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Quality TVET for the successful training-to- employment transition of Africa's youth

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Quality TVET for the successful training-to- employment transition of Africa's youth

Thematic report based on the 2nd Regional Workshop for Exchange between Vocational Training Actors in Africa and their Mutual Strengthening - Nairobi, 18-20 June 2019

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FOREWORD

This report constitutes the analytical synthesis of the 2nd Regional Workshop for Exchange between Vocational Training Actors in Africa and their Mutual Strengthening, held in Nairobi from 18-20 June 2019, on the theme of “Quality TVET for the successful training-to-employment transition of Africa’s youth”.

It was organized under the technical coordination of the Dakar-based Africa office of UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO-IIEP Dakar), in partnership with the Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency (LuxDev) and La Francophonie’s Institute for Education and Training (IFEF). The workshop received support from the European Commission’s VET Toolbox and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

This forum built upon the lessons learned from the first regional exchange workshop of this kind held in Dakar in March 2018, on public-private partnerships in vocational training, of which the wealth of cross-reflections and shared experiences were committed to a thematic report similar to this one.

The Nairobi regional workshop focused on the quality of management and the management of quality in TVET systems for the successful training-to-employment transition of Africa’s youth. It was organized around three crucial thematic areas for which the continent continues to seek out the best strategies: (i) certification mechanisms that cater for all forms of vocational training and skills acquisition; (ii) enhancing the performance of vocational training centres (VTCs), specifically measured against learners’ workplace integration and the improvement of corporate competitiveness; and (iii) monitoring the training-to-work transition of youth to make the provision of training more relevant. The second regional workshop did not systematically apply a public-private partnership (PPP) filter to proceedings, rather using specific aspects or processes of the value chain as entry points. However, PPPs in the area of certification was included as a key theme as it was not covered in the first workshop.

The organizers’ aim is that this report will refine understanding of the stakes; explore the issues, challenges and prospects for vocational training in Africa; and share country approaches, experiences and practices, being firmly convinced of the opportunities that exist for mutual learning among countries and systems based on different traditions. The policy and technical recommendations that have emerged from this wealth of experience constitute a package of measures to be implemented so that TVET can better respond to the expectations of its clients, both individual and collective.

UNESCO-IIEP Dakar, LuxDev and IFEF thus hope that this publication may be of use not only to “lay the bricks of the house of progress” in TVET (to use the words of one workshop participant), but also as a tool for communication among countries for further exchange and networking, thus reinforcing dialogue, both horizontal and vertical. Such debate is central to improving global knowledge about the quality of management and the management of quality in TVET, and to enable reforms that will address efficiently the challenges of youth employment and economic development.

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This report was written by Barnaby Rooke, an international education expert and senior reporter of the Nairobi workshop, with the support of Léonie Marin of the UNESCO-IIEP Dakar. It was reviewed by the members of the organizing committee: Barbara Murtin and Léna Watt (IFEI); Naceur Chraïti, Jérôme Gérard and Ibrahima Diallo (UNESCO-IIEP Dakar); and Alexis Hoyaux (LuxDev).

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The success of the workshop is above all due to the participation of the 130 participants from 31 African countries, as much through the presentation of their concrete experiences related to the themes covered, as through their active participation in the plenary debates and group work in Nairobi. The organizers warmly thank these participants which include key vocational training actors from both the public and private sectors, from local and central levels; representatives of the main pan-African and international vocational training networks/organizations and regional cooperation organizations; members of specialized technical organizations and research institutes.

The organizers also thank the experts and moderators for their valuable contributions, and for providing thematic guidance and perspectives with respect to the workshop process: Serge Coté, TVET expert – Canada; Filipe Miguel Cassapo, SENAI – Brazil; Amadou Ndiaye, Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training and Craftsmanship (Ministère de l'Emploi de la Formation professionnelle et de l'Artisanat - MEPPA) – Senegal; and Felix Sabate, education and training consultant with IIEP-Buenos Aires – Argentina.

Thanks also to the development partners that facilitated the combined presence of such an assembly, by facilitating the travel of many national participants to Nairobi through their different offices in Africa: the bilateral cooperation agencies of Germany (GIZ), Belgium (Enabel), France (AFD), Luxembourg (LuxDev) and Switzerland (DDC); the Belgian NGO VVOB and the UN agencies ILO, UNICEF and UNESCO. In addition to the development partners, the organizers praise the commitment of those countries that financed the participation of their national officers, such as Botswana, The Gambia, Ghana, Mauritius and Namibia.

Finally, they wish to thank all those who contributed to the perfect logistical and material organization of the workshop: UNESCO-IIEP Dakar's administrative team, under the leadership of Adja Bineta Nguer, which coordinated planning for the Nairobi workshop; the team at UNESCO's East Africa regional office in Nairobi, under the coordination of Teeluck Bhuwanee; as well as the administrative staff of LuxDev (managing consultants and service providers) and IFEI (travel logistics). Without them, the workshop would not have produced such extensive exchanges.

INTRODUCTION

Youth employment is one of the main challenges facing the African continent. The numbers speak for themselves. Young people between the ages of 15 to 24 make up 20 per cent of the African population and represent 41 per cent of the unemployed. Seventy per cent of youth that do have jobs are doing work categorised as vulnerable employment. In this context of massive ‘hidden unemployment’, the number of people of working age is set to increase by approximately 450 million by 2035. According to the 2017 Africa Competitiveness Report produced by the World Bank, the African Development Bank (ADB) and the World Economic Forum, if job creation trends remain unchanged, only 100 million of them might find opportunities for decent work.

Given this situation, it is imperative that the development of TVET on a continental level, over and above the quantitative increase in the number of participants in lifelong learning, must result in an improvement in the management and quality of TVET systems.

Most of the reforms of TVET systems by African countries place an important focus on the management of the quality of training. However, quality assurance systems are still not considered sufficiently effective by vocational training actors. To be successful in meeting this challenge, the quality of training and the excellence of the centres’ management must be given legitimacy based on the successful and sustainable transition of learners from TVET to the labour market.

The issue of the training-to-employment transition has a direct impact on the beneficiaries of both basic and ongoing training. This is influenced in part by external factors such as the structure and dynamics of labour markets that are not covered in this report. It also stems from internal system factors, such as the distribution of roles between central directorates and training centres and institutes, the alignment of qualifications and certification with the needs of the market, and the quantitative and qualitative regulation of training provision on the basis of labour market demand. This report will look at three key questions that were raised:

- What certification mechanisms will guarantee the quality of learning achievements and their alignment with economic needs in terms of skills? In addition to the courses offered by vocational training centres (VTCs), the African context provides multiple and varied opportunities for vocational training, including through internships and apprenticeships, be they traditional, renewed, or dual. Qualification frameworks and systems, certification processes and the recognition of prior learning, and the involvement of the private sector in these steps, are several elements likely to ensure that learners obtain credible certificates that give businesses the confidence to hire them, and learners the flexibility to grow professionally in the context of lifelong learning.

- Which strategies and tools will enable improvements in the performance of vocational training institutes and centres in terms of the professional integration of learners? Among the important elements leading to excellence in management practices at VTCs in Africa, the workshop underlined the importance of strategic planning, effective and transformational leadership, results-based management, and the selection of VTCs' key internal and external performance indicators. Further points include the ongoing need to work with business to develop training approaches related to the corporate world and make content more relevant, active support for the professional integration of graduates, and teaching entrepreneurship skills.
- How to create a proficient monitoring mechanism that can inform both ongoing TVET quality improvements and the regulation of training provision? Professional integration monitoring mechanisms are not currently widespread. They require the acquisition of data collection tools that are affordable and the active participation of the players involved (VTCs, youth and data analysts). When they exist, and if their outputs are disseminated among the public at large and stakeholders, including parents, secondary school teachers and youth, much value can be found in their outputs in terms of job trends. Information shared broadly with civil society and the education community will enable both the quantitative regulation – parents and youth will tend to choose vocational streams leading to jobs that are in demand – and the qualitative regulation of training provision, highlighting vocational streams undergoing growth or contraction. In countries where prospective labour market studies covering both remunerated work and self-employment are lacking, the analysis of graduates' employment and further education rates may compensate the lack of updated information on jobs.

*leadership
partnership
youth employability
soft-skills training
quality management entrepreneurship
joint certification processes training of trainers
TVET systems PPP workplace integration
renewed apprenticeships value chains
training-to-employment transition
occupational standards
legal frameworks*

These three areas do not cover every aspect of TVET quality and performance. However, the positive practices presented by participating countries provide food for thought that can contribute to improving the employability of Africa's youth and the competitiveness of its markets.

QUALITY FOUNDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE TRAINING-TO-WORK TRANSITION

CERTIFICATION MECHANISMS		STRATEGIES & TOOLS FOR VTC PERFORMANCE			
NQF/RQF		Management excellence		Training with businesses	
Build enabling conditions (robust TVET policies, institutional anchorage, partnership frameworks, and NQF mechanisms) for valuable qualifications	Determine a certification process or mechanism based on the identification of skills needs, of which the NQF is the end result	Develop business plans and performance contracts for VTCs, for greater strategic, pedagogical, administrative and financial management autonomy	Promote public-private partnerships in training provision for improved results in terms of the training-to-work transition	Define skill sets, CBT courses, and supervisor/mentor training standards and regulations, for renewed apprenticeships, dual training and internships	Reinvest professional taxes in ongoing training and apprenticeships effectively, by creating a national vocational training fund
Recognition of prior learning		Support to integration		Key Performance Indicators	
Adapt and decentralize the RPL process, to give access to informal and non-formal sector candidates with lower literacy levels	Design RPL guidelines and a framework aligned with the NQF, to offer learners a flexible and modular approach, and employers with credible skills assessment tools	Provide career guidance services to learners, preferably through dedicated units within VTCs with full-time staff	Support the spirit of entrepreneurship and self-employment by demand-driven skills targeting, and entrepreneurship and microfinance modules	Use both employment and self-employment rates, growth rates in corporate competitiveness, and the comparative levels of each, as measures of TVET's external efficiency	Regularly monitor trainee and employer satisfaction levels through sector-specific dialogue fora or periodic surveys
PPPs in certification		MONITORING INTEGRATION			
		Training-to-work M & E mechanisms		Perspectives for data use	
Involve the private sector at every step of the certification process, including the identification of labour needs and the definition of occupational standards and skills profiles	Delegate steps in sector-specific certification arrangements to autonomous private sector bodies, particularly where competency-based qualifications are involved	Build a monitoring culture and develop TVET graduate monitoring tools to track job creation on a sector-by-sector and region-by-region basis	Harness ICT solutions to improve M&E systems, in terms of their coverage, cost, reliability, frequency and usability	Adjust training content to cover current and projected future labour market needs in terms of skills, where possible based on labour market research, strategic analysis or private-sector observatory monitoring	Communicate horizontally to the broader public, stakeholders, learners, parents, teachers and businesses, through the media and schools, to provide youth with helpful career guidance

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	African Development Bank
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
CBT	Competency-based training
DP	Development partners
ERP	Enterprise resource planning
FNQ	National Quality Foundation (Brazil)
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HR	Human resources
ICT	Information and communication technology
IFEF	Institut de la Francophonie pour l'Education et la Formation
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
KPI	Key performance indicator
LuxDev	Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NQF	National qualification framework
PPP	Public-private partnership
RPL	Recognition of prior learning
RQF	Regional qualifications framework
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SENAI	National Industrial Apprenticeship Service (Brazil)
TQM	Total quality management
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VET	Vocational education and training
VT	Vocational training
VTC	Vocational training centre
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union

1. Certification Mechanisms

Improving the recognition of professional qualifications has been one of the main issues in vocational-training reform in Africa, for HR management by firms, and full access to the labour market by workers based on the full recognition of their education and learning. To achieve this goal may require an overhaul of the rules that govern how qualifications are granted, a reassessment of how responsibilities are shared, and a change in the way in which training courses in VTCs and businesses are devised and delivered. Yet without close collaboration between governmental bodies and partners in the labour market, it is impossible to fulfil this goal. Each country should be able to determine the partnership types and structures to be implemented or strengthened, taking into account their context and the human and financial resources available.

Professional certification involves issuing a document, following an evaluation process, which attests to a person's mastery of skills, aptitudes and knowledge needed to practice a profession or perform an activity associated with a professional field. The certification can therefore be based on a clear list of targeted skills (occupational standards) and a rigorous process of assessment. It should be possible for professional certifications to be issued either by the private sector, including companies and private schools, or by the public sector entities like ministries and governmental bodies.

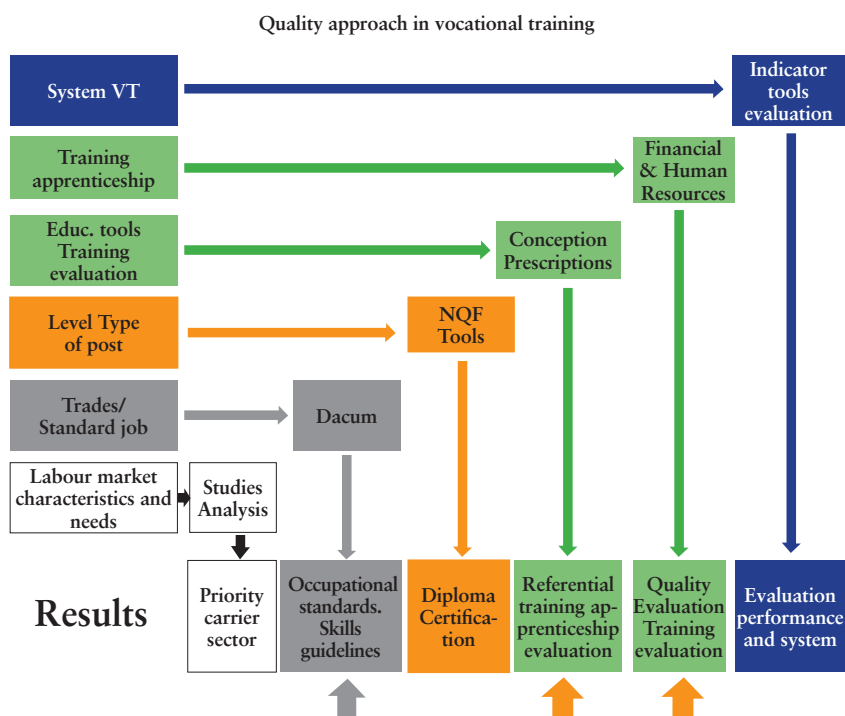
African TVET players have identified several problems likely to affect the recognition and therefore the value of professional qualifications:

- Lack of regulation of diplomas issued by the large number of public and private entities;
- Abundance of types of certificates;
- Insufficient validation of the skills imparted by training programmes, because of the poor definition of partnership frameworks;
- Lack of coherence and clarity in certification levels;
- Absence or weakness in the definition of performance norms and standards of training courses for targeted professions;
- Difficulty of evaluating skills;
- Absence of recognition of prior learning systems for professionals.

