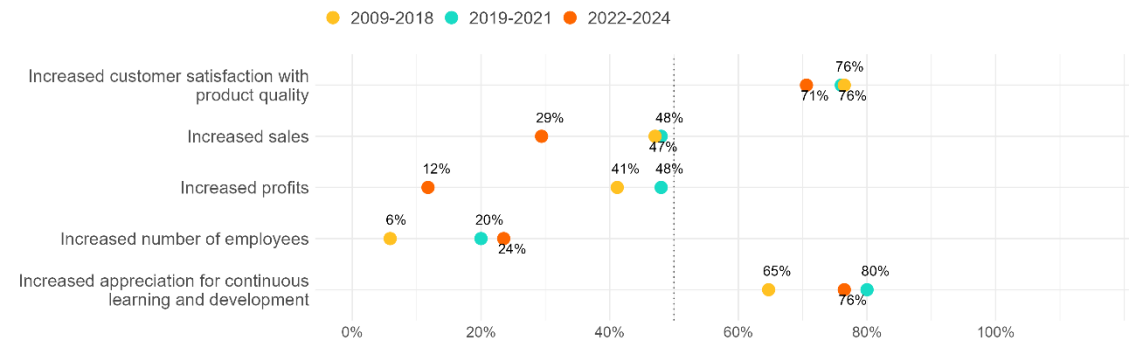
Figure 54: KPIs changed since SMEs' participation in SCORE Training, breakdown by region



Note: For Lima, based on responses from 40 companies. For Other, based on responses from 19 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Figure 55: Impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs' performances, breakdown by training period

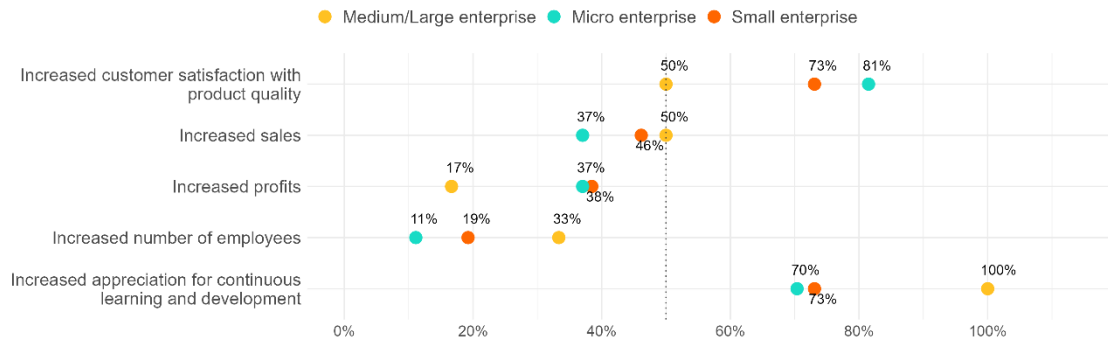


Note: For 2009-2018, based on responses from 17 companies. For 2019-2021, based on responses from 25 companies. For 2022-2024, based on responses from 17 companies.



Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

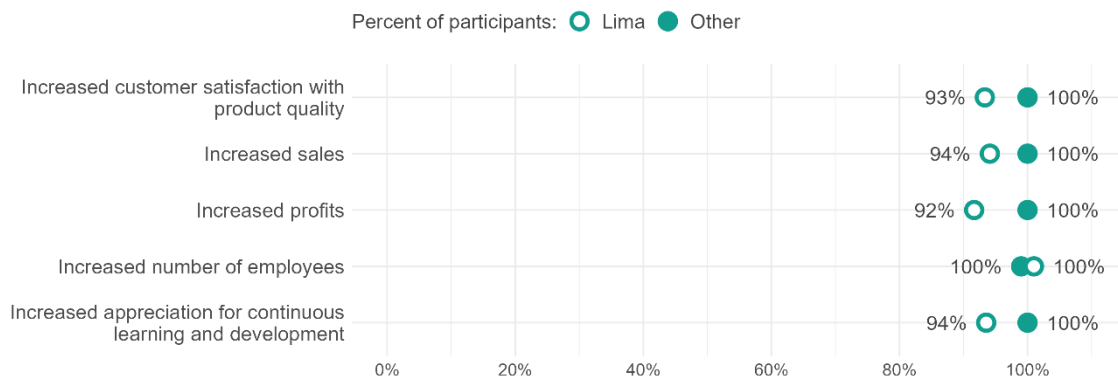
Figure 56: Impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs' performances, breakdown by firm size



Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 6 companies. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 27 companies. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 26 companies.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

Figure 57: Impact of the SCORE Training on SMEs' performances, breakdown by region

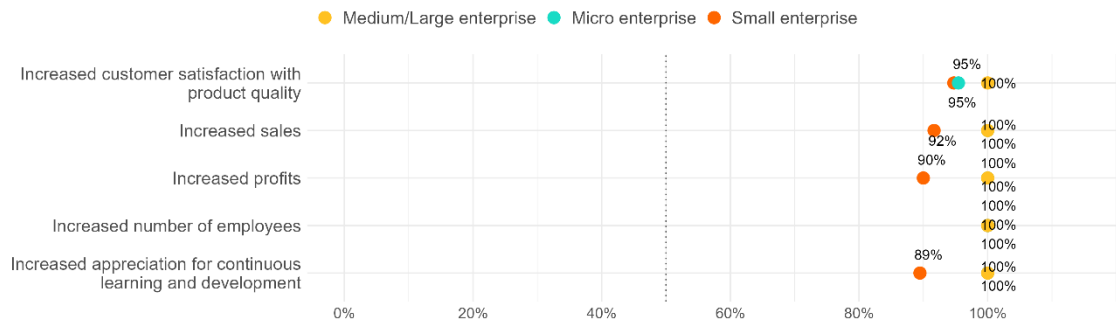


Note: For Lima, based on responses from 30, 17, 12, 5, and 31 companies, respectively. For Other, based on responses from 14, 8, 9, 5, and 13 companies, respectively.

Source: SCORE SME Survey (July 2024)

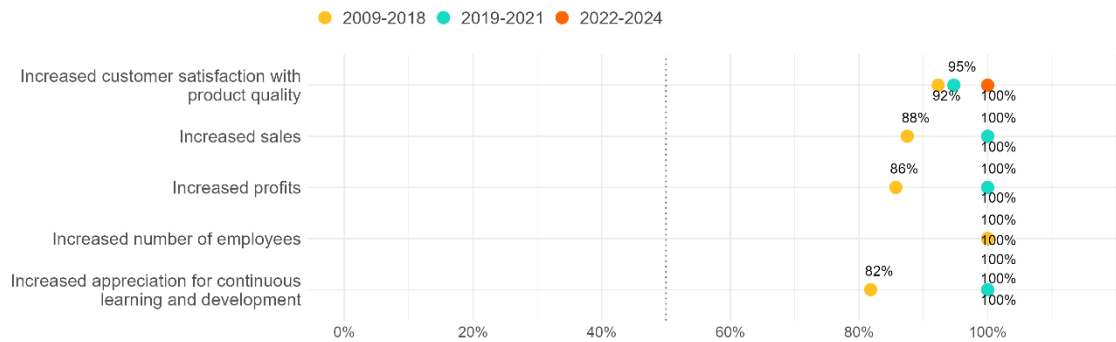


Figure 58: Contribution of the SCORE Training on observed impact, breakdown by firm size



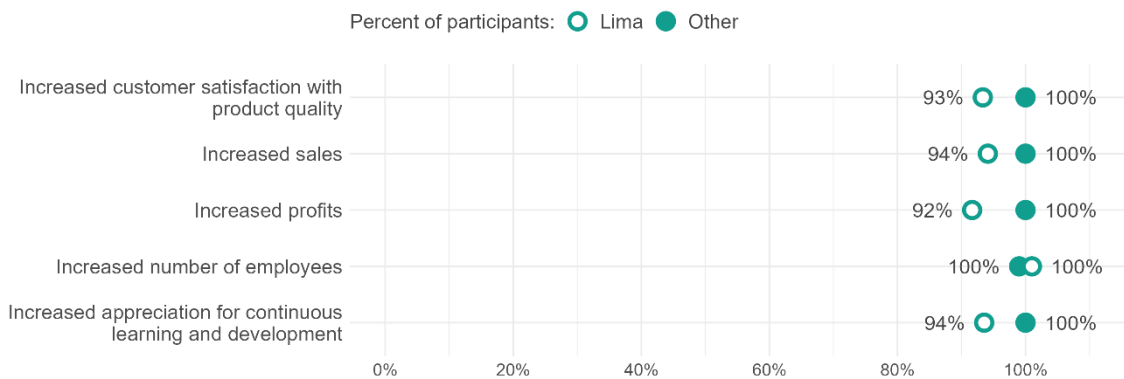
Note: For Medium/Large enterprise, based on responses from 3, 3, 1, 2, and 6 companies, respectively. For Micro enterprise, based on responses from 22, 10, 10, 3, and 19 companies, respectively. For Small enterprise, based on responses from 19, 12, 10, 5, and 19 companies, respectively.

