



MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL

A PRELIMINARY TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR MAURITIAN-MANAGED SUGAR COMPANIES IN AFRICA

Final Report

June 2003

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This report is based on work supported by the Mauritius Research Council under award number MRC/RUN-0021. Any opinions, findings, recommendations and conclusions expressed herein are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of the Council.

A Preliminary Training Needs Analysis for Mauritian-Managed Sugar Companies in Africa

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Unsolicited Research Grant Scheme

MRC/RUN-0021

(March 2001-June 2003)

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A Preliminary Training Needs Analysis for Mauritian-Managed Sugar Companies in Africa

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Summary

This preliminary study aimed to carry out Training Needs Analyses (TNA) in sugar companies in Africa that are under Mauritian management, namely: TPC Ltd, Tanzania; Mtibwa Sugar Estates Ltd, Tanzania; Companhia de Sena, Mozambique; and Sucrivoire, the Ivory Coast. All the companies involved in this study were newly privatised, were undergoing rehabilitation, and were suffering from lengthy absences from competitive business environments. The major challenges facing the new management teams were to increase efficiency and profitability. All the management teams expressed the need to develop high-class teams to increase the overall productivity of their companies. Each company was embarking upon new working practices that required high-performance work. A sense of loyalty, commitment and responsibility in all employees was thought to be a pre-requisite to success.

The project was divided into three distinct phases. Phase 1 concerned the background data collection period, Phase 11 was the in-country preliminary study of training needs and Phase 111 involved the design, production and delivery of a tailor-made Business Awareness Programmes (BAPs) and targeted capacity-building programmes. These BAPs have been shown to play a significant role in the development of High Performance Work Organizations (HPWO). Two of the companies, namely, TPC Ltd, Tanzania and Companhia de Sena, Mozambique were able to implement BAPs and targeted capacity-building programmes. The impact of these programmes has been very positive as measured by evaluation questionnaires and by direct feedback from the management teams. Training initiatives are continuing to receive full support in these companies. Unfortunately civil war in the Ivory Coast has halted all progress in Sucrivoire whilst Mtibwa Sugar Estates Ltd. in Tanzania indicated that capacity building was not their priority at the present time.

1. Introduction

1.1 Project overview

The project proposal was submitted October 2000 and approved in March 2001. The project had an estimated duration of 2 years and had the following objectives:

- to study training needs of employees of Mauritian-managed sugar companies in Africa;
- to increase the productivity of Mauritian-managed sugar companies in Africa through the development of business understanding and increased competencies;
- to design and develop systematic and relevant capacity-building programmes to meet the specific needs of each company.

The project was divided into three distinct phases. Phase I was completed in December 2001 and covered the:

- gathering of background information (literature survey);
- definition of the problem/meeting with relevant bodies/key informants;
- survey questionnaire;
- data analysis;
- preliminary report.

Phase II was completed in November 2002 and involved:

- in-country training needs analysis (TNA);
- preliminary observation of participants (educational levels, cultural differences, language of instruction);
- production of an Action Plan.

Phase III of the project covers:

- the design, production and delivery of Business Awareness Programmes (BAP);
- the design, production and delivery of capacity-building programmes which build upon the BAP foundations;
- suggestions for future work;
- production of a Final Report.

1.2 Companies involved in the study

1.2.1 Companhia de Sena (CDS), Marroneu, Mozambique

The sugar estate is located in the central region of the country near the Zambezi River, in the special economic zone of 100 000 hectares, set up by the Government of Mozambique, about 200 km from the town of Beira.

Sena Sugar Estates had been out of operation for around 17 years. In August 1998, a Mauritian Consortium signed an agreement with the Government of Mozambique for taking over the rehabilitation of the sugar factories in Marroneu and Luabo (ex Sena Sugar Estates). A Mauritian Consortium composed of the following three groups holds 75% of the shares:

- Les Groupes Palmar
- FUEL Group
- Espitalier-Noël Group

The Mozambican Government holds the remaining shares. Companhia de Sena has been on site in Marroneu since August 1998, when a 230-hectare cane nursery was planted.