States define the legal and regulatory rules governing diplomas and certification at national level.

There should be only one diploma issued for any given profession. This should be awarded after an evaluation has demonstrated beyond any doubt that an individual possesses all the skills required to practice the target profession. A state diploma could be complemented with a skills inventory or diploma addendum, similar to the Europass Diploma Supplement. This more clearly communicates the content and scope of a diploma, which is important to employers.

A national vocational certification system usually covers all formal diplomas issued under the authority of a governmental body. This system relies on the definition of norms that clearly define the level of skills acquired and certified by a diploma. Jobs or occupations are analysed and classified according to their characteristics and complexity. Once established, such norms should be used to determine the level of a diploma. Such vocational certification frameworks are aligned with those of basic and higher education. Pathways are usually included for transitions between different training levels (general, vocational, higher) with a clear vision of the requirements needed for certification at each level. A system of credits defined according to the classification adopted by a country (level of complexity, level of autonomy required to practice an occupation, level of general knowledge ...) enables, for instance, to classify the job of baker on the same level as that of carpenter or hairdresser. These skills can be acquired in various ways including institutional education, on-the-job training, and personal or professional experience. The value of state diplomas relates directly to their recognition on the labour market and potential for providing access to jobs and increasing the professional autonomy of their holders.



Source : Serge Coté's workshop presentation

As a certificate should be the reflection of the quality of the training received, the main concern will be to enhance the quality of training and teaching. There are six stages of a vocational training system that can influence the end quality of certifications: (i) Analysis of the labour market; (ii) Analysis of jobs and professions; (iii) Definition of levels of training and diplomas; (iv) Development of reference systems for education, training and evaluation; (v) Completion of training or education, (v) Skills assessment practices of quality; (vi) Evaluation of the system's overall performance.

Evaluation and the consequent certification should be the final phases of a training cycle that starts with the identification of needs. An analysis of the quality of the outcome of each of these stages may be considered a good approach to identify the most important deficiencies and priorities requiring intervention.

Enhancing the quality and value of certification implies two specific types of measures: (i) Revising and reinforcing the management and levels of evaluations and certification to strengthen the coherence between education, training and employment; (ii) Engaging with the private sector for companies to validate and legitimize the certification process. This legitimacy may in turn constitute the starting point to develop a mechanism for the recognition of prior learning.

1.1 National / Regional Qualification Frameworks

The development and management of national and regional qualification systems should consider all learners (at all levels, including those that are not enrolled) and all training types (formal, informal and non-formal), and reflect the distribution of jobs (formal and informal) in all economic sectors (including public, private and NGO jobs). Its primary goal is to organize a training process that reflects the organization and evolution of employment. It is a mechanism that aims to promote learners' professional integration into and mobility within the labour market. This raises questions in terms of who should be responsible for assessments, and how to improve the recognition of qualifications.

Managing Evaluation and Certification Systems

The plethora of players, the obsolescence of training programmes, and the lack of human capacity and technical and financial resources faced by many countries, has encouraged companies to turn to VTCs. This has resulted in the trialling of joint VTC-business assessments, with on-the-job evaluation of skills that complement that of official programmes. These innovations provide an opportunity to structure the involvement of businesses, which can result in the initiation and acceleration of reforms.

The overhaul of certification models should take a number of factors into account such as the availability of professional standards developed in partnership with industry specialists, the organization of skills within a programme, the organization of quality control devolved to state bodies and their capacity to assume responsibility for the evaluation process in partnership with businesses, the types of partnership set up, the availability of guidelines for the delivery of training and evaluation, and finally, the level of available human, financial, and material resources.

The context specific to each country dictates which approach for managing evaluation and certification is most appropriate to improve the efficiency, accessibility and recognition of the certification system (and therefore the value of diplomas). There is no doubt that sharing responsibilities between state, public and private training and learning institutions, through full or partial delegation, introducing industry-specific evaluation centres that are either state-managed or run as public-private partnerships, and transferring responsibility for evaluation and certification to partners in the labour market (as in Switzerland and Australia) are several avenues worth exploring. Furthermore, developing models to recognize prior learning will also provide access to a form of certification for many active workers.

Country Example: National Qualifications Framework - Tunisia

The development and management of the skills and qualifications system is one of the goals of the Tunisian reform. It aims to create a mechanism reflecting the social and economic characteristics of the country that values individuals while seeking to achieve success in complementarity with the other components of the education system (basic education, general education, higher education). Tunisian TVET must be capable of producing skills according to international standards that can respond to the needs of both local and international labour markets.

This has led to the operationalization of the National Classification of Qualifications (Classification Nationale des Qualifications - CNQ) and to it being considered as a reference framework that links the diplomas issued by all players (basic education, general education, vocational training, and higher education) with their corresponding levels of skills. The CNQ selected seven qualification levels and six level descriptors, formulated in terms of learning outcomes.

The key success factors include the partnership between all involved to improve the governance of the qualifications management system, the set-up of an information system, the elaboration of a social compact that relies on vocational education to target medium-level qualifications, and the creation of a documentary system that recognizes the learning outcomes of both formal and informal training streams.

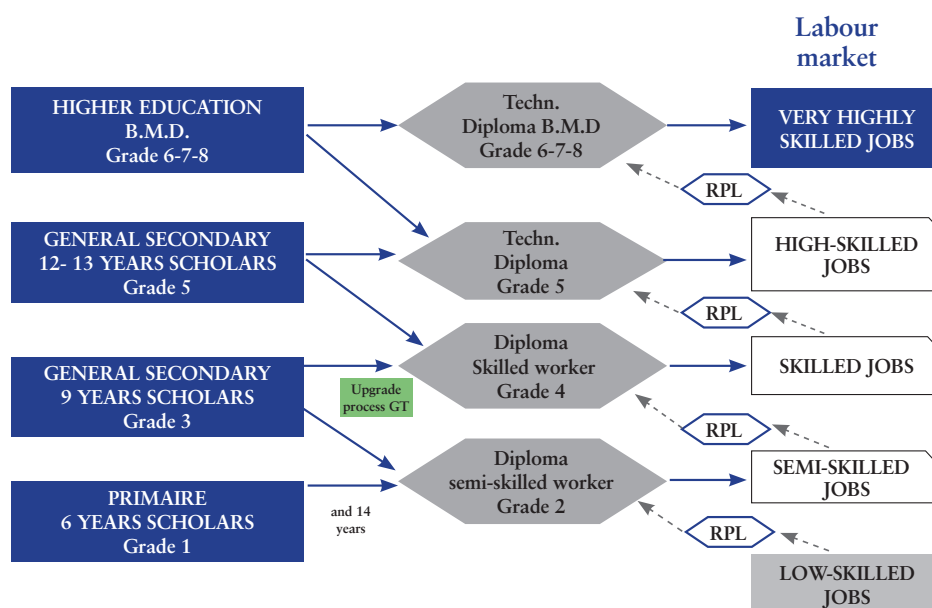
The main challenges faced in its implementation relates to training engineering (transition from a modular training approach to a certification approach), the internal management and organization of training institutes, partnerships and the lack of cooperation by all stakeholders, the regional delegation of the management of qualifications, and the absence of an information system.

In many countries, the correct balance between the role of the state, VTCs and companies in the management of the evaluation process is still elusive. The private sector is likely to adopt a more proactive and central role in the formulation of the evaluation process and propose solutions that include on-the-job assessments. Several countries, including Nigeria and Ghana, rely on industry bodies to register workers deemed to be appropriately skilled, effectively centralizing the burden of certificate and skills recognition for each economic sector. A majority of players agree on the potential benefits of sharing responsibilities, as well as on the need for such a process to take place in a climate of mutual trust, supported by clear collaboration frameworks and memoranda of understanding.

Strengthening Links between Education-Training and Employment

Generally speaking, adopting a tool like a national qualification or certification framework (NQF) will help strengthen the link between education-training and employment. NQFs are instruments that countries use to revise, reform, and consolidate their education and training systems. They promote greater recognition and coordination of programmes of general education and vocational training as well as their certification, and strengthen the alignment between educational and training pathways and employment. In addition, NQFs based on common foundations that are adopted by several countries further ease the mobility of learners and workers with diplomas, and allow for the mutual recognition of vocational training certifications.

Example of an 8-Level National Qualifications Framework



Source : Serge Côté's workshop presentation

For countries considering adopting a qualifications framework, or updating an existing one, several factors critical to the success of the process have been identified by vocational training actors. A qualifications classification tool should in principle be adopted based on the analysis of occupation types, using shared criteria and a common language, regardless of the type of training or education followed by the learner (level descriptors). Engagement of all public and private actors is deemed crucial for the successful acceptance of the tool and its smooth implementation. The framework should include a determination of norms and standards for skills, jobs, training and the assessment of skills. The framework should focus on and reflect a quality-oriented approach to training and evaluation. It is advisable to design modular programmes, based on skills that reflect professional standards.

Country Example: The National TVET Qualification Framework – Ghana

The National TVET qualifications framework (NTVETQF) is born of several initiatives including the passing of the Education Regulatory Bill, the establishment of a TVET Service Directorate at the Ministry of Education, and the conducting of Certificate II core subject examinations by the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEx). These are critical to making TVET more attractive to the youth, students, parents, employers and industries in Ghana. The NTVETQF is intended to bring occupation-oriented qualifications into a unified framework, facilitate access to further education and training, improve skill levels, define standards of practice in trades and professions, and promote and facilitate lifelong learning.

Prior to the implementation of NTVETQF, the TVET system suffered from the multiplicity of testing and certification standards, disparities in qualification standards within and among education and training sub-sectors, the absence of pathways hindering the progression and mobility of learners, unclear career pathways for TVET students, and poor alignment between skills demand and skills supply. With the TVET Qualification Framework, the educational/career progression of TVET students is facilitated.

The eight levels/stages involved in the NTVETQF are:

- Level 1: National Proficiency I
- Level 2: National Proficiency II
- Level 3: National Certificate I
- Level 4: National Certificate II
- Level 5: Higher National Diploma (HND)
- Level 6: Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech)
- Level 7: Master of Technology (M.Tech)
- Level 8: Doctor of Technology (D.Tech)

Prior to the implementation of this qualification framework, technical/vocational graduates were unable to progress to the next level because they had not covered the core subjects: English language, mathematics, integrated science, social studies and/or entrepreneurship, in addition to their trade subjects. Now, NABPTEx organizes exams for the core subjects for graduates at Level 4. Furthermore, the government is about to pass the Education Regulatory Bill which will harmonize the quality of training provided by all TVET service providers under the Ministry of Education which has approved a five-year TVET strategic plan.

The current training method/approach the government is actively pursuing is the dual TVET system. This gives the private sector the opportunity to get involved in the practical training of students, and offers plenty of on-the-job training and work experience. Through the Council for Technical and Education and Training (COTVET), the government has also developed a manual for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Common experience has shown that a NQF should clarify the available pathways in education, training or apprenticeships, define their relative degree of complexity, categorize them, and establish corresponding levels of certification. Successful implementation would then be based on the accurate identification of the sectors concerned and the corresponding expected skills. It should be based on a realistic implementation plan (including experimentation and implementation in priority sectors).

The designation of a body responsible for implementing and updating the NQF is also highly recommended, be it an administrative organization or structure, a partnership or a private body. Such a dedicated body should ensure that the elaboration process is partnership-based, that procedures and tools to analyse the level of complexity of targeted professions are developed and adapted, that sectors in urgent need or which offer the best conditions for initial success are identified, that implementation is gradual, possibly including a pilot period, and that professional standards, as well as titles and levels of training for diplomas and professional certification are validated by businesses and pedagogical experts. It would also have a role to play in the development and approval of quality standards governing education, training, and evaluation.

Enhancing the Value of Diplomas through a Quality Analysis of TVET

In the context of African countries, CBT has been adopted in most of the TVET reforms undertaken. This approach, used the world over, and where applied effectively and efficiently, may have entailed in-depth reform of vocational training, connecting it directly to the skills required to practice an occupation as defined by occupational experts. African TVET players have noted that for its implementation, it is often necessary to adapt competency-based approaches to ensure that they are realistic, concrete and feasible. “Too complex” and “too costly” are the two critiques often levelled at CBT. In countries where it has been deployed, it has required a strong political commitment that translates into the mobilization of the required budgetary resources. Other countries have adopted a gradual implementation approach and have mostly remained at the experimental stage due to weak commitment and insufficient financing. Any successful TVET reform requires the adoption of a vocational training policy whose implementation is coordinated by an engaged central authority. It also needs the tools and frameworks that will facilitate the creation of public-private partnerships with clear mutual commitments and roles, and the existence of a national qualification framework that is regularly updated to reflect economic needs in terms of professional skills.

