

Background

Ten years ago, the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre (UNESCO-UNEVOC) was established to foster further development and improvement of technical and vocational education in UNESCO Member States. During the last 10 years, the potential of UNESCO-UNEVOC has expanded within the framework of UNESCO's work in strengthening capacities in member states to develop comprehensive and evidence-based policies for technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

Recognizing its potential, the participants present at the UNESCO Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) entitled *Building Skills for Work and Life* hosted by the Government of the People's Republic of China in Shanghai between 13 and 16 May 2012 invited the Director-General of UNESCO to seek to implement the following actions with regards to UNESCO - UNEVOC:

- Collect and disseminate evidence demonstrating the multiple and diverse policy approaches for transforming and expanding TVET, using the global UNEVOC Network and UNESCO Chairs active in the field
- Expand and enhance the capacities of the UNEVOC Network to play a key role in developing the capacities of decision-makers and practitioners, and facilitate the involvement of all stakeholders

The Third TVET Congress provided an opportunity for more than 750 participants to discuss the challenges faced by TVET systems and explore appropriate responses aimed at building a better understanding of the contribution of TVET to sustainable development and at defining strategic directions for cooperation among countries and with the international community to support TVET for all, within the framework of the overall efforts in favour of access, inclusion and equity, education for sustainable development and a culture of peace.

From Strategy to Action: International Forum, Bonn, Germany

Scope and Aims:

In order to follow up on the Shanghai Consensus, UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre will convene an International Forum of some 100 experts from the UNEVOC Centres in 80 countries in Bonn, Germany, from 14-16 November 2012. The Forum is designed to find ways and means of implementing the recommendations and conclusions of the Third TVET Congress, to share ideas and practices to enhance knowledge effectively, to research a variety of perspectives on Transforming TVET for a Sustainable Future, and lay the foundation for future work, including the strengthening of the global UNEVOC community and identifying relevant mechanisms to sustain it.

The broad theme of the Forum is to **promote better teaching and learning for green economies and green societies through the strengthening of the UNEVOC Network**. Under this theme, the focus will be given to strengthen the UNEVOC Network and to promote better TVET teaching and learning for greening society.

Strengthening the UNEVOC Network

The UNEVOC Network of specialized technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions is a unique international platform for the sharing of knowledge and experiences regarding all aspects of TVET. The UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for TVET (UNESCO-UNEVOC) located in Bonn is the hub of the UNEVOC Network. UNESCO-UNEVOC has taken various actions to promote and foster collaboration in developing and improving TVET through the global network of UNEVOC Centres, which works as an inclusive and effective network providing various forms of assistance to TVET leaders and practitioners and share innovative practices. The UNEVOC Network is increasingly mobilized to assist member states in national policy dialogue with a view to promoting sustainable lifestyles among all individuals.

During the Third International Congress, the participants in the special session on Strengthening the Network recommended that the capacities of the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre and the UNEVOC Network be further strengthened so that they can ensure the full and timely implementation of UNESCO's Strategy for TVET and perform their clearing house and knowledge development role in producing, collecting and disseminating evidence demonstrating the multiple and diverse policy approaches for transforming and expanding TVET. It was also suggested that the UNESCO-UNEVOC through its global Network should develop effective organisation and management mechanisms to foster more engagement among member states and the TVET communities.

Further, the Third International Congress stressed that there is a need to encourage more discussion and further research among the TVET stakeholders thereby providing a better opportunity to develop a well-defined policy and planning structure of centre and help formulate and formalize its plans, programme, funding and implementation strategies. In particular, the participants in the special session recommended that the capacities of the UNEVOC Network be further enhanced and expanded by more dynamic partnerships with non-governmental stakeholders such as private sector representatives and civil society, so that it can act as a platform for knowledge, learning and innovation in TVET and play a key role in developing the capacities of decision-makers and practitioners. Taking these recommendations into account, different regional UNEVOC clusters in the Network will further capitalize on their specific strengths and develop a work plan to implement the recommendations of the Third International Congress on TVET in the light of the regional and sub-regional priorities.

Promoting better TVET teaching and learning for greening society

Pressures on natural resources, the environment and the climate changes necessitate a transition from energy and emissions-intensive economies to energy-saving and cleaner patterns of production and services. The greening of the economy implies changing skills needs as new industries and occupations emerge, alongside new skills profiles in many existing occupations. This affects training needs and delivery.

In responding to sustainable development issues, TVET needs to be able to adapt to changing economic and social demands by creating relevant TVET learning opportunities for all young people and adults throughout their lives, while not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development emphasizes a holistic, equitable and far-sighted approach to decisionmaking at all levels. It emphasizes not just strong economic performance but intra-generational and intergenerational equity. It rests on integration and a balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental goals and objectives in both public and private decision-making.

Climate change and environmental degradation are jeopardising livelihoods and future sustainability in many areas of economic activity around the world. Alongside other drivers of change such as globalisation and rapid technological change, they are increasingly causing important shifts in labour markets and skills needs. Public policies and enterprise strategies in many areas follow calls for innovative, clean and greener economies. Availability of skills for green jobs can play a crucial role in triggering change and facilitating just and timely transitions. These factors are having a great impact on youth development and the ability of youth to respond adequately to these challenges.