Factory rehabilitation began in May 1999. The start-up of the factory took place in early September 2001. CDS is currently employing some 7000 people. The company's total area under cane cultivation is 10 500 ha, with an estimated sugar production of 79 000 t for 2003 and a projection of 100 000 t for 2004.

1.2.2 TPC Ltd., Tanzania

TPC is situated at latitude 3°, South of the Equator, to the North East of Tanzania. The sugar estate is situated to the south of Mount Kilimanjaro at 730 m above sea level. The nearest town is Moshi, found at around 18 kilometres from TPC. TPC Ltd. employs around 5000 workers consisting of permanent workers as well as part time workers during crop season.

As from May 2000, the Government of Tanzania holds 25% of the shares of the company and Sukari Investment Company Ltd hold the remaining 75%. In June 2000, a partnership agreement was signed between DRBC Group and *Quartier Français* Group (from Réunion Island). The company (SML) would manage the factory and the investments of TPC. Executives were recruited by DRBC. The Board was made up of representatives of DRBC, *Quartier Français* and the Government of Tanzania.

1.2.3 Mtibwa Sugar Estates Ltd.

Mtibwa Sugar Estate is located in Turiani Division, Tanzania, 102 km north of Morogoro town and 290 km from Dar es Salaam. It is situated at an altitude of 350 m above sea level at the eastern foothills of the Nguru mountain range. In 1998 the company was privatised and purchased by Tanzania Sugar Industries Ltd. (TSI), a local company incorporated in Tanzania. In order to ensure the success of the rehabilitation and expansion of Mtibwa

Sugar Estate, TSI has entered into a strategic alliance with a Mauritian Consortium, Agricultural Consultancy Services (ACS) that has long and wide experience in the sugar industry. A team of ACS has been in place since August 1998 to take over the overall management of the estate.

1.2.4 Sucrivoire, the Ivory Coast

In July 1997 four factories belonging to Sodesucre in the Ivory Coast were privatised after an international bidding process, namely Ferké I, Ferké II, Zuenoula in the central west and Borotou in the northwest.

A consortium Harel Frères-SIFCA (Ivory Coast company specializing in agro-industries) obtained 55% of the shares of Zuenoula and Borotou under a *Convention de Cession* on the 31 July 1997. The Government of the Ivory Coast retained 45% of the shares. Eventually 5% will be proposed to employees and 20% on the open market. Zuenoula is situated at 400 km northwest of Abidjan near Yamoussoukro. Borotou is 800 km from Abidjan in the north west of the country near the Guinean border. The company is now known as Sucrivoire.

The two estates had a total workforce of 800 permanent employees. During the crop season, around 1500 employees are recruited on a temporary basis. In addition, around 4000 agricultural workers are employed on a seasonal basis. A large majority of the seasonal workers come from Mali and Burkina Faso during the crop season.

2. The development of Business Awareness Programmes (BAP)

2.1 Introduction to BAP

Following the in-country TNA's (described in the Action Plan of November 2002) it was realized that it was necessary to undertake company-wide awareness programmes before embarking upon specific capacity-building programmes. All the companies involved in this study were newly privatised, were undergoing rehabilitation, and were suffering from lengthy absences from competitive business environments. The major challenges facing the new management teams were to increase efficiency and profitability. All the management teams expressed the need to develop high-class teams to drive the company strategies. Each company was embarking upon new working practices that required high-performance work. The management teams all wanted to inculcate a sense of loyalty, commitment and responsibility in all employees.

Two of the companies, namely, TPC Ltd, Tanzania and Companhia de Sena, Mozambique agreed to implement Business Awareness Programmes. This type of programme has been shown to play a significant role in the development of High Performance Work Organizations (HPWO) as defined by the ILO (1998). According to Ashton and Sung (2002) HPWOs are characterized by high-performance work practices which include, amongst others, commitment from management and workers, mutual trust between management and workers, a genuine approach to lifelong learning, opportunities for development, shared values and objectives, reward for high performance, etc. It has been shown that these practices lead to win-win situations whereby companies benefit from increased productivity and employees gain through improved quality of working life whilst developing their capabilities and range of skills.