Management of Qualifications and Assessments – Key Points

- For qualifications to gain in value, several enabling conditions need to be met to ensure that TVET systems are robust in terms of policy, institutional anchorage, partnership frameworks, and that a NQF mechanism exists. Ghana and Nigeria, for example, are in the process of adopting laws that outline such a favourable context.
- There is an emerging trend whereby the private sector (companies and sector bodies) increasingly demonstrates an interest in sharing responsibility for the appraisal of skills acquired in the context of formal, informal or non-formal careers. In Tunisia for instance, employers are involved in a process to certify VTC trainers that assess learners' achievements.

1.2 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

In the light of shared experiences, it is clear that operational RPL models, practices and approaches should reflect occupational, skill set and certification standards that are in harmony with NQFs, thus providing workers with credibility and professional mobility. Appraisal methods may be based on on-the-job observations, the submission of formal written requests, or exchanges with a jury, and involve employers and VTCs. In the context of African countries where the informal economy represents between 60 and 80 per cent of jobs, RPL is an interesting training method to improve the productivity of small and medium businesses.

The recognition of prior learning (RPL) can be defined as an approach or process through which a person can obtain official recognition of their professional skills, through certification or the award of a state diploma. The RPL issues a diploma or an official skills inventory (record). For people who are already on the labour market, the chance to obtain such a document can greatly help their career path. For recognition of prior learning to be effective, several conditions must be met:

- The availability of professional standards (occupational skills or standards)
- The adoption of a formal framework defining the RPL process and requirements
- The availability of evaluation procedures and tools (guidelines, tests, or exams) for each skill set
- The development of expertise in the appreciation and analysis of individuals' diverse experiences and accomplishments
- The availability of sufficient technical and financial wherewithal for the recognition of prior learning
- Access to skills assessment procedures
- The organization of ongoing training for situations where skills are lacking, so that candidates can be trained and acquire them

The RPL process requires access to a system of ongoing training for candidates and to facilitate this, it is generally preferable to develop programmes in modular units.

A Quality Approach to the RPL Certification Process

Most stakeholders agree that to ensure that RPL is considered legitimate by recruiters, it is important that it be governed by a regulatory framework and occupational standards and assessment processes designed in collaboration with private sector players. Therefore the private sector should contribute both to the development of skills and the certification of those skills. It is important that the technical and soft skills required of RPL candidates be the same as those expected of graduates of formal/ official technical and vocational training, and that their assessment leads to the awarding of the same qualification.

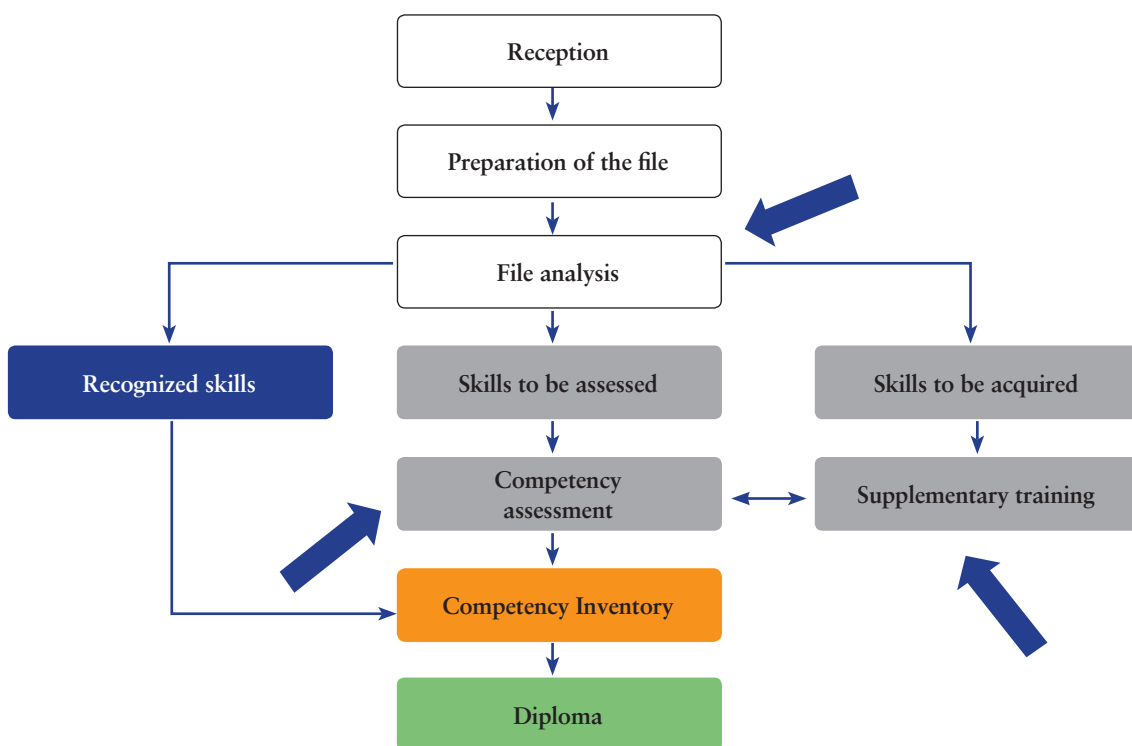
Namibia. National Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning	<i>The Namibia Training Authority (NTA) regulates TVET in Namibia. It developed a National Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in 2017. To date, more than 2,000 employees have been certified in various occupational areas and received formal certificates. NTA is also involved in the definition of standards and in identifying the training/ assessment providers. Namibia has placed industry involvement, securing financial resources to sustain TVET interventions, and long-term planning and projections at the heart of its policy.</i>
Tanzania. Roll-out and scale-up of the recognition of prior learning framework	<i>In 2009, the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) developed an RPL framework for the assessment and certification of vocational skills acquired through informal and non-formal learning, and incorporated it into its competency-based assessment approach.</i> <i>In both 2014 and 2016, a labour market survey was used to develop modules of employable skills to be evaluated. Capacity building programmes for RPL assessors, facilitators and moderators were also carried out.</i> <i>Currently, RPL is implemented in 20 occupations from four sectors: mechanics, energy, construction, and hospitality. Over 2017-2018, the number of RPL beneficiaries increased to 3,989 (3,539 males and 450 females) and 10,443 candidates were expected to be assessed, starting from June 2019. The National Skills Development Strategy (NSD) recommends the skills recognition system be integrated into the national qualifications framework.</i>
Mauritius. RPL Guidelines and strategies for different skills levels	<i>Mauritius successfully initiated RPL to certify the skills and competencies acquired in informal and non-formal contexts, by candidates working in various sectors of the economy.</i> <i>The 2016 RPL guidelines, aligned with those of SADC, provide a framework for the recognition of skills and competencies up to Level 6 of the National Qualifications Framework, thus broadening the scope of the system and making the education and training landscape more inclusive. The national RPL framework has been established to provide the structure.</i> <i>RPL implementation remains the responsibility of the Mauritius Qualifications Authority as per the Mauritius Qualifications Act of 2001, and involves the private sector.</i> <i>Different RPL strategies are proposed for Levels 2-3, Levels 4-5 and Level 6: the strategies for implementing RPL differ according to the NQF level. A range of assessment methods are available.</i>
Cameroon. Experimental RPL in the absence of occupational standards	<i>Experimental RPL sessions have been organized by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training since 2012, through an application-based appraisal process involving scrutiny by a jury.</i> <i>As Cameroon does not have a national professional qualifications framework, the diplomas issued through the RPL process have no legal value.</i> <i>In the context of public-private partnerships, the actors involved in this activity are professional colleges, teachers, vocational training centres and psychologists. The technical platforms used are those of the VTCs and professional colleges.</i>

Alignment of RPL with Labour Market Needs

In terms of RPL implementation, the main point that emerges from country experiences is that economic sectors need to be analysed and formalized, with representative trade bodies for each. This appears to be a prerequisite for business leaders to determine the skills profile needed for each job, even where no certification exists. Where required skills are clearly identified, a better understanding of the gap between those of RPL candidates and available training and qualifications should enable the planning of courses to complement their skills.

The existence of appropriate financing mechanisms for RPL should ensure that all relevant trades gain access to the certification process. In several countries (Morocco, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire and Namibia), RPL is financed in part by the vocational tax levied on wages in favour of ongoing training. This is more of an exception than a rule, and it is more common that RPL is financed either by governments or learners. This raises the issue of funding redistribution. Training costs are financed by businesses in the formal sector of the economy, but used in part to train informal sector workers. The approach adopted in Cameroon, whereby trade unions finance 100 per cent of RPL for candidates within their industry, appears to be a sustainable alternative.

Example of an RPL Process Diagram



Source : Serge Côté's workshop presentation

RPL and the Recognition of Informal Sector Skills

The informal sector poses a particular challenge for RPL as to some extent it is its *raison d'être*, inasmuch as the sector relies in great part on those workers that are least likely to have completed skills acquisition courses in formal TVET. The informal sector is predominant in African economies and its economic players aim to access calls to tender for both the public and private sectors. To achieve this, their competencies must be recognized and certified. However, professionals in the informal sector are at a disadvantage when their skills are measured against the same benchmarks as those of working qualified TVET learners.

To adapt the RPL process to the informal sector, new assessment approaches have been piloted which involve on-the-job observations, practical exercises and direct interviews. In some countries, RPL has also provided an opportunity to gain greater awareness of the value of soft and transferable skills. Others have adopted a similar approach to that set out in the diagram above. Candidates first prepare an application file and receive coaching or complementary training by a VTC in areas where their skills are weak or lacking. This can include exam response strategies. Then they either sit the same exams as the TVET course participants, or make their case in front of a jury.

RPL is a time-consuming endeavour. To ensure that it is both sufficiently flexible to accommodate the needs of workers who have acquired their skills in non-formal or informal contexts, either for their individual benefit or in response to business needs, and be cost-effective, RPL can benefit from several factors. This includes decentralization, which offers the additional benefit of appraising those skills in greatest demand locally; delegation to sectoral employer organizations; and the modular organization of skills to enable individuals to certify those skills they have effectively acquired without having to undergo full-time training, which may be a disincentive to candidates due to their availability after work, or employer reluctance.

Recognition of Prior Learning – Key Points

- ✓ The recognition by employers of prior learning, or of skills acquired outside formal training, relies on preconditions and organization that requires addressing the issue of RPL credibility and processes.
 - This can be partly achieved by involving business leaders in the certification process, to assess the same technical skills as those offered by formal TVET, thus enabling learners to acquire the same qualifications.
 - To work, the process must be transparently regulated. Several countries have experiences worth mentioning in this area, including Mauritius, Cameroon, Namibia and Tanzania.
- ✓ This process may be of particular value for the numerous African informal sector. It also involve particular solutions such as indirect assessment approaches, focusing on practical on-the-job evaluations, testing for very focused skill sets, or decentralization.

1.3 Public-Private Partnerships in Terms of Certification

In the light of shared experiences, identifying the nature, how important and the potential of public-private partnerships (PPP) to strengthen and manage a national certification system appears to be crucial to improving the quality of the process and the legitimacy of certificates, reflecting recognition of learning and skills. A well-established and dynamic PPP should enable an improvement in the number of learners integrated into the workplace, and the confidence of businesses to recruit them.

Key Steps in the Certification of Skills

The value of skills certification usually depends on the coherence of skills acquired with respect to labour market expectations, the incorporation of the standards defining an occupation, the process and organization of assessments based on the acquisition of skills, and the credibility of the institution or body vouching for the value of the skills certified.

So, in the spirit of the quality approach to vocational training mentioned earlier, a certification mechanism should be considered as a holistic process that involves the private sector in each of the following steps: (i) Elaboration of a legal and regulatory framework; (ii) Identification of labour market needs in terms of skills; (iii) Elaboration of occupational standards; (iv) Elaboration of standard skill sets for each occupation; (v) Elaboration of assessment standards; (vi) Provision of training and assessment of individual skills; and (vii) Evaluation of the certification process.

The table below gives an overview of these steps, indicating in which areas a limited sample of countries has developed a PPP.

PPP Perspectives, by Stage of Certification

Certification Stages	Congo	Côte d'Ivoire	Ghana	Guinea	Madagascar	Morocco	Mauritania	Namibia	Ouganda	Tunisia	Zambia	Global	Level of involvement
1. Elaboration of a legal and regulatory framework												6/11	3 rd
2. Identification of needs												4/11	6 th
3. Elaboration of occupational standards												7/11	2 nd
4. Elaboration of standard skill sets												8/11	1 st
5. Elaboration of assessment standards												2/11	7 th
6. Provision of training and assessment of skills												5/11	4 th
7. Evaluation of the certification process												5/11	5 th

Country Example: Quality and Relevance Strategies for TVET Providers – Malawi

Quality and relevance management strategies have been developed for vocational education and training centres (VETC) and Technical, entrepreneurial and vocational education and training (TEVET) provider institutions in Malawi, to improve the quality and relevance of TEVET products and services, under the Malawi Skills Development Policy.

The strategies are based on the broad involvement, partnership and participation of stakeholders that drive the delivery of training, to ensure TEVET programmes are demand-driven and responsive to the needs of the labour market, enhance the quality TEVET outputs (both competent graduates and the products of their work), improve industry productivity, and provide access to technology.

The qualification framework is based on TEVET registration and accreditation rules, the TEVET quality management system, and the TEVET management information system (TMIS) under development. The qualification framework provides a context in which each stakeholder has specified roles, responsibilities and functions, including the government, TEVET authority, industry (public and private sector, employers and employees), VTCs, quality assurance bodies, NGOs, DPs, students, trade and sector advisory committees, and quality specialists/occupational experts.