Figure 59: Contribution of the SCORE Training on observed impact, breakdown by training period



Note: For 2009-2018, based on responses from 13, 8, 7, 1, and 11 companies, respectively. For 2019-2021, based on responses from 19, 12, 12, 5, and 20 companies, respectively. For 2022-2024, based on responses from 12, 5, 2, 4, and 13 companies, respectively.

Figure 60: Contribution of the SCORE Training on observed impact, breakdown by region



Note: For Lima, based on responses from 30, 17, 12, 5, and 31 companies, respectively. For Other, based on responses from 14, 8, 9, 5, and 13 companies, respectively.



# Annex 8: Data triangulation

The following table summarises the evaluation questions for each of the five SCORE stakeholder groups and outlined the primary sources of information and the methods employed to collect and triangulate data. The abbreviations DC (SCORE-related documents and other literature), Dt (SCORE M&E data), Su (Survey), and In (Interviews) were used to denote the data sources. Points shown in lighter colour signify additional sources that were consulted in addition to the primary sources.

Table 3: Evaluation matrix with evaluation questions, sources, and methods

EQ	Evaluation questions	SME	IP	Lead Buyers	Gov.	ILO (ex)	Dc	Dt	Su	In
<b>Sustainability - SME</b>										
1	To what extent have the changed production / management practices among companies that participated in SCORE Training been sustained?	■	■	■			■		■	■
2	To what extent have practices been upscaled / replicated to other departments / sister companies?	■					■		■	■
3	To what extent is there an increased interest in developing own capacity?	■					■		■	■
<b>Sustainability – Implementing Partners</b>										
4	To what extent do IP continue and expand providing SCORE-like services (i.e., similar services for same type of clients)?		■				■		■	■
5	To what extent are implementing partners sustaining the technical, financial / commercial, and organisational practices / behaviours that were initiated by the SCORE Programme?		■						■	■
6	To what extent has the provision of SCORE training affected the IP's performance and position in the market? <i>Note: Evaluation question of secondary priority.</i>		■						■	■
<b>Sustainability – Government and Lead Buyers</b>										
7	To what extent have government actors continued to support (financially or otherwise) SCORE-like services?				■		■			■
8	To what extent have lead buyers continued to support (financial or otherwise) SCORE-like services?			■			■			■



Sustainability - ILO										
9	To what extent is the ILO offering SCORE training one of its key SME services – why (not)?					■	■			■
Impact										
10	How have the participating companies developed (performance, growth)? To what extent can this development be linked to the SCORE training?	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■
11	Are there additional / unforeseen benefits attributed to the SCORE programme?	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■

# Annex 9: Data collection tools

## Interview guides

### Implementers

#### Background

- Before interview: Collect information on implementers: their organisation, training offers, funding sources, number of SME trained etc.
- Can you provide a brief overview of your organization, and its involvement with SCORE?

#### Sustainability and Impact

1. Have you continued or expanded services similar to those of SCORE? If yes, how have you continued or expanded these services? What specific ways and methods have you used?
2. If any of your SCORE-like services were discontinued, what were the reasons behind the discontinuation? Can you provide specific reasons for stopping these services?

#### Organizational capacity

3. What administrative structures, systems, and processes have you established to manage the SCORE training program? How do these new systems differ from the ones you had in place before SCORE? Can you describe the specific changes and improvements due to SCORE? Are there any challenges?

#### Business Strategy

4. Have you developed a business plan or approach to independently carry out SCORE trainings after the ILO? If so, can you describe it? Can you share any successes or challenges you have encountered while implementing your business plan?



5. Have you acquired any new clients specifically for these services since implementing SCORE? If so, who are they, and how do they differ from your previous clients?

#### **Funding**

6. What is your current funding/financial strategy for SCORE training? Have SMEs paid for your services, or have other funding sources financed them? If other sources, what are they?
7. Can you share some successes or challenges in fundraising or financial mobilization?

#### **Adaptations**

8. How do you customize the SCORE training content to fit the local context? What methods do you use to adapt SCORE training based on assessments of the local context?
9. Optional: What e-learning capabilities have you developed for delivering SCORE training? How do you ensure the quality and engagement of e-learning content? What feedback have you received from participants about the e-learning modules, and how have you used this feedback to improve?