Other capacity building programmes can then build upon the solid foundation of these awareness campaigns. The BAP needed to fulfill expectations at the following levels:

Management

- ♦ Increase in productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness
- ♦ Reduction in production costs
- ♦ Improvement in product and work quality “Do it right the first time”
- ♦ Increased production
- ♦ Increased loyalty of workers to the company (respect for company property)
- ♦ Increased basic knowledge as a preparation for skills improvement

Investors and Management

- ♦ Contribution of workers at all levels, including staff and management, to increase profitability

Workers

- ♦ Understanding how the business works
- ♦ Transparency of business operators
- ♦ Benefit from bonuses on profits

Workers, Management and Investors alike

- ♦ Harmonised interaction and interests of both labour and capital

2.2 Objectives of BAP

Within the above theoretical framework the awareness programme was designed to cater for this absence of a business culture, the necessity to change the organizational culture, and the desire to encourage positive attitudes. The objectives of this programme were to share with employees a full understanding of how a business organisation needs to work in order to survive, progress and generate value for shareholders, employees and customers. The BAP programme is specially targeted at persons who have lived for an extended period in an environment in which productivity and profitability were preoccupations far removed from their daily routines. The programme was designed to create a work attitude that would be in tune with the demands of a modern business organization.

The specific objectives were defined as follows:

- To develop knowledge and understanding of the business environment of the company
- To develop positive attitudes to work among all employees
- To identify 10-15 participants of the BAP to follow a one-week programme focusing on the content, the training methodology and facilitation techniques.

2.3 Design of the BAP

The awareness programme was divided into three modules:

- Brief history of the company
- Present business environment, organization, structure, financing, product, markets
- Future prospects

Module 1: History of the company

This module sets the scene by describing the historical context of the company. The ownership during different periods is described. Periods of private and public ownership are clearly explained. Factors leading to the current ownership and management structure are identified.

Module 2: How a private organisation works

This module discusses the steps in the creation and operation of a private company (with emphasis on clarifying and illustrating basic concepts, and making parallels with the situation of the company). It covers the implications of competition for a business, how and why profits are distributed, benefits of privatisation, how employees can contribute to the success of the company.

Key topics

- Creation of a Business
- Competition
- Production Costs
- Company Income, Profit and Loss
- Working Efficiently

Competition

- Competitors
- Price, cost of production
- Quality
- Production targets
- Factors influencing price, quality, production costs including materials, machines, employees

Company Income

- Source of company income

- Use of company income
- Losses (causes and consequences)
- Profit (causes and benefits)
- Distribution of profit
- Use of reserves

Working Efficiently

- Definition of the factors that affect efficiency
- Role of management
- Rules and regulations
- Industrial relations

Module 3: the Company as a Business Organisation

This module looks at the present situation of and challenges for the company through a blend between management vision and targets and employees' contribution towards the attainment of these targets.

- Restructuring
- How competitive can the company be?
- Challenges / Vision of the company for its future
- Employees' contribution to the success of the company

2.4 Training Methodology

The methodology was devised by RASITC and was inspired by the 6M Simulation project of National Institute for Personnel Research, South Africa (NPI, 1989). The BAP is a very interactive programme involving the use of three-dimensional models, transparencies, pre-course and post course assessments, group discussions and brainstorming, role-playing and demonstrations. This programme is specially adapted for persons with low

education/literacy level. It is based on the notion that learning is a continuous process that contributes to team-building, improved communications and increased productivity. The originality of this programme is that it can easily be run in remote locations with little or no modern facilities (e.g. absence of electricity does not prevent the implementation). It can also be adapted for use in de-centralized training over wide geographical areas. This type of campaign can only be carried out in a company where the management is committed to sharing business information at all levels. This transparency of information is essential for the success of such a programme.

2.5 Target audience

Ultimately, all employees of a company should follow the BAP. Pilot groups were chosen for the preliminary project, followed by specific groups of employees from whom in-company trainers were selected. These selected employees then followed a Train-the-Trainer programme and helped in the translation of the materials into the local languages, namely Swahili for TPC and Portuguese or Sena (a local dialect) for Companhia de Sena. BAP in-house trainers were then able to take full ownership of the training.

2.6 Delivery

Delivery at TPC was scheduled and carried out to plan as shown in the Table 1 below.