Key strategic interventions include: (i) Extending the registration and accreditation of TEVET providers to ensure quality standard compliance; (ii) Strengthening the development of course content to ensure the alignment of curricula with market demand and technological changes; (iii) Facilitating capacity development of instructors; (iv) Enhancing quality compliance and assurance management systems; (v) Ensuring availability of adequate machines, equipment and books in training institutions; and (vi) Enhancing interaction between industry and training institutions.

The main achievements following implementation of the TEVET sector quality and relevance strategy are:

- Revision of all assessment and certification functions from those of the TEVET authority (the regulator) to those of the newly established TEVET qualifications awarding body - the Assessment and Certification Unit (ACU)*
- Definition of the leading role in the development of competence-based education and training (CBET) curriculum and materials and the monitoring of training delivery of the TEVET authority and quality assurance bodies and occupational experts*
- Establishment of quality assurance instruments: TEVET qualification framework, registration and accreditation rules, trade advisory committees, assessment committees, and others*
- Development and implementation of the harmonized TEVET curriculum, replacing multiple existing curricula and which will impact the quality and the acceptance of the TEVET graduates*
- Building of new modern community technical colleges and refurbishment and expansion of existing technical colleges by government and development partners*
- Upgrading of training equipment and machines in training institutions*

Overall, there is a growing number of registered TEVET providers, an increasing acceptance of TEVET programmes and a better integration of its graduates. However, there are also serious challenges. This is mainly to do with inadequate capacity by all stakeholders to take on key responsibilities in ensuring the implementation of the quality and relevance strategies, in terms of technical capacity, resourcing, tools and systems, at: (a) Government policy level and financing (b) The regulator - the TEVET authority (c) TEVET provider institutions, (d) Industry and (e) Trainees.

According to the experiences shared by eight out of eleven countries which gave a presentation on the topic, the step in which there is the greatest level of private sector involvement is in the definition of occupational standards/skill sets. The design of the legal and regulatory frameworks and appraisal of the certification process also constitutes an important step for half of these countries which have set up public-private partnerships.

It is noted that generally speaking, businesses and industry are more heavily involved in the design and conception phases, than in the implementation stages. Furthermore, certification mechanisms tend to work better, with the motivation and involvement of all partners, when assessment centres are autonomous, such as Morocco's delegated management institutes (Instituts à Gestion Déléguée - IGD).

Sustainability of the Certification Process

The sustainability of the public-private partnerships that underpin the certification process appears to be particularly sensitive to private sector incentives and motivation. In addition to accessing better qualified labour, the private sector needs recognition in terms of its leadership of the processes and funding management, in the context of a regulatory framework that implies some delegation and determines the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Country Example: Sector Skills Councils and Informal Sector Certification – Uganda

Demand-driven training with private sector-led Sector Skills Councils	<i>Uganda's TVET policy emphasizes an employer-led system which requires that Sector Skills Councils are established to guide skills provision and training in specific sectors, placing employers and the private sector in the lead to improve the value chain for developing manpower. So far five councils with a majority of members from the private sector are in place and fully functioning. These are now responsible for:</i> - Identifying appropriate competencies and profiles - occupational standards - Developing CBT curricula with the private sector in the lead - Approving sector-specific training, including new programmes - Designing assessment and certification standards in their sector - Establishing partnerships with international VTCs and certification bodies <i>A demand-driven approach was chosen. Employers, employees, NGOs, human rights bodies, training providers and government ministries and departments were involved in establishing the competency-based training and assessment system.</i> <i>An institutional framework, the TVET Council, has been created. It will eventually be the quality assurance body for an employer-led TVET system. The development of the National Vocational Qualification Framework and alignment of the assessment and certification system is in progress. Certification systems are not stand-alone and require a streamlined qualification framework. Legal reforms are therefore an important aspect that requires funding. A skills development fund has been piloted, offering hope that in future, employers may contribute both in kind and financially to skills development.</i>
Delegated certification in the informal sector	<i>The Ministry of Education mandates different institutions to carry out certification, such as the Uganda Business and Technical Examination Board (UBTEB) and the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT). DIT assesses informal students taught by entrepreneurs and UBTEB carries out assessments for vocational training institutes.</i> <i>This PPP was created, with the support of Enabel Skills Development Fund grants, to provide the practical and innovation dimensions of TVET that employers today are interested in. Vocational training institute instructors will benefit from in-company refresher training. At the same time, private entrepreneurs have been asked to assist with the development of assessment training packages (ATPs) to be used to assess students. Thus, entrepreneurs become the advisors to their different sectors. Public vocational schools have come up with programmes that will be used by entrepreneurs to improve their skills in their fields.</i> <i>The Uganda Small Scale Industries Association (USSIA) has partnered with DIT to assess informal centres so that they can be accredited and offer structured training to apprentices who will obtain a certificate of competencies that is recognized by employers (the "workers' pass").</i>

Public-Private Partnerships in Terms of Certification – Key Points

- A certification process or mechanism is all the more effective when it relies on greater involvement by the private sector at each stage of the process, innovating in terms of how such involvement occurs (decentralization, delegation etc.). Such partnerships are particularly crucial during:
 - The identification of qualitative and quantitative needs in terms of labour
 - The definition of occupational skill sets and certification standardsCertification will then be relevant, ensuring a smooth transition to work.
- Certification mechanisms are strengthened when VTCs are autonomous, such as with Morocco's Delegated Management Institutes (Instituts à Gestion Délégée).

Certification frameworks may be subject to tension between approaches based on skills and occupations, and those based on state certificates or results-based training. Several approaches can help to reduce this:

- Regulation. Governments are the custodians of official diplomas and should directly or indirectly ensure that the recognition, credibility and quality of certification is built on occupational and skill set standards and streamlined qualification systems involving the private economic sector.
- Assessment management. To flexibly reflect labour market needs, and ensure the smooth integration of workers, different levels of certification can coexist and be implemented. Governments can assess core competencies, VTCs can assess complementary skills, and sector professional bodies can provide vocational registration.
- Training-to-work transition. NQFs are systems that, once correctly implemented, by providing clarity help stakeholders to improve employability. They are not an end goal in their own right. As tools, they require institutional anchorage, implementation plans, and periodic updating. They must clearly signal the bridges between general education and vocational training, levels of competencies/skills, and certificate/qualification levels aligned with the level of jobs or occupations.
- Training quality. Countries are encouraged to consider the true usefulness of the skills TVET systems produce, and to establish a quality control process to improve qualifications and their alignment with labour market needs. Where required, businesses may intervene to train staff in specific areas not covered by the basic training on offer.
- “Vocational training be taken out of school!” Opportunities for PPPs in TVET may abound, yet they do not appear to be widespread. It is also necessary to consider the development of short-course or modular approaches that take competency-based training into account, to improve the alignment of TVET to economic needs.

2. Strategies and Tools for VTC Performance

In seeking more effective and efficient training systems, many countries are engaging in significant reforms to VTC management. Training systems manage a large number of public training centres which often report to different ministries and authorities. VTCs generally receive a large part of the government TVET budget. Governments should therefore ensure that these centres operate in a flexible and cost-effective way, so that they can respond quickly to changing labour market training requirements in an efficient manner.

It is hoped that the process of reforming vocational training and technical education will lead to a higher degree of autonomy, which in turn will result in management staff having more complex responsibilities, particularly in terms of budget management. In this context, vocational training and technical education centres face new roles and challenges. Public and private training providers compete in an increasingly demand-driven environment. Changing technologies and production processes require new professional skills and constant adaptation to the needs of labour markets. At the same time, VTCs should adhere to social equity goals and respond to the needs of groups with low levels of education and training.

Public sector reforms emphasize the distinction between governance and management, while promoting greater autonomy of government institutions. Training centres become new players in the system. This requires managers to know how to best achieve their goals, while preserving institutional sustainability. To achieve this, a government needs to create an enabling environment that allows training centres to develop their autonomy and full potential, to become more effective and efficient. Increasing the quality of the performance and management of vocational training institutes and centres requires a vision and the skills to build public-private partnerships and an administration focused on competitive and sustainable economic development; financial, administrative and/or pedagogical autonomy; and the acceptance of multi-stakeholder dialogue. In addition to the above:

- General management practice. Leadership is not innate, and the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to enhance VTC performance would benefit from including approaches and tools such as results-based management, adopting a client-focus, and developing strategic planning capacities.
- Company-based learning. Several approaches are emerging for learners to gain industry experience, including renewed apprenticeships, dual/alternate training, internships and placements. Shared experiences show that direct industry experience will enhance a learner's integration into the workplace.
- Career guidance services or units. Well beyond helping graduates find work, such services can often constitute a valuable connection with various public and private stakeholders, making training more relevant and effective, in the light of the needs of markets and businesses.
- Key performance indicators (KPIs). Fundamentally, VTCs should select monitoring indicators with care, to reflect their success in terms of graduate employability.
- Consideration of entrepreneurship and self-employment as complementary strategic alternatives to labour market integration, and the creation of new regional industry career streams.

2.1 Management Excellence

Cornerstones of excellence in TVET management cover the areas of total quality management including consideration of people, processes, stakeholders and knowledge; leadership; and above all, the development of and commitment to strategic goals and a results-based approach to achieve the highest possible level of learner employability. VTC autonomy and public-private partnerships are considered strong foundations.

Considering the experiences shared during the forum, several factors appear to be conducive to the improved quality of management of VTCs. These are the elaboration and monitoring of performance criteria and indicators (see Sections 2.4 and 3); recruitment criteria and processes, for administrative and pedagogical staff, as well as their status and motivation; the supervision, annual appraisal and career development plans of trainers; and the alignment of the VTC with employment trends, through industry visits by trainers and the existence of a job-seeking service that is in touch with business leaders.

Several strategies and tools may improve the quality of management. The autonomy of training institutes and centres, and the mobilization of public-private partnerships, whether operational (a private company runs the VTC) or supporting public-run VTCs, are two essential approaches. This would lead to VTC undertakings consigned to paper in the form of performance contracts; greater visibility of resource mobilization prospects, possibly with results-based budget allocations; healthy collaboration and competition among centres; combined public-private steering committees; and greater accountability.

Ultimately, training institutes and centres should be both ports of call and resource centres in terms of skills, for businesses and private sector professionals.

Business Plan and Institutional Project/Performance Contract

In many contexts highlighted during the workshop, the elaboration of a business plan and an institutional project or performance contract will constitute a new and significant measure for VTCs in terms of the planning, delivery and appraisal of training. Government-supported performance-based contracts can then lead to “formula funding” whereby payments are subject to the VTC obtaining agreed results, including concrete numbers for the rate of graduate job insertion. Some degree of administrative, financial and pedagogical autonomy is considered a sound basis for the elaboration of a performance contract, that should set strategic goals to strengthen a VTC’s supply of training, both quantitatively (diversification, capacity) and qualitatively (relevance to the local economy, practical training). The measure of an external evaluation of a VTCs performance will depend on the graduate employment rate by stream and level, as well as on businesses’ gains in terms of performance. To achieve this, VTCs should be in a position to rely on a local, regional or national graduate tracking system, as well as one that tracks growth in the productivity of businesses that recruit the graduates.

Country Example: VTC Institutional Projects – Mauritania

Between 2011 and 2017, Mauritania developed experience in VTC stewardship through institutional projects aimed at improving the supply of training that was both qualitatively and quantitatively weak. To achieve this goal, it was necessary to innovate in approaches to the planning, delivery and appraisal of training to give it greater flexibility to respond to social and economic demands.

The results-based management approach involved over 13 training institutes, representing over 85 per cent of training supply. Institutional projects reflected national strategic goals to diversify the supply of training, improve its relevance to economic needs, improve the quality of training to comply with the standards expected by businesses, and thus participate in the implementation of the national TVET policy.

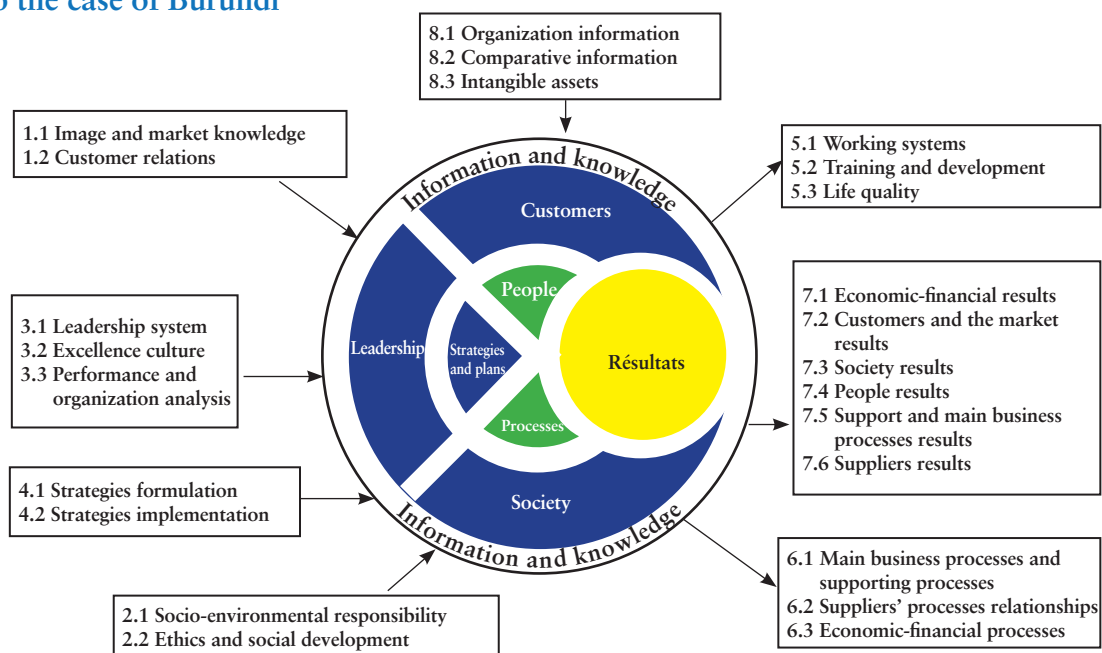
These projects, set up in the form of performance contracts, were based on an appraisal of each institute's general context, the alignment of its proposed training with the needs of the economy, and an audit of the institute against national standards, in order to define the pillars and goals of an action plan in conjunction with quantifiable performance indicators.