Transformation to a green economy will not only generate new jobs, but will also change the scope and character of existing jobs. Providing green skills will require a revision of existing curricula, qualification standards and training programmes. It will also require retraining of teachers and trainers. Stakeholders such as employers and training providers need to work in a long-term partnership to bring about these changes.

For all these reasons, the Third International Congress on TVET devoted a Roundtable on the issue of Skills for Sustainable Development: Transforming TVET for Green Economies and Green Societies. This roundtable discussed, inter-alia, how should TVET provisions be adjusted to meet new demands of a greener society and economy, how can sustainability principles be integrated into TVET programme, assessments and qualifications, and what roles can TVET play in ensuring low-carbon climate-resilient development.

While TVET policy aims and reform choices often call for improved training for TVET teachers and trainers, the low status of TVET teaching as a profession, the low quality and the lack of training are frequent barriers. Also, TVET teachers and trainers are a diverse and dispersed occupational group, and yet they are often expected to provide successful and innovative programmes for ever more heterogeneous groups of learners. Almost everywhere there is a shortage of continuing development of TVET teachers and trainers. For instance, how they will stay 'qualified' and how they will progress in their careers have received little attention.

Policy options regarding TVET teachers' and trainers' learning, skills and career development include the consideration of the competence profile and frameworks that may be appropriate for TVET teachers and trainers, the optimum pre-service TVET teacher and trainer education, a successful induction process and their continuing professional development.

The discussion in the Congress stressed the need for a change of mindset of TVET trainers through a process of re-engineering and re-tooling to embrace new development approaches in pedagogy and acquisition of pedagogical skills. Trainers must have the competencies to guide and counsel learners on the demands of industry and to address the challenges of unemployment and opportunities of self-employment. The recruitment and retention of quality teachers and trainers which are essential for building quality TVET were seen as key challenges. This includes, among others, the problem of "casualization" of teachers' employment, the need to provide professional development, the need to develop vocational practical competency and more broadly the attractiveness of the profession.

The suggestions were made during the TVET Congress that countries need to pay attention to put in place adequate policy and funding mechanisms not only for improving teaching and learning processes but also capacity development in the recruitment, management and professionalization of TVET teachers and trainers at all levels of education including formal and non-formal technical and vocational education and training. Further suggestions were made to develop instruments for promoting research and gathering relevant data to inform the global debate on the teaching professions. Overall, the Congress called countries for action to strengthen their efforts in advancing the 'greening TVET' agenda towards low carbon and climate-resilient growth and development.

In the light of these recommendations, UNESCO-UNEVOC as a UNESCO International Centre for TVET has planned appropriate action to reinforce national, regional and inter-regional strategic cooperation and promote a constructive dialogue between technical and vocational institutions, universities and teachers training institutions and the world of work. Through its action, it is envisaged to identify the areas in which TVET teachers should be trained, the professional skills needed to cope with the changing and diversifying target groups in line with individual and labour market needs and the kind of national and regional and inter-regional cooperation needed in the development of teacher standards for effective learning.

Through its global UNEVOC Network, UNESCO-UNEVOC aims to develop and implement an Action Plan to promote the sharing of experiences, good practices and lessons learnt in mainstreaming greening issues into TVET. Overall, UNESCO-UNEVOC, as a member of the Interagency Working Group, advocates that investment in TVET and skills development initiatives needed for the green transition enhances environmental awareness, competency, innovation and entrepreneurship, and thus opens new market opportunities for environmental goods and services, promotes green innovation and green growth, and puts our world on a more sustainable development path.

Objectives of the International Forum:

The Forum will:

- Validate the mechanisms that will make the UNEVOC Network stronger, more relevant, more effective and more sustainable
- identify strategies to implement the recommendations of the Third TVET Congress through examining the capacity of the UNEVOC Network;
- identify relevant approaches to empower TVET teachers and trainers to critically engage with the complexity of sustainability issues and mainstream these issues into teaching and learning processes;
- promote sharing of experiences, good practices and lessons learned in advancing TVET transformation towards greener economies and societies.
- Foster regional and global partnerships with existing Networks (e.g. Inter-Agency Working Groups, UNESCO Chairs, Regional Economic Communities, etc.)

Key Outputs:

- Recommendations and plans of activities to be implemented by the UNEVOC Network in the next 2 years
- Forum proceeding report including presentations and working group discussions
- Press releases

Outcomes:

- UNEVOC Centres able to prioritise and assist member states for advancement of TVET transformation at national and regional levels;



United Nations
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Education and Training

International Forum on

The role of the UNEVOC Network in transforming TVET for a sustainable future

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- UNEVOC Centres enhanced knowledge of issues related to the preparation of TVET teachers and trainers for advancing greening TVET and mainstreaming these concerns into development policies and practices;
- The member states gained relevant knowledge to develop comprehensive and evidence-based policies for greening TVET and follow up implementation through UNEVOC Network.