#### **Marketing**

10. What marketing strategies have you developed to promote SCORE training? How do your staff acquire and use communication and promotional skills to implement these strategies? Can you provide examples of successful marketing efforts and their outcomes?
11. What plans, processes, and personnel do you have in place dedicated to fundraising or resource mobilization for SCORE training? What improvements are you planning for the future?

#### **Performance**

12. How has your participation in SCORE impacted your organization's performance? What specific/most important performance improvements have you observed?

#### **Position**

13. What effect has your involvement in SCORE had on your position in the business services/training market? How has your market position changed?

#### **Improvement**

14. Are there any additional insights or comments you would like to share about your experience with SCORE? How do you think the SCORE program can be improved to better meet your needs and those of your clients?

#### **Certifying Trainers (*secondary importance*)**

15. How do you select candidates for Training of Trainers (TOT) programs, and how do you ensure they become certified trainers? What processes are in place to maintain a roster of SCORE trainers for continued delivery? How do you manage and enhance the capacity of your trainers over time?

#### **Training Quality Assurance (*secondary importance*)**



16. What measures do you have in place to ensure the quality of SCORE training? Can you provide examples of quality assurance practices that have been particularly effective?

## Government

### Background

- Can you provide a brief overview of your organization, and its involvement with SCORE?

### Sustainability and impact

1. How did your organisation – or how have other government actors – support SCORE, financially or otherwise? Can you share more specific details? What were the motivations?
2. Could you provide details on the types of companies your organization has supported?
3. What positive changes did the SCORE program bring, and what challenges did you face while supporting it?
4. Has your support continued after the SCORE program ended? Why or why not?
5. What have been the main barriers and enablers in continuing your support?
6. If the support continued, how has it evolved? What outcomes do you expect?
7. Do you think the IPs have capacity to implement and sustain the delivery of SCORE-like services? What are your observations since the ILO's exit in 2021?
8. What can be done to make sure that your government's support for the SCORE program continues effectively over the long term?

### Improvement

9. How can the SCORE program be improved to better suit the need of your government?
10. Are there any additional insights or comments you would like to share about your experience with SCORE?

## Lead Buyers

### Background

- Before interview: Collect information on lead buyer: company's profile, year and methods of engagement with SCORE.
- Can you provide a brief overview of your organization, and its involvement with SCORE?



## Sustainability and impact

1. How did your company support SCORE, financially or otherwise? Can you share more specific details? What were the motivations?
2. What positive changes did the SCORE program bring, and what challenges did you face while supporting it?
3. Has your support continued after the SCORE program ended? Why or why not?
4. Could you provide details on the types of organisations and companies your company has supported?
5. What have been the main barriers and enablers in continuing your support?
6. If the support continued, how has it evolved? What outcomes do you expect?
7. Do you think the IPs have capacity to implement and sustain the delivery of SCORE-like services? What are your observations since the ILO's exit in 2021?
8. What can be done to make sure that your company's support for the SCORE program continues effectively over the long term?

## Improvement

9. How can the SCORE program be improved to better suit the need of your company/supply chain improvement?
10. Are there any additional insights or comments you would like to share about your experience with SCORE?

# SME

## Background

- Before interview: Collect information on SME: location, year of establishment, size, sector, type, woman/women owned, export orientation, last participation in SCORE training, training modules attended.
- Can you provide a brief overview of your company, and its involvement with SCORE?
- How did you hear about SCORE? Why did you decide to participate in the SCORE Training programme? What were the financial arrangements at that time?

## Impact

1. What important changes in management and production have you made due to SCORE training? Can you describe specific practices or behaviors that have changed? **See below for more technical details focusing on Enterprise Improvement Plan(s).**
2. How has your company grown in terms of sales, profits, and jobs since SCORE? Can you provide examples or figures to illustrate this growth?



3. How have working conditions, worker-employer relations, and customer feedback improved since SCORE? Can you share any specific improvements or feedback received?
4. How much are these improvements a result of SCORE training? To what extent do you attribute these changes to the SCORE program?
5. How do you track and measure these changes and improvements? What tools and metrics do you use? Could you mention any specific systems or KPIs you use to monitor progress?
6. Have your expectations from the SCORE training been met? In what ways did the training meet or exceed your expectations?
7. What are the most significant changes brought by SCORE? Are there any unexpected benefits or issues from the SCORE program? Can you think of any positive or negative outcomes that you didn't anticipate?