Overall, this approach has had a favourable impact on the development of VTC capacities, with a marked increase in enrolment, an improvement of the material and pedagogical learning environment, the development of the skill levels of trainers, and more fluid relationships with businesses to take in learners on placements. A decrease in the dropout rate has also been noted, as well as an ongoing improvement in the success rate at qualifying exams. Furthermore, TVET reform has enabled the vocational training tax to be allocated to the financing of these institutional projects.

Human and Institutional Development

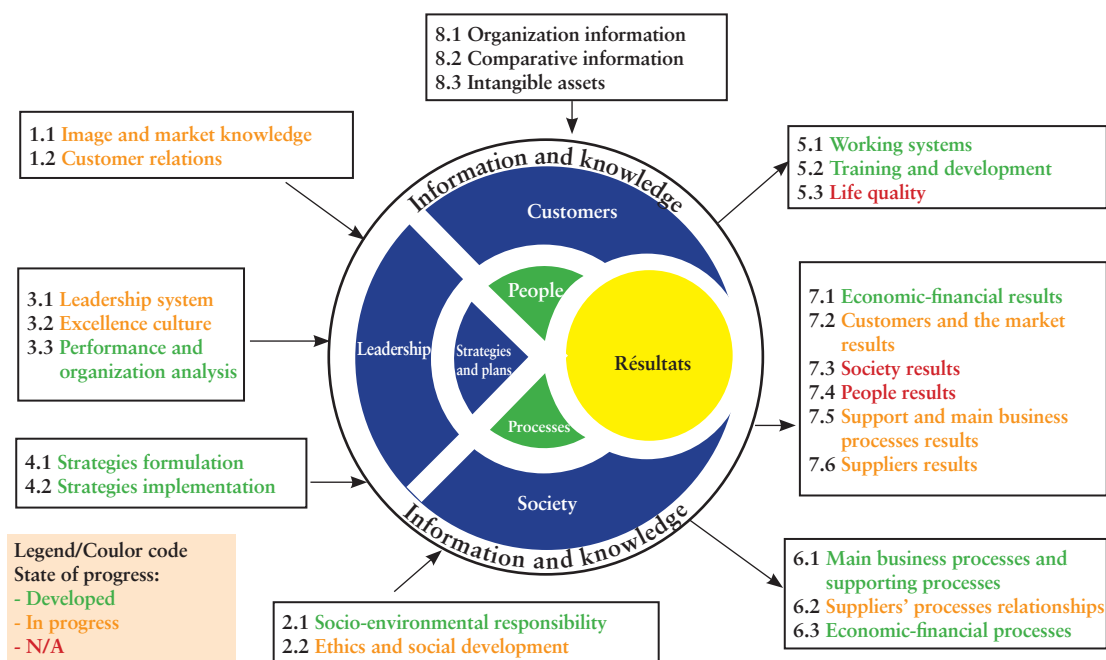
Ensuring quality outcomes at the VTC level frequently depends on having effective leaders and management, competent and qualified staff, and also on the leadership models and styles implemented. Careful recruitment, along with flexible contractual arrangements and career development and remuneration plans therefore seem important to sustain performance in the long term. Encouragement to establish and maintain contact, as well as to develop projects with local and multinational industry, can also support VTC performance. The African experiences presented in Nairobi show that for trainers, the ongoing upgrading of technical skills, management practices and soft skills will be a further determinant of quality. For directors, results-based remuneration or bonuses, as well as a long-term approach to governance and transformational leadership, can often help to strengthen performance.

Fundamentals and Criteria for Excellence in VTC Management – applied to the case of Burundi



Source : Management of Education and Vocational Training Institutions – Training Manual to Identify Opportunities for Improvement in the Management, D. J. Parise and G. de Barros Barreto on behalf of VET-Toolbox and PARISE Education & Innovation, 2018.

The image below illustrates how this theoretical framework can easily be converted into a tool to measure progress and challenges, here applied to the TVET sector in Burundi. The colour coding of each area of excellence may be completed by a representative cross-section of stakeholders, and then inform priorities for the future. And this can just as easily be performed at the VTC level.



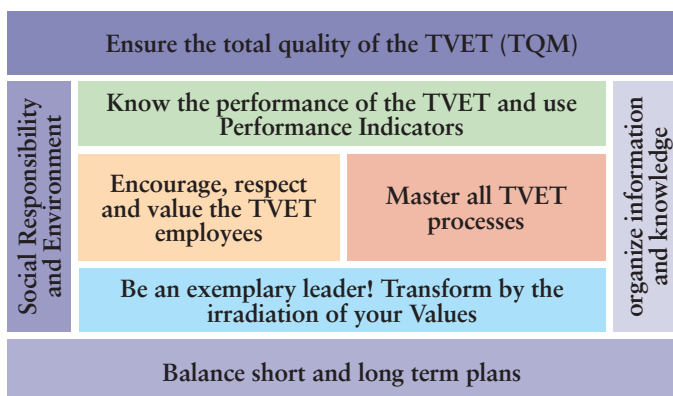
Total Quality Management and Management Quality, Based on the Principles of the National Quality Foundation, Brazil



The above TQM approach and the ongoing improvement of the quality of management, building on the pillars of management excellence of the Brazil's National Quality Foundation (Fundação Nacional da Qualidade - FNQ), are based on the concept that institutions such as VTCs are organisms that are part of a complex societal ecosystem, and that excellence depends on their ability to pursue objectives that are in perfect harmony with these ecosystems.

The fundamentals of excellence express a set of internationally recognized concepts that also include systemic thinking; organizational learning and innovation; adaptability and flexibility; and sustainable development – concepts that should ultimately remain focused on end results, for all stakeholders, in terms of value creation.

The image below applies this theoretical framework to the TVET sub-sector and VTC management in the SENAI – National Service for Industrial Apprenticeship of Parana State (in Brazil), for the continuous improvement of the management quality of VTCs.



VTC-Level PPPs

Experiences shared by delegates at the workshop suggest that public-private partnerships for VTC management constitute one of the cornerstones of excellence in TVET (see the report on the first regional workshop held in Dakar in March 2018). The training-to-job transition of learners is found to be more effective in VTCs that operate under PPPs where the private sector takes responsibility through a dynamic chief executive officer and with sound legal statutes; where the VTC has an active unit to establish relations with companies and organize industry placements; and where learners practice producing and selling as part of their training. PPPs should ensure internal financial sustainability that is less reliant on support from development partners. The workshop-school concept, a small VTC with an associated handicraft workshop provided by a company where learners can gain some practice, may be an interesting solution.

Country Example: Automotive Sector Delegated Management Institute – Morocco

The Training Institute for Automotive Industry Professions of Casablanca (Institut de Formation des Métiers de l'Industrie Automobile de Casablanca - IFMIAC) is managed within the framework of a delegated management convention signed between the government and IFMIA SA, a company created by the Moroccan Association of Automotive Industries, in May 2012. Through this agreement, the government has given the contract to maintain and manage IFMIAC's equipment to IFMIA SA. This is a new management model providing autonomy as well as compliance with regulations, to ensure the attainment of the goals set by the government and the automotive sector's leaders, in relation to youth's personal development, employment in line with their skills, and the best possible career prospects. The success of the model is attributed to its ability to convene key stakeholders, demonstrating its effectiveness and efficiency. The institute has developed several international partnerships, with KOICA (Korea) for its expertise, with AFD (France) for funding, and with Canada for technical support to the education reform project using the CBT approach. Financial autonomy has reached 50 per cent after five years, and the average learner employment rate is over 92 per cent. Its partnerships have turned IFMIAC into KOICA's platform of choice to extend this model project throughout Africa. By 2019-2020, IFMIAC will train African managers and trainers with delegated management models.

Among the challenges encountered, the development of programmes according to CBT guidelines was difficult for sector experts. Although the CBT concept was retained, the programme format was changed. Sustainability factors include the involvement of sector workers in the institute's strategy to guarantee the efficient choice and attainment of goals, ensure the alignment of training with employment and youth employability, as well as the respect of regulations and the issue of diplomas with net added value, whose quality is guaranteed by the government.

Macro and Micro TVET Financing

At the macro level, VTCs should consider funding from the national budget, including allocations from a national vocational training tax drawn from the payroll of companies. This tax includes exemption, redistribution or reimbursement options for businesses directly assuming the cost of the ongoing training of their employees. However, this type of tax is often little or badly redistributed, hence the option of allowing a vocational training fund to levy the tax directly without it being filtered through ministries of finance or national budgets. Mauritania for instance, has recently reformed its TVET sector. VTCs are now eligible for funding via the vocational training levy based on the quality of their institutional plan. Funding from the national budget should be complemented by other sources of financing. Resource mobilization can be diversified at the micro level, allowing VTCs to develop income generating activities, services and products needed by business partners.

At the micro level, DP support can provide an opportunity for good management practices to emerge, and could constitute a criteria for the allocation of funds from the vocational training tax, be it national or sectoral, thereby encouraging quality through a degree of competition between VTCs. It is indispensable to reflect on a strategy that will remain effective when DP support ends. Of course, good management also involves accounting transparency and annual audits.

Cornerstones of Excellence in TVET Management – Key Points

Two particular aspects of excellence in the management of VTCs stand out, based on the experiences of Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia, Congo and Burundi:

- ✓ Solid business plans with performance contracts are tools that enable VTCs to achieve greater results through higher levels of day-to-day autonomy in terms of pedagogical, administrative and financial management.
- ✓ Public-private partnerships, where the legal responsibility resides either with a private company, like the l'Institut de Formation des Métiers de l'Industrie Automobile de Casablanca (IFMIAC) in Morocco, or the state, demonstrate improved results in terms of the training-to-work transition.

2.2 Training with Businesses

Making training more relevant to labour market needs involves the development of an approach that is related to the corporate world, including modernised apprenticeships, work-study/dual training, traditional apprenticeships and work placements. Deploying such practices at scale will usually involve trade-offs in terms of the trades and occupations most suited to this competency-based training approach, or the regions where the skills gap is an urgent priority, and in terms of responsibility for and management of training.

Countries are at different stages of experimentation, development and implementation of corporate-based training approaches. Partnerships with businesses can take the form of placements or internships for learners following traditional training courses, or reflect policies to promote modernised apprenticeships or alternate/dual training.

Country Example: Private Sector Training in West Africa – Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal

Benin Agricultural, Technical and Professional Education and Training Project (EFTPA)	<i>The EFTPA (Education et Formation Technique et Professionnelle Agricole) project, an African Union initiative financed by GIZ, aims to improve the employment and self-employment prospects of youth in agricultural science and technology, improving the professionalism of their basic training by placing business at the heart of the training system. The project has been built around four public agricultural colleges and three private training centres, plus a network of food and agriculture businesses that deliver training related to four value-added chains selected for their sales potential: parboiled rice, local genetically improved chicken, local genetically improved pork and Tabaski lamb.</i>
Côte d’Ivoire A national reform framework for apprenticeship training	<i>In the context of a global TVET reform, the transformation of apprenticeship training was launched to make it better respond to the needs of the economy and society, as well as cater for the many young people who have dropped out of school and entered the informal sector. Based on studies of the existing framework, the state of training centres, and workshops involving all actors (employers’ associations, consular chambers, trade unions, local authorities and relevant ministries), ambitious reform programmes were defined for all training levels and occupations. The goal is to turn apprenticeships into a comprehensive training approach, offering both skills and qualifications.</i> <i>A new national apprenticeship framework was designed with the private sector, including a decree stipulating partnerships for the management of eight pilot schools and another launching a new organizational and functional framework for apprenticeships, as well as a new financing model. A pilot phase is underway in four specialized institutes for the hospitality, automotive, construction and agro-mechanics sectors.</i>
Senegal Renewing and scaling up the traditional apprenticeship system	<i>Modernising the traditional practice of apprenticeships in Senegal has involved: (i) Introducing a contract between the learner/trainee and the apprentice master; (ii) Strengthening the technical and pedagogical skills of master craftsmen; (iii) Introducing training modules in French, mathematics and the use of digital learning platforms; (iv) Mobilizing several actors for the supervision of training activities, at national and regional levels; (v) Giving learners access to the titles, certificates and diplomas delivered in the TVET system, through the recognition of prior learning; and (vi) Supporting the training-to-work transition of certified apprentices, through entrepreneurship training and assisted development of business plans.</i> <i>To date, 8,425 young boys and girls have enrolled, and approximately 543 artisanal production units have joined the scheme which is also relatively cost-effective (\$205-315, compared to \$1,180 in VTCs). Scaling up modernised apprenticeships will involve first confirming the feasibility of the certification, support and monitoring mechanisms at the local level, including for the recognition of prior learning; introducing a progressive certification approach; and decentralizing responsibility.</i>

Expanding opportunities for company-based learning raises issues in terms of financing, certification and its reflection in national qualifications frameworks, the development of training content and curricula, and effective implementation. Good practice suggests that successful approaches are based on the definition of an appropriate legal and regulatory framework, the elaboration of standard skill sets that can be used to develop competency-based training programme content, the training of supervisors and mentors responsible for enterprise-based learning components, and the establishment of joint VTC-company certification processes.