Table 1 Schedule for BAP at TPC Ltd.

February 2001	Training of 24 Tanzanian managers and staff
April 2001	Training of 76 managers and staff Selection of 16 BAP trainers from the 100 persons trained.
May 2001	1-week Train-the-Trainer Programme. Training materials translated into Kiswahili by a sub-group of trainers.
July 2001	Monitoring by RASITC of BAP training carried out by Tanzanian trainers plus a 1-day refresher training for the BAP trainers.
December 2001	Final monitoring and evaluation of BAP

Delivery at Companhia de Sena was carried out as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2 Schedule for BAP at Companhia de Sena

September-October 2002	Pilot runs for 2 groups of 16 \pm persons
October 2002	Training of 2 groups of 16 \pm persons in the revised and adapted version. Selection of potential trainers and translators for the train the trainer
November-December 2002	BAP one-week Train the trainer programme
February 2003 onwards	Implementation of the training programme in Portuguese (official language) and Sena (regional dialect) by the selected trainers
Mid-2003	BAP monitoring consultancy visit by RASITC

3. Design, production and delivery of capacity-building programmes for TPC Ltd, Tanzania

Elaboration of further training programmes is based upon information gathered through the in-country TNA described in the Action Plan of November 2002 (RASITC, 2002). These programmes build upon the solid foundations of the BAP.

Three training initiatives were proposed:

- Management programmes
- Training Attachment for the Training Manager of TPC in Mauritius on the theme of “Training Management and Evaluation”
- Agronomy programmes

3.1 Management Programmes

3.1.1 Objectives

To update management skills at senior and middle management levels in order to equip the participants with modern business management skills.

3.1.2 Design:

A three-phase programme intended for Tanzanian senior and middle management was devised and delivered as follows:

Module 1 Leadership and Communications

- Communication in the Organisation
- Interpersonal Communication Skills
- Team Leadership
- Motivation

Module 2 Change Management and Business Strategy

- Change management
- Business Strategy
- Achieving Objectives: planning, organising and implementing

- Creativity, problem-solving tools and decision-making.

Module 3 Human resource management

- Managing resources
- Human Resource Management Systems for:
 - (1) Personnel records
 - (2) Recruitment, selection and induction
 - (3) Training and Development
 - (4) Performance Management
 - (5) Reward Management

3.1.2 Delivery

Around 40 people were trained according to the schedule given below:

September 2001: Module 1

October 2001: Module 2

November 2001: Module 3

3.1.3 Evaluation

Course participants were assessed through short assignments, participation in group case studies and submission of a project concerning their department at the end of the course.

3.2 Training Attachment in Mauritius on the theme of “Training Management and Evaluation”

A one-week attachment was arranged for Mr. Michaël Mtenga, Training Manager of TPC Ltd. It took place from 18 to 29 March 2002.

The attachment programme covered:

- Change management,

- Training needs analysis
- Visits to training centres
- Visit to Deep River Beau Champ S.E.

3.3 Agronomy programmes

Introduction

The aim of this capacity-building programme is to equip young graduates at the start of their careers with the technical skills required for them to become effective assistants to the Area Managers who are the senior Tanzanian managers in the Agricultural Department. This programme was offered to newly appointed junior managers, as well as to existing staff.

Design

The agronomy programme was divided into five modules. Emphasis was placed on key issues of concern to TPC such as the problems of irrigation, salinity, sodicity, and white grubs.

Module 1

Overview of Sugar Cane Agronomy

- Introduction to sugar cane
- Factors affecting the growth of sugar cane
- The sugar cane plant (botany, physiology)
- Plant-water relations

Module 2

Overview of irrigation and drainage

- Water requirements of sugar cane (rain fed vs. irrigated conditions, full and deficit irrigation).
- Different irrigation systems, efficiencies.
- Methods of irrigation/scheduling with particular reference to TPC's conditions
- TPC cane husbandry procedures linked to irrigation (ripening, harvesting)

Module 3

Sugar Cane Husbandry/Soils and Fertilization

- TPC cane husbandry procedures (land preparation, planting)
- Soils (soil structure, salinity, sodicity), fertilization

