

### Launch of the Second Phase of the Trade Training Program for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

In May, 2010, JICA and the Ministry of Trade signed a Record of Discussion necessary to activate the second phase of trade training for Small and Medium Enterprises which is being implemented by both the Export Promotion Council (EPC) and the Kenya Institute for Business Training (KIBT). Inclusion of the KIBT is aimed at enhancing the development of the local training while also boosting the much desired sustainability for the project. Apart from having two implementing institutions, other notable points of departure from the first phase of trade training include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Categorization of various training groups as start-ups, intermediate and advanced as an ideal approach of increasing the impact of trainees considering that different SME are usually at different stages of preparedness. Additional areas of focus proposed for inclusion which have already been incorporated into a revised curriculum include productivity enhancement and competitiveness, entrepreneurship, business counseling, and SME growth and transformation.
2. Use of both the general and specific approaches in inviting participants depending on the strengths of the targeted sectors. Carry out a needs assessment to identify the strength of the sectors with potential for targeting during either the development of sector-based modules or the invitations to training.
3. Standardization of all the training manuals in order to improve on the delivery of the training by the trainers. Developing an appropriate instructor manual and improving a shared understanding of the details of the modules by incorporating more local examples familiar with participants. Extension of the training to cover other towns apart from Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Eldoret.
4. Organize networking forums for ex-participants to share their experiences and common challenges especially those that are from similar or related sectors. In the long term institutionalization of the networking forum would be given priority.
5. Development of a five-day certification course covering all the main modules, which will be implemented during the delivery of the advanced level-course. This would ensure that training is less disruptive while also catering for the busy businesses.



*Small and medium entrepreneurs during a trade training session.*



Traffic jams in Nairobi during rush hour are common.

## Nairobi Has Become a City of Frequent Traffic Jams

*‘ JICA is currently implementing construction of the Westlands Ring Roads to ease congestion between Westlands and Kilimani areas. In addition, expansion of Ngong Road from All Saints Cathedral to Adams Arcade is under preparation. As these road projects will be constructed using world-class standards, pedestrian and cycle lanes are incorporated. ’*

Getting to work in the morning within Nairobi city is always a nightmare. It gets even worse when one has to cross the city centre to work or when it rains. It is estimated that Kenya loses over \$460 million a year due to delayed production caused by traffic congestion, fuel consumption and vehicle pollution. This is a serious threat to establishing Nairobi as an international business hub.

Unfortunately, this situation is getting worse by the day and it is having an enormous effect on productivity of workers. Due to this, many organizations are adopting flex office hours to coincide with low traffic flows. “I’m tired of these traffic jams in Nairobi every day,” says Mr. Mutiso, 40. “One is never punctual to work no matter how early you start the day. There is always a jam. Imagine how frustrating this can be when one is attending an interview or other appointments.”

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At individual level, people are developing their own coping strategies. “If you look at the traffic jams in Nairobi, you have no option but to walk,” Peter, a city resident says. This is his intervention to deal with the traffic jams. But is this possible for everybody? Obviously no because some residents live far away from their work stations.

Residents are watching helplessly as traffic management system within the city gets out of hand. No wonder, some residents like Peter, are