Country Example: Integrated Skills Outreach Programme – Zimbabwe

The Integrated Skills Outreach Programme (ISOP) was mooted by the government of Zimbabwe, according to the Action Plan for Democratisation of Skills for School Leavers in Rural Areas, in an inter-ministerial Memorandum of Understanding signed in June 2006. There is a fair acceptance of the ISOP and skills training concepts by all stakeholders. The community is used to education and training for formal employment as opposed to training for job creation. However, a lack of resources (funds and transport) has limited outreach activities, awareness campaigns about community-based training, capacity building, deliberate and planned evaluation of training effectiveness, tracer studies and the follow-up of graduates.

Graduate support services such as starter kits and start-your-business training are being employed under ISOP, in some instances, to assist graduates to generate income and enable them start their own businesses.

In the Kwekwe District, the Integrated Skills Outreach Programme includes the training of youth in urban areas in a bid to reduce unemployment. Whereas tuition fees are not charged in rural areas, nominal fees (Z\$10/month) are charged in urban areas. For training sustainability, participants mobilize their own resources. In addition to the three months' tuition, trainees also do an internship (on-the-job education and training) for another three months.

Modernised Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a training method that is better represented in national TVET strategies in Francophone countries than in non-Francophone ones. Wherever renewed apprenticeships or dual or modern company-based learning approaches have been piloted, they have been based on public-private partnerships, focusing either on the definition of skills, the location of training activities, or to a lesser degree, on financing. Where regulatory frameworks exist, they must strike the correct co-management balance between businesses and the government, an important condition for an apprenticeship improvement model to become widespread and to take employment trends into account.

Renewed apprenticeships are usually characterized by the definition of occupational and assessment standards for each type of trade, against which both supervisors/mentors and learners are appraised, in a process potentially involving trade unions and sector bodies in addition to the government. The skills and skill levels of both master craftsmen and apprentices are then formally certified.

Country Example: National Service of Industrial Apprenticeship (SENAI), Brazil

The National Service of Industrial Apprenticeship (SENAI) is a private non-profit organization linked to the Brazilian industrial representation system. It is a vocational training institution with broad experience in supporting the private sector. It was created in 1942 as a result of business demand, at a time when government institutions lacked the sufficient capacity to satisfy industrial demand for qualified workers.

The SENAI has received financial support from the private sector since its creation. In addition to the levy of a compulsory apprenticeship tax indexed on wages, companies can finance bespoke services according to their technical and technological needs.

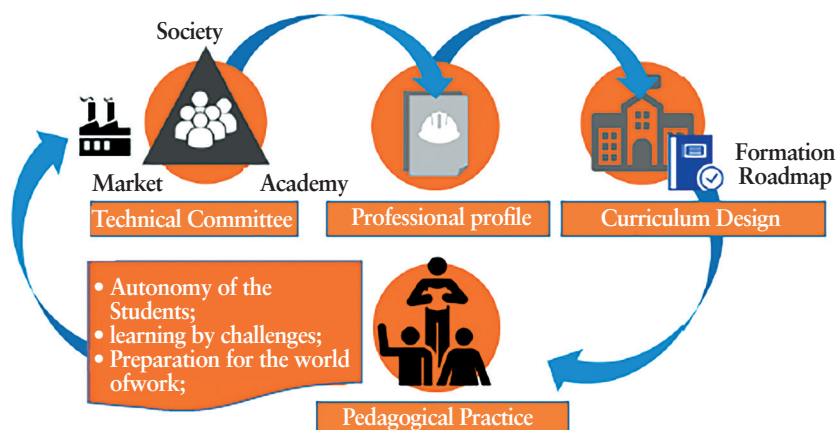
With its vocational certification activities, SENAI has trained over 64 million workers throughout the country since its creation.

Currently, SENAI is one of the five largest vocational education complexes in the world, and the largest in Latin America. It offers training in 28 industrial sectors, through both short and long courses. It manages 580 institutes and 499 mobile units, in addition to 85 technology and innovation institutes that support industry by developing applied research, conducting laboratory tests, and offering technical consultancy to businesses.

It is administered by the National Confederation of Industry that represents Brazil's 27 industrial federations and 1,250 sectoral employers' unions. Vocational training is based on key competencies related to business needs.

The figure below shows the operating principles of sector technical committees for the design of vocational training programmes.

In terms of innovation in PPPs, SENAI has recently launched Senai Flex, an online platform that allows each company to customize and request specific training, according to its needs, in a simple and practical way.



Dual/Alternate Learning

Dual learning emerges from traditional apprenticeships, involving a theoretical component taught by a VTC. The split of training may be in the proportion of 20 per cent at a VTC to 80 per cent on-the-job. Dual or alternate apprenticeships lead to the issue of a skills certificate and in some countries, a government-recognized qualification. In most countries, CBT is the chosen approach to elaborate occupational, skill set, training and assessment standards. Both modernised and dual apprenticeships build on the organization of traditional apprenticeships, while aiming to improve their productivity. This type of apprenticeship should ideally be based on a learner/employer contract, and some form of compensation for learners' time on the job.

The experiments conducted in Mali, Burkina Faso or Benin show that dual learning enables an increase in the turnover of informal businesses. Despite these benefits, this training model struggles to be adopted by all occupations and in all sectors of the economy. The cost and political will to organize a partnership that allows businesses the freedom to choose how to train according to their constraints probably explain this difficulty. In these three countries, the projects are financed either by DPs, or by ongoing funds for training and apprenticeships.

Development of Corporate Training Approaches – Key Points

Several countries are experimenting with new approaches to training that share the responsibility with businesses: dual training modes and/or modernised apprenticeships (Cote d'Ivoire, as other countries, is officially recognizing these as a training path, with clear skill sets to be acquired, qualifications and certificates).

Such approaches involve creating legal and regulatory frameworks, elaborating standard skill sets and competency-based training programmes, training company apprenticeship supervisors and mentors, and the joint organization of assessments and certification. They imply co-management and co-responsibility between the government and businesses in the delivery and certification of learners. They have to:

- ✓ Ensure that training taxes are effectively used to constitute national funds to finance ongoing training and apprenticeships.
- ✓ Create a mechanism to manage and monitor the quality of business-based training.
- ✓ Adopt a regulatory framework where the roles and responsibilities of the government, VTCs and businesses are defined and accepted by all stakeholders.

2.3 Job-Finding Services

VTCs are ideally placed, both in terms of contacts with learners and businesses, and in terms of their mandate of preparing people for employment, to offer career guidance, job-finding support, networking and placement services, to ensure that the professional integration of their learners is optimal. Such approaches, through bodies or activities, should start with the selection of courses to deliver and candidates to train, include active networking for the provision of business-based learning in courses, and end with to find employment or become self-employed.

Centralization in the management of the TVET sector and the lack of skills in public institutions has not been conducive to the setting up of systems to track the professional integration of learners. Where bodies monitoring labour market integration exist, and where VTCs have established open communication channels with businesses or have conducted thorough employment and labour market analysis in their region and adapted their courses accordingly, for both learners and businesses, the setting up of units to monitor learner employment and organize internships result in the provision of better guidance to learners about their options.

VTC Resources and Approaches to Supporting Workplace Integration

VTCs may have, or do have access to several types of resources to support learners' transition to the labour market. Many will have chosen to establish an in-house job-finding service or unit, in addition to possibly having access to high-level guidance on labour market opportunities through ministerial offices, local authorities, or sector and trade bodies. Where such units exist, they should develop their own business plan, and ensure that their targets in terms of work placements, employment and self-employment are clearly reflected in the VTC's performance contract.

Material resources encompass the equipment and tools that add to the quality of training, and hence the employability of learners. Finally, three types of financial resource may be available, at the national, regional or VTC level. In this last case, funds can be constituted by learner course fees, but also through arrangements whereby work placement remuneration is transferred, at least in part, to the intern's VTC.

Supporting integration should not be seen as an activity only for the benefit of the unfortunate graduates who fail to find work. It should be seen as a holistic process, whose success will hinge in part on the relevance to labour market demands of the training offered, and in part on the quality of the practical skills and competencies that the course is able to deliver. So business relations are key to the nature of training, and the incorporation of different types of company-based learning (see Section 2.2) is both a direct short-term goal and an indirect longer-term one. Indeed, where businesses have confidence in the relevance and quality of VTC-provided training, they appear to be more likely to agree to participate in the training of a learner, and employ them once they qualify.

Country Example: Supporting the Training-to-Work Transition – Mali, Senegal, Chad

Mali Ségou Regional Council's professional integration monitoring mechanism for the agriculture and handicraft sectors	<i>School-company liaison bureaux (Bureau de Liaison Ecole Entreprise - BLEE) were created to revitalise the career services of training centres both by strengthening technical, organizational and financial capacities, and establishing partnerships between these units and the labour market. Ten pilot centres were selected by the Segou regional council, and supported by LuxDev, to receive subsidies and logistical support. Actors were involved in three areas: (i) Governance - local authorities, government technical bodies and DPs; (ii) Demand - sector bodies, professional associations, enterprises; and (iii) Supply - training centres.</i> <i>This approach enabled an increase of the professional integration rate to 84 per cent for VTCs with a BLEE, against 16 per cent for those without one, reflecting an improvement in the quality of training thanks to the closer links between training centres and the world of work, in partnership with the Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment.</i>
Senegal Ziguinchor VTC's training-employment project	<i>Ziguinchor's VTC designed and implemented a training-employment project in the processing, conservation and sale of apples and cashew nuts, with the support of the Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training and Craftsmanship, in the context of the « promote employment » project financed by the European Union. It has established a career advisory unit, one of ten pilot units supported by the programme.</i> <i>The unit organizes learners into a cooperative set up from year one, and provides each class with petty cash to develop an income generating activity related to the trade being learnt. The head of class monitors the amounts received, spent, the sale of products, the price of each product and date of production, and any profit is saved to contribute to the VTC's needs in terms of staff or equipment.</i>
Chad Ministry of Vocational Training and Small Occupation's microfinance and support for self-employment	<i>At the Ministry of Vocational Training, three departments support self-employment in the service and commerce sector : (i) The Directorate of Information and Educational and Vocational Guidance prepares youth for employment, job searches and self-employment ; (ii) The Directorate of Self-Employment promotes entrepreneurial spirit and culture for the setting up and development of micro, small and medium enterprises ; and (iii) The Directorate of Microfinance focuses on providing access to microcredit.</i> <i>The ministry grants microcredit on behalf of the government, DPs and NGOs, on the basis of written projects submitted by a young person, group of youths or women's association. To support the initiative, the government has created a single office for the setting up of small and medium businesses, and helps young people with the distribution of kits. The agro-silvo-pastoral sector entails long-term credit that is not viable. To better ensure the sustainable development of the sector, institutions that are able to provide microfinance and technical support are needed, both of which require local-level support according to individual needs.</i>

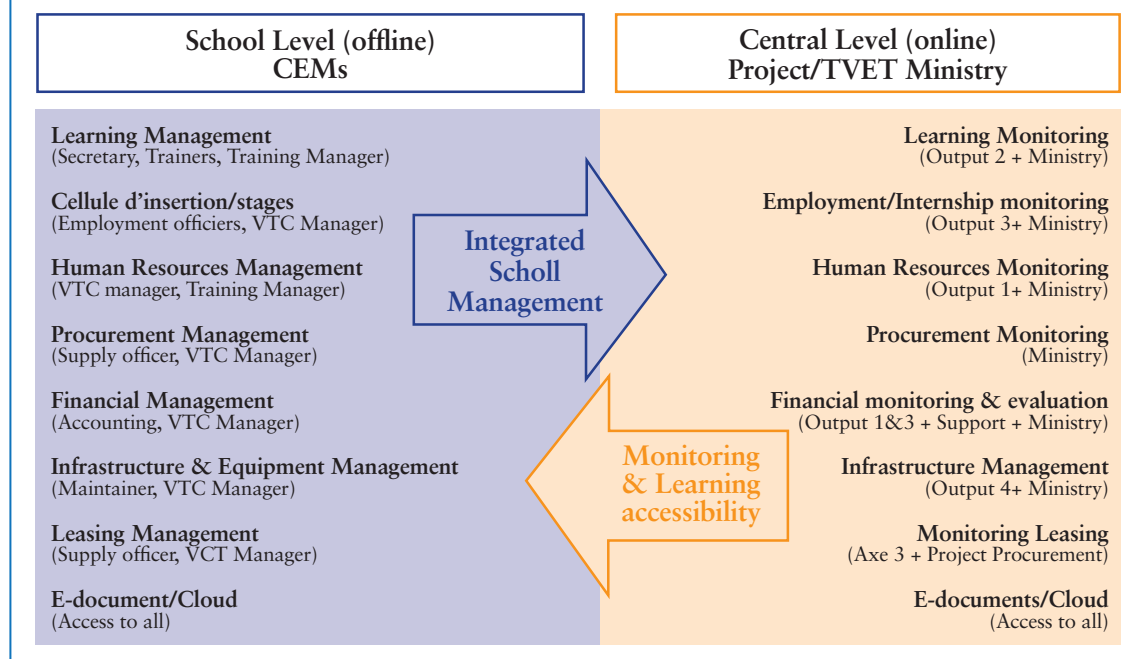
In order to improve the attractiveness of vocational training, the incorporation of practical training modules and use of modern tools, equipment and facilities improve youth employment prospects. Finally, the role of government should not be overlooked. Even on the premise of VTC autonomy, governments may require, through their regulatory mandate, that training courses include an element of exposure of learners to the world of work and practical work experience. Likewise, VTC performance could be measured in terms of how many graduates get jobs, with a minimum percentage required in order for its operating licence to be renewed.