Module 4

Plant protection

- Diseases and their causal agents
- Disease management
- Pest management
- White grubs especially *Cochliotis melolonoides*, termites, borers and sap sucking pests

Module 5

Weed Agronomy/Mechanization

- Weed agronomy including herbicides used in Tanzania and means of application.
- Mechanization and transport

Delivery

Module 1: May 2003

Module 2: June/July 2003

Modules 3-5: to be determined

4. Design of capacity building programmes for Marromeu, Mozambique

4.1 Proposed programmes

Two training programmes were proposed:

- Training in Supervision for field supervisors (Kapataz)
- Management and Supervision Programme

4.1.1 Training in Supervision for field supervisors (Kapataz)

Objectives:

The objective was to provide basic supervisory training in Portuguese for two groups of around twenty field supervisors.

Design

Modules in the following around were proposed:

- Leadership
- Communication skills

- Planning and organising work
- Motivating workers
- Control
- Team work and team leading
- Positive discipline

4.1.2 Management and Supervision

Objectives:

To provide sound initial training in management and supervision to two groups of 20 Mozambican junior and middle management personnel, so that they may be groomed to take over from expatriates on expiration of their contracts.

Design

Alternative 1:

A three-phase programme, two phases of which can be delivered at Marromeu and the final phase at Maputo, Beira or Marromeu according to the client's wishes. Each phase will amount to 40 hours' training (3 x 40 = 120 hours in all). The programme would cover key areas of management, including:

Module 1

- Communication in the Organisation
- Interpersonal Communication Skills
- Team Leadership

- Motivation

Module 2

- Change Management
- Achieving Objectives: planning, organising and implementing
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Quality Management

Module 3

- Basic finance for non-financial Managers
- Human Resource Management Systems for:
 - Personnel records
 - Recruitment, selection and induction
 - Training and Development
 - Performance Management
 - Reward Management

5. Remarks on Mtibwa, Tanzania and Sucrivoire, Ivory Coast

Design and delivery of awareness and capacity-building programmes were discontinued for these two companies for reasons beyond our control.

Mtibwa

The management of Mtibwa informed us that they do not have funding for training for the next few years. Their interest in further identifying training needs or making a training plan is dormant for the time being. Consequently, research has gone only as far as the preliminary phase of the project (literature survey) and RASITC has not yet been involved in the design, production and delivery of training programmes for Mtibwa.

Sucrivoire, Ivory Coast

The in-country TNA was carried out in April 2002 and was reported on in the Action Plan of November 2002 (RASITC, 2002). At this point in time investment in human resources through specialized training was high on the list of business objectives for Sucrivoire. Unfortunately the business plan has had to be put on hold because of the eruption of violence and civil unrest in the country. This began with an armed uprising of rebels in the North of the country in September 2002 and expanded with the emergence of two other groups of rebels in the West in November 2002. French peacekeeping troops were sent to the Ivory Coast to maintain law and order and thousands of foreign nationals were evacuated.

Heavy fighting continued for several months despite the signature of the Marcoussis Accord, at the Summit of the Heads of State held in France in January 2003. On 5 April 2003 a Government of National Reconciliation was inaugurated but it is struggling to maintain order in a country that has been torn apart by the conflict. At the time of writing the country is split into two, which means that supplies for the sugar complexes (especially Borotou in the North), as well as the transportation and sales of the sugar produced are seriously compromised. In these extremely difficult circumstances it is highly unlikely that the company will be able to invest in capacity building in the near future.

6. Evaluation and discussion

The classical methodology for evaluating training programmes (as shown in Table 3) was used for the BAP (Kirkpatrick, 1998). Level 1 evaluation was devised and implemented for the awareness and capacity-building programmes. This was done through an evaluation questionnaire to determine the immediate reaction of participants to the course.

Table 3 Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation

Reactions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you like about the course?	Level 1
Knowledge and Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did participants learn that was useful?	Level 2
Behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What changes of behaviour occurred based on what participants learned?	Level 3
Results/Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did the change in behaviour positively affect the organisation?	Level 4

Analysis of results for the reaction-level questionnaires Mozambique has shown that there was an overall positive reaction to the course. Most participants found the programme to be interesting and informative.

