

„Argentina“

„Strengthening the National Quality System in Argentina“

## Summary of the Evaluation Report

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### Project Data

Project No.:	1998.2019.2
PTB No.:	95031
Amount of the German Contribution	DEM 2.687.000,00 EUR 1.373.863,23
Period :	01/2001–6/2004
Evaluation Period:	2004–2013 (ex-post)
PTB Working Group:	Q.53
Project Coordinator:	Ursula Flach
Evaluator/s:	Dr.K.–Christian Göthner Pablo de Santiago

Summary of the evaluation of the project  
 „Strengthening the National Quality System in Argentina“

**Project Description**

Denomination of the measure	Strengthening the National Quality System in Argentina
Objective:	The economy of Argentina, in particular SMEs, has at its disposal a system of quality assuring measures which is internationally recognized and increasingly demanded
Planned results:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The National Accreditation Body OAA is internationally recognized.</li> <li>2. IRAM is accredited and internationally recognized as certification body for quality management systems and products.</li> <li>3. Training of external professionals is realized.</li> <li>4. An integrated management system is implemented in the selected SME.</li> </ol>
Partner:	Consejo Nacional de Normalización, Calidad y Certificación-CNCC (presided by the Secretariat of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism)
Intermediary (executive organisations):	OAA, IRAM, Executive Board of the CNCC, INCALIN, SSAG
Target groups:	Argentine enterprises, in particular SMEs

**Assessment of the project**

(1) Criteria	(2) Assessment	(3) Weighting	(4) = (2) x (3) Weighted Assesment
1. Relevance	2	1	2
2. Effectiveness	1	1	1
3. Efficiency	1	1	1
4. Impact	2	2	4
5. Sustainability	1	2	2
Total		7	10
Total Assessment			1,4

**Results**

- The National Accreditation Body OAA was internationally recognized in 2004 by a peer review realized by ILAC and IAF for accreditation of calibration and testing laboratories, quality management and environmental management systems, and product certifying bodies;
- IRAM was internationally recognized as certification body for QMS and products. The certification of foodstuff according EurepGAP/GlobalGAP and electrical devices (incl. IECEE-CB scheme) were of special importance.
- 482 experts were trained for introducing and certifying QMS and EMS.
- 14 SMEs were prepared for the certification according ISO 14001.

**Status of the change process**

The main long-term impacts are the following:

## Summary of the evaluation of the project „Strengthening the National Quality System in Argentina“

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- If not already retired the trained persons are still working in QI (Quality Infrastructure) institutions, laboratories and in industry. They are transmitting their knowledge to the next generations in Argentina and other LAC countries.
- OAA has become one of the leading NABs in LAC and got the recognition in all possible accreditation fields. OAA is one of the two Latin American NABs that received the OECD recognition for Good Laboratory Practices (GLP).
- IRAM became one of the leading conformity assessment bodies (CABs) for products and QMS in Latin America with subsidiaries in Chile, Bolivia and other Latin American countries.
- INCALIN is the only academic institution in LAC preparing experts of different levels for industrial quality with emphasis on metrology with an increasing demand-led curricula offer. 90% of the 1,200 graduates are working in industry and laboratories implementing and developing QMS.
- The majority of the enterprises supported in establishing an integrated management system improved their performance and are maintaining their QMS.

Although the individual institutions and pilot SMEs were advancing after the end of the project some developments (impacts) were not obtained:

- The training in EMS by INTI was interrupted after the end of the project.
- Until now, the national quality system is not working as a real system. The strengthening of the institutions did not contribute to improve essentially the correlations between the components of the system. Argentina stays behind other countries like Brazil and Mexico.

### ***Causes and success factors for the observed results and change processes***

The following success factors were important for the project:

- The motivation, the technical competence and the involvement of the leading persons
- A clear strategy based on a systemic and process oriented approach concentrated on capacity building and institutional strengthening
- The combination of interventions on the meso level (QI institutions) with the micro level (SME) which allowed to combine the capacity building with concrete activities for SME which were not so much in the focus of the QI institutions
- A confidential cooperation with the individual partners of the project and a fluent and short communication between the Argentine actors, the consultants, the intermittent consultant, and PTB
- The organization of the main activities in sequential order which resulted in learning processes and adjustments of the activities, whenever necessary
- The long history of cooperation between PTB and INTI which facilitated the mutual understanding between the project partners

A weak point was the missing coordination between the different project components and the lack of a project steering committee.

### **Learning processes and learning experience**

- To have competent and engaged partners with decision power is the most important success factor

## Summary of the evaluation of the project „Strengthening the National Quality System in Argentina“

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- The existence of a steering committee, a permanent exchange of information, and a participatory monitoring and planning process is indispensable for transparency and synergy effects in projects with different partners
- Projects need a base line at the beginning of the project implementation for better defining and monitoring the changes (impacts) produced by the project activities
- The not awareness of the importance of projects on the political level is a strongly limiting factor which only partially can be neutralized by strong partners
- The permanent and step-by-step training of well selected competent and highly motivated experts and the fact that some of them later on became instructors/ consultants were one of the fundamentals for the long-term impacts
- The project design needs an exit strategy in order to to develop proposals how to continue the work after the end of the project. This was missing in particular in the case of the SME
- Projects need a final seminar for systematizing the results, and lessons learnt, and developing proposals for the future

### **Recommendations**

The project was designed at the end of the 90s when the project management did not follow the same procedures and criteria as today. For this reason, in many cases, nowadays the conclusions and recommendations are already introduced into the project management process of PTB's cooperation projects.

#### *Design, planning, monitoring, and evaluation, coordination*

- To study the existing and potential demand in new areas before beginning the implementation of new services in new fields
- To define better the (common) interests and the roles of the project partners in the planning process
- To establish a steering committee which is monitoring the project advances as far as adjusting the project design and the operational plan if necessary
- To name a national coordinator in the case of projects with many counterparts for facilitating the communication between them
- To develop a base line at the beginning of the project for having a reference point for the changes produced by the project (for QI institutions and SME);
- To include an inception workshop, a closure workshop, and meetings for systematizing results and lessons learnt
- To include the development of post project activities together with the counterparts into the project design at time
- Training programmes for the implementation of ISO Norms should include elements of monitoring and evaluation of economic results
- Information exchange and cooperation with entrepreneurial organizations as important stakeholders of the QI, incl. German Chambers of Commerce
- Improvement of information, cooperation and coordination with relevant governmental bodies
- The necessity of a continuous information flow and coordination between the different bilateral and regional PTB projects in which the country is participating;

## Summary of the evaluation of the project „Strengthening the National Quality System in Argentina“

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- In innovative projects the lessons learnt should be transmitted and discussed in the PTB's Technical Cooperation Department
- To develop a report structure and assessment scheme which corresponds to the requirements of an ex-post evaluation and emphasizes the sustainable direct and indirect, intended and non-intended, positive and negative long-term impacts

### *Recommendations for the partners*

- To look for possibilities how to include the QI institutions permanently into the economic and social policy and the minds of the important policymakers using PTB as valid partner, but the experiences and the contacts of the QI institutions of the neighbor countries, too
- To develop good contacts and a close cooperation with the entrepreneurial organizations
- INTI should retake training courses and consultancy services for SME in the field of quality issues (environment protection, clean production, energy efficiency, etc.). The INCALIN post-graduate formation should be continued and amplified
- To re-establish the CNCC in a new form including all QI stakeholders with the objective to have an instrument which is developing and coordinating the principal proposals for the development and the monitoring of Argentina's QI



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