Country Example: VTC Management ERP with Enabel Burundi

Burundi has created an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for a more integrated approach to TVET school management, with the support of Enabel's 'Appui Complémentaire à la formation professionnelle et technique': pgs-burundi.bi

This is part of a broader drive to harness ICT in TVET, that also includes: (i) ICT training, and provision of all VTC HR and administrative staff with computers; (ii) The creation of 13 virtual KoomBook libraries without borders, that offer additional audiovisual training and learning tools; (iii) The promotion of learning innovation ICT hubs in VTCs, with multimedia areas and equipment ; and (iv) The use of mobile money to pay membership fees for craftsmen, intern allocations, or product purchase prices.

Advantages of the ERP system have been found to include the user-friendliness of the interface which is efficient and simple; its adequacy for the operation and management of TVET schools; the speed of setting up new screens and features; the reliability of the technology; the possibility of using the system both online and offline, and the centralization of data (synchronization). The following diagram illustrates the ERP system's modules and access rights.



Supporting Self-Employment

The trend of rising self-employment clearly carries great potential for Africa, building on the lack of opportunities for paid employment. But public TVET policies tend to reflect sectors with potential for wage growth and are formulated first and foremost according to the needs of the main industrial players, without considering the specificities of small- and medium-sized businesses. Furthermore, families for whom self-employment or business creation is the only option, often lack the funds to get started.

There is clearly great potential for VTCs to support self-employment and job creation as well as industry placement and salaried employment. To do so, funding start-ups will be a prime concern, particularly given the guarantees required by some microfinancing outfits. The creation of a fund to directly support self-employment stands out as a best practice in several countries. Potential candidates will often also need specific training in how to develop a business plan, fill out forms and complete formalities, or conduct basic bookkeeping. Of course, such initiatives will benefit from the upstream analysis of job market potential for self-employment, and downstream monitoring of how successful they are in achieving sustainable outcomes for learners, after an initial period of say five years.

VTC Support to Professional Integration– Key Points

Country experiences resoundingly show that to ensure TVET is not self-serving, but responds to national needs and contributes to fluid training-to-work transitions :

- ✓ VTCs must provide career guidance and job-finding services to learners, preferably through dedicated units with full-time staff.
- ✓ PPPs should be promoted for every link of the TVET chain, albeit at the expense of the central management of the sector. Formalized institutional frameworks carry the greatest chance of ensuring that professional integration begins with the identification of labour market needs, rather than at the moment of a learners' certification.

2.4 Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicators for monitoring and evaluating VTCs should ideally measure the professional integration rate of learners, as well as businesses competitiveness gains which is the ultimate gauge of course relevance, quality training, and valued skills. Other aspects may also be of interest: business-based learning, public-private partnerships, cost-effectiveness, or internal efficiency.

The fundamental issue in selecting key performance indicators (KPI) to monitor VTCs is the choice of how to define success. While formative or summative examination pass rates may be of interest to gauge how well learners absorb what they are being taught, or the dropout rate may reflect the perceived quality of training and facilities, these indicators are often considered insufficient as effective measures of quality and relevance by training and employment stakeholders. Ultimately, performance should be measured by a VTCs' level of success in supporting their learners find gainful activity.

Country Example: Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria – Nigeria

The N-Power Build Programme is a national capacity building programme in construction trades for youths between the ages of 18 to 35 years. It is an accelerated training programme under the Federal Government's National Social Intervention Programme designed to create jobs and develop capacity.

Monitoring and evaluation is critical to ensure adequate training that will result in the acquisition of the required knowledge and skills by each N-Power Build trainee; to assess and demonstrate the council's effectiveness in delivering effective and relevant training; to improve internal learning and decision-making about programme management; to ensure accountability to key stakeholders (Federal government, National Social Investment Office, construction companies, developers, builders, local authorities); to influence government policy; and to contribute to the evidence base about skills gaps, shortages and development for the construction sector.

The Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON) partnered with the Nigerian Institute of Building (NIOB) and other important stakeholders to create and implement a three-tier monitoring and evaluation structure for the purpose of quality assurance. There are monitors at the national (programme implementation committee members), zonal (council officials), and state (schedule officers in CORBON's zonal offices and state-level NIOB officials) levels to assist in collecting quantitative and qualitative data on the ongoing N-Power Build training. The data is analysed by zonal coordinators and schedule officers. The reports from each zone are the basis for periodic, retrospective assessment of the programme by the N-Power Build Implementation Committee.

The system aims to ensure that: (i) Training centres and project staff keep accurate records relevant to training and assessment; (ii) Performance of centre trainers is appraised; and (iii) Progress against the implementation plan is monitored and revised accordingly.

The CORBON M&E template was quite useful in eliciting vital information to guide the programme implementation, but needs to be streamlined to facilitate analysis and include feedback from trainees, instructors, assessors and employers.

So, to guarantee the performance of VTCs in terms of effectiveness, it is necessary not only to measure the training-to-work transition rate of learners in the public and private sectors, but also the success rate of self-employment. To take the approach a step further, it will be of value to compute an indicator that compares success rates in each area.

Beyond effectiveness, from a regulatory point of view, monitoring may wish also to focus on the TVET sector's capacity to support economic and market competitiveness. This involves looking beyond current professional integration rates and to combine data sourced from industry and trade bodies on market developments and their resulting skills requirements, with that obtained from VTCs across the board, so as to determine the degree to which the provision of training is prepared to respond to changing needs.

Criteria for Selecting Indicators

To select indicators that will be helpful to channel VTC efforts towards improved performance in terms of graduate employability, it seems relevant to consider the following criteria: (i) Usefulness for determining goals; (ii) Facility of measurement; (iii) Repeatability and reliability; (iv) Frequency of update; and (v) Ease of understanding/communication.

Summary List of Useful Key Performance Indicators

<i>VTC</i>	Certification rate and number of graduates and interns mentored by superiors	Trainer performance rates, including: - by/with the private sector	Dropout rates	Business investment rate in training
<i>PPP</i>	Number of memoranda of understanding signed with businesses, or: - of businesses registered as VTC partners - of PPP projects implemented		PPP training of trainer programmes (training or certification)	Number of business internships
<i>Labour Market Integration</i>				
<i>Self-employment</i>	Rate of new business creation Rate of formal incorporation – including for self-employment: - after fairs - after incubation (start-up nurseries)	Survival rate of new entrepreneurs or self-employed after three years	Incubation centre attendance rates (start-up nurseries)	Self-employment rate, comparative to employment rate
<i>Formal employment</i>	Graduate employment rate	Number of graduates and professional integration rate as facilitated by career guidance units		
<i>Monitoring and Evaluation</i>				
<i>External</i>	Implementation rate of performance contracts signed between VTCs and authorities	Satisfaction rates: - of learners - of businesses	Percentage of projected skills needs (by occupational associations) met	
<i>Internal</i>	Execution rate of performance contracts	Execution of strategic plans - Hours of training planned/ delivered	Level of autonomy: - Share of own resources	Budget invested per qualified graduate

Ideally, a mix of result and lead indicators should be retained, where:

- Result indicators are those that include a lag, but make it possible to highlight performance results attained at the end of a period of activity, such as annual exam pass rates.
- Lead indicators reflect ongoing activities and efforts, such as the number of hours of training delivered each week.

The mix is important, as the former allow the measurement of progress towards specific performance targets, based on past success and constituting historical trends, whereas the latter can be helpful predictors of future performance, allowing VTCs to adapt their focus or activities according to their objectives.

Good Practices in KPI Use

The effective use of KPIs ultimately requires monitoring and evaluation systems (see Section 3.1). But several points stand out as illustrating good practices that are already being applied in the African context: For planning purposes, it is helpful for VTCs to analyse unit costs, or investment; KPIs become more effective when they are included in the VTC's strategic plan or performance contract; employment rates are insufficient, and should ideally capture the dimension of decent employment and sustainable self-employment; the performance of training of trainer courses, and later the individual performance of trainers, constitute useful data for VTCs to monitor the quality of learning; different indicators may be set for different levels, including VTCs on regional and national levels, without however imposing a set list of KPIs on every VTC as they have different goals and strategies; disaggregation by gender, disability and area of residence is always valuable; and finally, the appraisal of VTC performance should ideally be performed by an independent national entity rather than the centre itself, based on national standards of employment by occupation and/or sector.

Key Performance Indicators for VTC Monitoring and Evaluation – Key Points

Pour améliorer leur performance, les CFP devraient porter une attention particulière à :

To improve their performance, VTCs should particularly focus on:

- ✓ Effectiveness: it is necessary to measure not only the level of workplace integration, but also the sustainability of self-employment, and to compare the two. Senegal and Tunisia are among countries investing more in mechanisms that promote self-employment opportunities.
- ✓ Competitiveness: private sector observatories should conduct ongoing market research to inform current needs in terms of skills, but also strategic analysis of market trends to identify likely future needs and allow VTCs to prepare for these. This approach has been initiated in Morocco, with the Observatoire des métiers, financed in part by the vocational tax.

The trends covered above aim to highlight the importance of excellence in VTC management in Africa and in the world, with a specific focus on PPPs, autonomy and quality, to improve the employability of leavers. 'Excellence' is not a word to be taken lightly, and achieving it will doubtless entail several of the following endeavours:

- 1) The training and development of a cadre of transformational leaders capable of implementing total quality management and sustainable development approaches in VTCs;
- 2) The recruitment of a leadership cadre that is autonomous, empowered, capable and demonstrates true team and private sector orientations;

- 3) The decentralization and growth of vocational training through the use of mobile education;
- 4) The emphasis on key processes for security and total quality management;
- 5) Shared management of information on the insertion and follow-up of learners in the private sector;
- 6) A paradigm change, whereby learners having found apprenticeships or paid employment are credited to the private sector, that should be understood and recognized as the main client of VTCs; and
- 7) The systematization of private sector oriented competence-based training approaches.

According to African training players, financing remains the key issue for many sub-Saharan African countries wanting to develop different forms of apprenticeship in TVET, with high dependency on DP support, partnerships between governments and professional bodies still being relatively new. The experiences witnessed suggest that apprenticeships cannot be developed in the same form in every sector. The duration, rhythm and content of on-the-job learning will depend on trade specifics, the density of business presence in a given region, or the nature of the demand for skills, be it situational or stable. Finally, the training of master craftsmen and the equipment of them and VTCs will have a direct impact on the quality of training delivered.

Ultimately, a significant improvement of the training-to-work transition will require firm political commitment to promote insertion by implementing reforms. These should certainly be based in part on the role of VTCs and their career guidance units, as well as the structured development of monitoring tools (see Section 3). They should also reflect and enact a clear direction whereby TVET is increasingly by and for professionals and employment, rather than as an emergency exit for misguided learners in search of a certificate for a certificate's sake. These reforms should also reflect systemic thinking that encompasses general education streams, starting with basic education, the non-formal and informal sectors and bridges between them all, to strive towards the best possible educational outcome for each individual, including future prospects of a transition towards appropriate higher education for TVET graduates in search of opportunities to further develop and hone their skills.

3. Monitoring Workplace Integration and Regulating the Supply of Vocational Training

TVET system reforms are relatively recent on the African continent and tools that enable the measurement of their external performance are still too rarely deployed, despite the fact that the purpose of vocational training is to directly facilitate the workplace integration of leavers, by ensuring that they are fully operational at the end of their training.

This purpose modifies the structure of the objective: the quality of the vocational training content is confirmed if it is consistent with the jobs of today while taking into account the future evolution of skills.

To address this need for coherence, the vocational training strategies of most countries have focused over the last 20 years on a rapprochement with companies mainly in two areas:

- The development and the validation of training programmes;
- VTC management approaches.

The state of progress in these two areas differs from country to country, but signals a will to face two challenges. On the one hand, strong demographic growth in African countries is making populations younger, with an average of 50 per cent under 25 years of age. On the other hand, greater access to and completion of basic education, even if there is significant scope for further progress, requires governments to plan for the massive influx of young people making it into upper secondary and higher education.

Throughout Africa, one of the most frequently publicized priorities is to increase the number of learners enrolled in vocational training systems, and to ensure that they are then integrated into the workplace. Thus, the quality of youth's professional integration would legitimise the quality of training and that of VTC management.

Creating indicators to monitor the professional integration of leavers can be used to both improve the quality of TVET, and adapt enrolment numbers in each training stream to the employment potential of each. Monitoring the performance of technical and vocational training involves:

- Implementing tools to monitor the training-to-work transition of learners, and analysing and communicating their outputs;
- Establishing mechanisms through which the findings are dealt with to formulate a response in terms of the quantity and quality of training supply, based on the evolution of the integration indicators.

3.1 Training-to-Work Monitoring Mechanisms

In a context where research into employment is rare, irregular, and reliant on specifically mobilized funding, the creation, structure and organization of data collection tools and the participation of stakeholders in workplace integration monitoring systems are starting to develop on the African continent. These tools remain sporadic however, and the results in terms of worker integration are rarely shared. Some VTCs have taken the initiative to conduct research into the status of their graduates. However, central governments should benefit from complementing this information by creating integrated information systems that offer feedback on the analysis of jobs, integration data, and data that is specific to the supply of vocational and technical training. The analysis of these three types of information will determine policy direction.

The occupational integration rate of TVET graduates (in wage- or self-employment), the rate of further education, and the rate of satisfaction of recruiters with the skills of the youth they employ, provide information on the efficiency of a TVET system. To set up such tools, several options can be considered, of which the following can be mentioned:

- Field or phone surveys conducted and financed by the ministry, but which is fairly costly in both human and financial terms
- Resorting to ICT to deliver surveys to TVET leavers, with the survey answers submitted to a domain dedicated to data collection

The setting up of external evaluation tools implies two phases and the involvement of different players. The first phase is the design of the surveys, their dissemination and the data collection. It involves central ministries, interviewers, VTCs, businesses and graduates. These surveys are generally conducted six months to a year after qualifications are issued.

The second phase focuses on the analysis of the data collected internally, and the way it is disseminated.