To assess business awareness before and after training the trainers used pre-course and post-course assessment questionnaires. These assessments correspond to Level 2 evaluation.

It must be noted that this course is not a capacity-building programme and that it is therefore not primarily intended to improve the job performance of participants. However, as an awareness programme meant to develop knowledge and understanding of the business environment of the company, it may indeed have an indirect impact on job performance through the creation of positive attitudes amongst employees to their jobs and to the organization.

Level 3 evaluation refers to changes in behaviour. Indicators of attitude change that were expected from the programme would be greater responsibility shown by all, greater efficiency (reduction in wastage/theft, proper maintenance and storage of tools, better time-keeping), improved quality of work, improved communication and cooperation with management (constructive suggestions, communication flow, fewer strikes, etc.). This type of evaluation was obtained through feedback from the management teams. Management commitment to investing in training has enabled evaluation and monitoring by RASITC to be carried out systematically through a series of questionnaires, meetings and briefings. BAP trainers of TPC gave the following comments as feedback:

- the BAP helped unpopular decisions get through peacefully
- created business mindsets
- improved cooperation with management
- employees who are yet to be trained are eagerly awaiting their turn
- employees are making constructive suggestions on how work efficiency can be improved in their respective departments.

Feedback from management on the running of the BAP by in-company trainers in Marromeu since February 2003 has been very useful for a distance monitoring of the programme before RASITC consultants carry out an on-site monitoring, scheduled before the end of 2003. This feedback indicates that the training is meeting its objectives and is having an impact on behaviour and motivation. Those who have participated so far show a great level of interest in the training programme and have been highly involved in-group discussions to come up with ideas and to discuss about their jobs. Besides, the training gives them a chance to really explain to others what their job is about and how important they are to the production chain. The high level of motivation can also be measured by the punctuality of participants to the course.

Level 4 evaluation refers to long-term impact and effects. This can only be measured after the programmes have been fully implemented. However, feedback from participants shows that they believe the training is going to have a positive effect on their job. According to a BAP Management Report (SENA, 2003) participants have declared that the training:

- Makes clear the current financial situation of the company
- Explains the plans of the company
- Shows the importance of workers to the success of the company
- Explains the need for efficiency at work

Information will have to be updated regularly and systematically to remain relevant and achieve maximum impact. Since a lot of the information provided in the programme,

especially in Module 3, is related to the present business environment and targets of the company, the training department and BAP trainers will need close collaboration and support from the other departments. Moreover, running this programme on the scale of the company and possibly extending it to the community will entail a lot of logistics, including the release of employees to act as BAP trainers. This complex organisation will also require the commitment and support of heads of departments.

As the CEOs of TPC Ltd and Companhia de Sena are firm believers in training they have given their full backing to all the training projects and it is therefore expected that the impact of these programmes will be positive. On-going monitoring is under the responsibility of the Training Manager, Mr. Michaël Mtenga at TPC Ltd. and the Training Coordinator, Mr Isaac Muchenje at Companhia de Sena.

Recent studies of HPWO (Applebaum, *et al.* (2000) have used a broad range of measures of performance and productivity including employee satisfaction, employee stress, labour turnover rates, customer satisfaction, etc and have shown a crucial link between learning and performance. The hypothesis is that employees respond to these practices by developing higher levels of commitment to the organization, and higher levels of motivation. It appears that the awareness and capacity-building initiatives described in this report will contribute significantly to making TPC Ltd and Companhia de Sena high-performance workplaces.

7. Suggestions for future work

The initiatives described in this report form part of the business plans of the companies involved in this study. All the companies have strategic plans that are highly ambitious and will require continuous investment in people. Training needs will change as the companies mature and evolve. The following list of future initiatives is far from exhaustive:

- further capacity building in Management Skills and Agronomy at TPC Ltd.
- the design of induction programmes for new recruits for TPC Ltd and Companhia de Sena
- advanced training courses in Mauritius for the most promising employees of all the companies
- BAP and capacity-building programmes for Sucrivoire if ever the unfavourable situation can be turned around.

It is hoped that work can be undertaken to develop the BAP model for other sugar-producing countries such as Madagascar (with translation into French) and also BAP could be envisaged for use in other sectors.

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