### **Sustainability**

8. How well have the changes from SCORE training been maintained? What helps or hinders this? What factors contribute to sustaining these changes or pose challenges?
9. Have you expanded or copied the new practices from SCORE across your organization? Can you give examples of how these practices have been replicated?
10. Is there more interest in improving your capabilities since SCORE? Have you taken any steps to improve your capabilities? Have you participated in other similar courses? What motivates you? What actions have you taken, and what drives these efforts?
11. What helps or prevents you from continuing to build your capabilities? Can you identify any key factors that contribute or hinder the ongoing development?
12. Would you be willing to pay for SCORE training in the future, and if so, what price range would you consider reasonable?

### **Improvement**

13. How could the SCORE training program be improved to better meet your needs? Are there specific topics, areas or support you wish had been covered more thoroughly?
14. Do you have any additional insights or comments about your experience with SCORE?

## **Trainer**

### **Background**

- How did you hear about and get involved with SCORE?
- Which of the SCORE modules have you been trained as expert trainer? Certified trainer?



## Impact

1. Why did you join the SCORE Training scheme?
2. How was the TOT and certification process? Any suggestions for improvement?
3. Has the SCORE certification helped you get more business?
4. How strong is the demand for SCORE training in your market? What are the main sources of funding for SCORE training in your country?
5. How much competition is there among organizations offering similar SME training courses?
6. What is your relationship with implementers/service providers? How many do you work with?
7. What are the key challenges you face in training enterprises, particularly using SCORE methodology?
8. How adaptable is the SCORE training methodology to local situations? Any suggestions for improvement?
9. Can SCORE training be commercialized? Is it feasible to offer it on a fully commercial basis to SMEs at the current price? How can we improve to achieve this?
10. Any additional insights or comments about your experience with SCORE?

## ILO

### Background

- Can you provide a brief overview of your role, and your involvement with SCORE?

### Strategic Importance and Integration

1. How has SCORE been integrated into the broader ILO strategy for supporting SMEs?
2. What role has SCORE played in the ILO's efforts to promote decent work and sustainable enterprise development?
3. What evidence suggests that the SCORE training has become a key service for SME at the ILO, and what evidence indicates otherwise?
4. How has the demand for SCORE training from the ILO, donors, and other partners influenced whether it became a key service for SMEs at the ILO? Any examples?
5. What other factors, like funding, strategy, or competition with other services, have affected whether SCORE became a key service for SMEs at the ILO? Any examples?
6. Compared to other (flagship) programmes of the ILO, how does the SCORE training differ – e.g. in terms of relevance, significance, institutionalisation? Are these differences supporting or hindering SCORE to become a key service for SME?

### Sustainability and Scalability



7. How interested were donors and third parties in funding SCORE? What helped secure funding, what challenges made it harder to get more?
8. What strategies have been put in place to ensure the sustainability and scalability of SCORE beyond the initial donor funding?
9. Have there been efforts to adapt or evolve SCORE training to meet the changing needs of SMEs or different regional contexts? Can you provide examples?

#### Future Directions and Strategic Considerations

10. What are the future plans for SCORE, both within the ILO and in partnership with other organizations? Are there any anticipated challenges or opportunities?
11. How can the ILO leverage the success or experiences of SCORE to secure additional funding or to replicate the program in other regions or sectors?

#### Challenges and Barriers

12. What challenges have been encountered in promoting SCORE as a key service for SMEs within the ILO and externally? How have these challenges been addressed?
13. Are there any additional insights or comments you would like to share about your experience with SCORE?

## SME Survey

No	Respondents	Survey question	Response options
	Background information		
1		What is the size of your company?	less than 10 employees from 11 to 50 employees from 51 to 250 employees more than 250 employees
2		In which sector is your company active?	Manufacturing Services Other (please specify)
3		Is your company exporting goods or services?	Yes No
4		When was the last time that your company participated in the SCORE training?	[Select Year]
5		Which specific areas did your company target for improvement projects during SCORE training? Please select all that apply.	Workplace Cooperation Quality Management Clean/Lean Production Human Resource Management Occupational Health and Safety