Internally, within the ministry responsible for TVET, the data analysis should result in a reflection on the streams with high employment prospects and those with weak potential. Discontinuing some streams, supplementing some or reinforcing others are decisions that call into question the mobility of trainers and their status. External evaluation data can lead to an adjustment of the trainer environment, suggesting that they should reorient themselves if their training courses are in low demand on the labour market. By way of example, Burundi's representatives at the workshop said too many young people take secretarial and accounting courses at TVETs and fail to find work. On the other hand, the creation of tax-free zones has resulted in the development of the country's textile sector which is struggling to find competent young people to employ. The country doesn't have a legitimate external evaluation system or data drawn from surveys on the analysis of employment to justify a reorientation of streams and trainers towards promising sectors. Training is then costly for the government: it maintains saturated streams and does not adapt to the needs of growth sectors.

External evaluation modifies training supply and its organization. It assumes that content, trainers and VTCs are flexible.

Communicating data on worker integration, further education and employer satisfaction to the broader public so as to reach all players involved in decisions related to career guidance for young people, by using television, radio and the internet, has an impact on the regulation of TVET enrolment. Training streams with good integration scores will certainly attract youth, convince parents, and be of value to those responsible for career guidance within basic education, secondary schools and universities. In Quebec, each year, the data disseminated on integration mentions the timeframe between qualification and employment, wage levels by industry and region, and the satisfaction rate of young employees. The numbers enrolled in the streams are automatically regulated each year, thus reducing the risk of unemployment.

TVET Graduate Tracking Tools and Approaches

In Africa, the tools and approaches used to appraise the external efficiency of TVET systems are varied. Globally, few governments appear to use regular graduate tracking surveys, although Malawi and Kenya have made progress in this direction:

- *Central government-led approach.* Several countries have adopted a centralized approach based on field or telephone surveys, relying on the Ministry of Labour (Burundi), national employment and training observatories (Niger), specialized VT directorates (Mauritania's Ecole Nationale d'Administration Publique; DRC's Institut National de Préparation Professionnelle).
- *VTC/worker integration tracking services.* VTCs are often involved in collecting information on their graduates, and in some cases are the only organizations to do so. This would usually occur in the form of field or phone-based surveys. The findings may be entrusted to a central employment observatory or national statistical office. Surveys are sample-based. They are part of the VTC's auto-evaluation activities that takes learner/employer satisfaction into account.
- *Businesses and the private sector.* Companies may be involved in monitoring mechanisms by responding to ad hoc or regular surveys on their level of satisfaction with TVET graduates (Morocco), or on industry and employment prospects. Malawi conducts specific labour market surveys that take into account the training programmes provided.
- *Regional TVET directorates.* Regional TVET authorities may be involved in the monitoring system, either under federal systems where they act on behalf of the central government, or in collaboration with central offices, to conduct local surveys through the outreach antenna of statistical bureaux (Niger).
- *Labour Market Information Systems.* A few countries have created market information systems (LMIS). In Kenya, such a mechanism is run by the National Employment Authority which publishes this information annually. In Malawi, integration efforts between the LMIS and the TVET information system are underway.
- *Tracking individuals.* To appraise the performance of a TVET system in detail, it can be helpful to obtain very precise information about the careers of specific individuals. Initiatives adopting this approach have involved using cell phone numbers, or national identity card numbers (Mauritania).

The above range of approaches is complemented by a number of other alternatives, including the creation of national independent assessment systems (Ethiopia), the organization of career fora to interview attendees in bulk, reviews of the national press, and the exploitation of data drawn from national employment funds.

Country Example: National Employment and VT Observatory - Niger

In the framework of the TVET sector policy elaborated and adopted in 2006, a National Employment and Vocational Training Observatory (Observatoire National de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle) was created in 2012, one of whose missions is to monitor the workplace integration of vocational training centre and institute leavers, as well as those of higher education. The mechanism includes all of the country's training and examination centres. In 2014, the observatory created a learner-level database of over 15,000 TVET graduates from 2010 through to 2014. A first national survey on the workplace integration of TVET leavers was then launched, with the support of all actors. The process to update the database has been initiated with approximately 843 centres throughout the country, for graduates from 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

The aim is to be able to manage the supply of skills at national level, improve the governance of the sector, monitor the professional careers of learners after their graduation, measure graduate unemployment and underemployment, analyse the quality of employment of young graduates and appraise the difficulties youth face in finding work.

Considerations for Implementing and Scaling Up the External Evaluation of TVET

Focus national efforts on measures of external efficiency that gauge the quality, performance and cost-effectiveness of TVET and regulate learner numbers. External efficiency complements internal efficiency, whose role is in particular to measure success/failure rates, and repetition and dropout rates. This internal evaluation enables improvements in the management of trainers, to review programme content and structure, or to adapt the entry levels of learners.

Conceptualize the monitoring mechanism. In order to determine the most appropriate channels and mechanisms to collect data, it may be helpful to first categorize participants by function: those who are requested to produce information - graduates and companies for their satisfaction rate with available skills; intermediaries - training centres, central or regional departments responsible for worker integration; and beneficiaries - TVET system decision-makers and planners, individuals tasked with career guidance at the basic education level, youth, their parents and companies.

Standardization. Providing policymakers with actionable information implies the standardization of indicators across regions, sectors and VTCs. Modern technology offers great opportunities in this regard. Malawi, for example, has set up a labour market information system, even although this does not yet easily communicate with the VET information system. However, the standardization of indicators may represent a burden for VTCs, and may not reflect the specificities of each, or their needs in terms of monitoring their day-to-day operations. Working on these three types of data can enable a TVET system to evolve from a system based on the supply of vocational training to a system steered according to labour market demand. In terms of costs, and in a context where labour market studies are irregular, investing in downstream tracking of graduates is a more efficient and easy approach to implement, in particular where ITC is called upon to access information on the workplace integration of youth.

Monitoring public and private sector TVET. In some instances (WAEMU), initiatives tend towards a privatization of the M&E process, to address efficiency and independence requirements.

The Value of New Technology to Monitor Integration

Classical Approach		Approach with ICT
Survey type	Human surveys led by employment institutes	Survey available through a link or an app on graduates' phones
Data management	Recorded in files held by centres or ministries	Data automatically sent to servers, Big Data
Transparency	Limited, as information is held at the ministry or central level	High, as information is made public and is accessible to all, with analytical tools available online
Cost	High human and financial cost each survey year	High initial investment (development of computer applications and ICT equipment, training of trainers), but soon recovered

Source : Barbara Murtin's workshop presentation.

The stakes are high. In addition to adapting the training on offer to labour market demand, the effective monitoring of learners' workplace integration makes it possible for VTCs to further develop partnerships with the private sector; to legitimate the focus of their programmes towards local growth sectors, for ministries; and to fine-tune budget allocations towards effective training streams, making the system more efficient.

Mechanisms to Monitor Professional Integration – Key Points

Tools enabling a measure of the external performance of TVET are still small and varied. Country experiences show that measurement tools have been set up, but their results are seldom shared, if at all. They have little influence on the supply of training. To compensate for the organizational and financial costs and to use integration monitoring data as a decision-making instrument, we conclude that:

- ✓ ICT offers a real opportunity to improve these systems, in terms of their cost, reliability, frequency and user-friendliness, but has not yet been taken up.
- ✓ Where data exists, greater efforts need to be deployed to ensure that it is available, and accessible to society at large.
- ✓ Where such data exist, it is important that it be taken into account in the annual or biannual organization of training supply, by streams and levels, in each region.

3.2 Perspectives for Data Use

As the effective monitoring of TVET learner integration gradually produces data, this provide information required to improve the management and governance of TVET, by offering insight into employment trends, which will facilitate the quantitative and qualitative regulation of the provision of training.

Given the low prevalence of tools to monitor the workplace integration of TVET learners in Africa, or the fact that such tools are still in the early stages of development, it is understandable that few countries have had the opportunity to harness the results and outputs of such systems to date. Indeed, even where the data exist, governments and institutions have a long way to go still to establish sustainable tools and approaches to exploit the information.

Two main possible outcomes from the regular production of TVET sector performance data could be an improvement in decision-making in favour of the quantity and quality of the training supply, and communication efforts that can contribute to manage behaviours, including those of future learners, based on economic demand in terms of personnel and skills.

Country Example: Improved Financing of TVET thanks to M&E - Zambia

The main objective of a project to develop technical education, vocational and entrepreneurship training (TEVET) supported by the World Bank was to improve the development and provision of skills in the sector. Better funding has enabled the elaboration and implementation of an M&E system through the project.

Within the existing framework of improved management systems and accountability, the capacity of institutions with regards to monitoring systems was enhanced. Despite government difficulties to institutionalize M&E systems and adhere to quarterly reporting schedules, the information harnessed has enabled the development of a robust funding system for the sector. More development partners have become involved in skills development by supporting the African Development fund. The government has established a skills development fund through an act of parliament, and other sources of funding have been identified.

Subsequently, a virtuous circle has emerged: the prospect of funding has enticed VTCs to improve their M&E practices, to make better cases when considered for funding and support.

Shared experiences indicate that most countries currently appear to face a series of issues with regards to these outlooks, including:

- *Cost considerations.* Pending the systemization of labour market information systems, the processing and analysis of workplace integration data involves the mobilization of analysts and training supply planners, while including vocational institutes' leaders. The implementation of a graduate tracking mechanism, when not using ICT, is costly in terms of human and financial resources. However, if these mechanisms are accompanied with rules aiming to make TVET's response more flexible in order to provide training with a future, the State's financial intervention will be lighter from a social point of view, with a lower unemployment support package.

- *Trust.* The information gathered is highly centralized in many contexts, being generated at the VTC, sector or regional level, and feeding through a vertical consolidation process that ends at central government. TVET players and VTCs, basic education, youth and parents in particular are often not informed of the findings such data provide. Career guidance is therefore based on the training currently on offer, with no relation to employment or income prospects. TVET's image is not corrected, remaining a cultural stopgap.
- *Stonewalling.* Some stakeholders hesitate to share information, out of concern that policy changes will entail adjustments to their service delivery modes. The case raised focused on trainers, whose work contracts do not often include the need to evolve in their jobs, or to teach subjects other than those mentioned in their contract. These contracts do not always contemplate the need for ongoing training, for stints of business-based work, or for certain positions to be cancelled. VTCs do not always have a choice of the training streams they offer. The analysis of workplace integration tracking data therefore has a strong impact on trainer management modes, on the degree of VTC autonomy, and on their management of course content.
- *Dissemination.* Few countries have developed outreach programmes to ensure that relevant data is made available, and in an accessible form, to the general public. It is common that raw data is quietly made public on official web pages, but rarely consulted. The press, schools and social networks are crucial channels for the dissemination of data in a way that encourage learners to gravitate towards skills development programmes that reflect the needs of the labour market.
- *ICT fluency.* Despite the prospects of cost-efficiency provided by new technologies, the managerial cadre (be it in TVET or the private sector) is slow on the uptake of solutions such as cloud-based data storage (paper is still the norm in many contexts) and web-based surveys.

Dynamics Resulting from Output Monitoring – Key Points

The two key areas that derive from the monitoring of integration are:

- *Decision-making.* Where information systems on performance and integration are reliable, they must receive continued investment, and be consulted for decisions that aim to adapt TVET to employment, in terms of enrolment numbers and programme quality. Based on dialogue between different TVET stakeholders, such as the Tables de Concertation (Benin, Niger), statutes and regulations should enable the implementation of a greater flexibility of TVET.
- *Communication.* Communication to the broader public of the findings of workplace integration monitoring favours the quantitative regulation of enrolment, and strengthens trust in TVET's usefulness, sobriety and potential.

Conclusions

The workshop raised and highlighted several cross-cutting themes that stand out as meriting particular attention to improve quality management and management quality in TVET, as well as the employment, including self-employment, prospects of learners:

- The application and implementation of competency-based approaches requires the adaptation of a generic guide into a contextualized methodology.
- NQFs are not an end goal, but a means to clarify the connection of training and qualifications with skills and jobs, which should be an integral part of a broad process, with oversight bodies and action plans.
- The autonomy of VTCs should be safeguarded where it exists and promoted elsewhere, in carefully crafted frameworks that are conducive to greater quality.
- The consideration of the informal sector in TVET service delivery and monitoring represents a particular challenge that it is important to address in the African context.
- The achievement of real positive outcomes, for African learners and the continent's economies, involves thinking, or rethinking TVET in a holistic way, starting with a clear and shared understanding of needs in terms of skills.
- The credibility of TVET diplomas and certificates must be nurtured, to ensure that they reflect the value of learners to employers, and provide learners with real opportunities and professional mobility.
- The requirements of an effective system in terms of inputs needs constant attention and appraisal, including in material (funding, equipment, premises), human (trainers, supervisors), and regulatory (laws, frameworks, tools) terms.
- National commitments in terms of funding must be pursued and reinforced, in particular in terms of reinvesting vocational and professional taxes directly into TVET, possibly through the creation of a vocational training fund where none exists.
- The value of public-private partnerships has been demonstrated, at every step of the TVET value chain, from needs identification to skills certification, and their prevalence is for ever on the increase, offering multiple success stories.
- It would be interesting to create an African network of training engineering schools, institutes and bodies, focusing just as much on learner training programmes as on trainers, to broaden the sharing of experiences to everyone's benefit.

TVET systems will always face challenging contexts in terms of national economies and their labour markets. TVET systems that are relevant and offer quality training, improve the prospects of learners and contribute to the development of national economies. When quality becomes an integral part of a TVET system's operations, its performance and external efficiency will be naturally enhanced.

2019

This report constitutes the analytical synthesis of the 2nd Regional Workshop for Exchange between Vocational Training Actors in Africa and their Mutual Strengthening, held in Nairobi from 18-20 June 2019, on the theme of “Quality TVET for the successful training-to-employment transition of Africa’s youth”.