	SMEs' observed changes		
6	Note: Only show if selected in Q5	<b>Workplace Cooperation</b> Did your company introduce the following practices after the SCORE training? Please select all that apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Existence of daily worker management meetings</li> <li>· Use of notice boards</li> <li>· Existence of Employee Suggestion Scheme (ESS)</li> <li>· Application of 5s</li> <li>· Upgrade of worker facilities</li> </ul>
7	[List only the practices selected in the previous question]	Is your company still implementing them?	Yes No
8	Note: Only show if selected in Q5	<b>Quality Management</b> Did your company introduce the following practices after the SCORE training? Please select all that apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Collect customer feedback</li> <li>· Existence of Quality Policy</li> <li>· Systematic analysis of defect causes</li> <li>· Quality info shared with employees</li> <li>· Use of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)</li> </ul>
9	[List only the practices selected in the previous question]	Is your company still implementing them?	Yes No
10	Note: Only show if selected in Q5	<b>Clean/Lean Production</b> Did your company introduce the following practices after the SCORE training? Please select all that apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Monitoring of resource use</li> <li>· Process to reduce materials usage</li> <li>· Process to reduce energy consumption</li> <li>· Existence of machine maintenance</li> <li>· Productivity is measured</li> <li>· Target established after measuring cycle time</li> <li>· Concept of Takt Time is used</li> <li>· <b>Process to improve workflow</b></li> <li>· Line balancing is performed to even workload</li> </ul>
11	[List only the practices selected in the previous question]	Is your company still implementing them?	Yes No



12	Note: Only show if selected in Q5	<b>Human Resources</b> Did your company introduce the following practices after the SCORE training? Please select all that apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Rewards for good performance</li><li>· At least minimum wage is paid</li><li>· Overtime is paid correctly</li><li>· Working hours are within legal limits</li><li>· Workers are trained regularly</li><li>· Existence of complaint procedure</li></ul>
13	[List only the practices selected in the previous question]	Is your company still implementing them?	Yes No
14	Note: Only show if selected in Q5	<b>Occupational Health and Safety</b> Did your company introduce the following practices after the SCORE training? Please select all that apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Existence of worker management OSH Committee</li><li>· Existence of OSH Policy</li><li>· Use of risk assessments</li><li>· Emergency exit routes</li><li>· Use of PPE</li><li>· Accidents and near misses are tracked</li><li>· Root cause analysis of accidents</li></ul>
15	[List only the practices selected in the previous question]	Is your company still implementing them?	Yes No
16		<b>Influencing Factors</b> What are the factors that contributed to sustaining these practices in your company over time? Please select all that apply.	Active involvement and support from company management Continuous training for employees Low Staff Turnover Active participation and input from employees Sufficient financial and material incentives to maintain practices Clear and consistent information sharing within the company Routine checks and assessments to ensure practices are maintained Assistance from outside experts and consultants Economic and industry shifts requiring adoption of new practices Internal enthusiasm to adopt or continue new practices Other (please specify)



17		<p>What are the factors that hindered sustaining these practices in your company over time? Please select all that apply.</p>	<p>Lack of active involvement and support from company management Lack of training for employees High Staff Turnover Lack of participation and input from employees Lack of financial and material incentives to maintain practices Ineffective information sharing within the company Insufficient checks and assessments to ensure practices are maintained Absence of assistance from outside experts and consultants Economic and industry shifts impacting operations Internal opposition or reluctance to adopt or continue new practices Other (please specify)</p>
18		<p><b>KPIs</b> Have the following changes occurred since your company participated in SCORE training? Please select all that apply.</p>	<p>Increased cost savings Increased productivity Increased on-time delivery Reduced in-line defects Reduced end-line defects Reduced rework Reduced energy use Reduced materials use Reduced waste Reduced worker complaints Reduced accidents Increased wages Reduced absenteeism Reduced turnover Increased adoption of recommendations</p>
19	[List only those selected in the previous question]	To what extent did SCORE influence the changes?	<p>Not at all To a small extent To a moderate extent To a great extent Completely</p>
20		<p><b>Impact</b> Have the following changes occurred since your company participated in SCORE training? Please select all that apply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Increased customer satisfaction with product quality</li> <li>· Increased sales</li> <li>· Increased profits</li> <li>· Increased number of employees</li> <li>· Increased appreciation for continuous learning and development</li> </ul>



21	[List only those selected in the previous question]	To what extent did SCORE influence the changes?	Not at all To a small extent To a moderate extent To a great extent Completely
22		What have been the main positive changes that have occurred in your company since the SCORE training?	
23		In what aspects has your company made no progress since the SCORE training?	



# Annex 10: ToR



ToR\_SCORE Ex-post  
evaluation.v1.0.pdf