



Regional Workshop on Developing TVET Policies Designed to Increase Skills for Employment and Entrepreneurship in Asia-Pacific

23-24 May 2018

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Concept Note

Background

Globally, youth unemployment is on the rise. Emerging economies do not make an exception of this trend: youth unemployment rates in ASEAN developing countries are three to four times higher than adult unemployment rates and continue to grow.¹ In Central Asia, the youth unemployment rates have gradually increased between 2014 and 2017²; Asia-Pacific has some of the globally highest regional youth-to-adult unemployment rates. Increasing evidence indicates that one of the main reasons for this global phenomenon is a growing mismatch between the supply and demand for skills³.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is increasingly seen as a potential means of addressing the youth employment challenges, slow economic growth, poverty, inequality, and the need for sustainability. Promoting TVET is included in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4)-Education 2030 agenda, which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, as stated in Targets 4.3 and 4.4: “ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education” and “substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”, respectively.

For TVET systems to fully contribute to economic, human and sustainable development, its policies and policy measures need to be well balanced, responsive to respective socio-economic contexts and closely aligned with the national economic development agenda.

In this regard, UNESCO Bangkok, with support from the government of the Republic of Korea, launched a project, entitled “Developing TVET Policies Designed to Increase Skills for

¹ Martinez-Fernandez, C. and Powell, M. (November, 2009). *Employment and Skills Strategies in Southeast Asia: Setting the Scene*. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

² International Labor Organization, ILOSTAT database. Data retrieved in March 2017; accessed in February 2018.

³ World Economic Forum. *Matching Skills and Labour Market Needs: Building Social Partnership for Better Skills and Better Jobs*. (January, 2014); Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab. *Skills Training Programs*. (August, 2017); Lim, C. and Grant, A. *Unleashing Youth in Asia: Solving for the “Triple-E” challenge of youth: Education, Employment and Engagement*. The McKinsey Center for Government.

Employment and Entrepreneurship in Alignment with National Economic Plans.” The project aims to enhance Member States’ capacities to develop TVET policies that are designed to increase skills for employment and entrepreneurship, in line with national economic development. Particular attention will be directed to the following two points:

1. TVET policies need to be aligned with national economic development plans and major industrial development strategies -on the macro level.
2. TVET policies, on the micro level, need to aim at boosting employability and entrepreneurship skills of TVET graduates, not only at the upper secondary level but also at tertiary levels and in non-formal TVET.

Apart from fostering youth employment and entrepreneurship, this project will also contribute to strengthening the capacities of respective TVET systems to support accelerated and sustained growth, social equity and continued development⁴.

To achieve the objectives of the project, **country contexts and situations** and **relevant TVET policies** are currently being reviewed, which will allow Member States to align their national policies with national economic plans. Major findings from the country cases will be shared with selected Member States through a **regional workshop**.

In this context, UNESCO Bangkok, UNESCO Almaty and UNESCO Tashkent are jointly organizing a **regional workshop in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from May 23rd to 24th, 2018**. The event will place special focus on developing TVET policy recommendations for employment and entrepreneurship and promoting quality, inclusive learning for all. The workshop will also seek to strengthen and reinforce participants’ capacities to effectively contribute to national TVET development efforts. The implementation framework of SDG 4 and UNESCO’s overall objectives will be emphasized as well. The workshop will share the cases of selected Asia-Pacific countries (i.e., Iran, India, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam) and discuss the issue in the Central Asian context, with focus on a lifelong learning perspective, and other Asia-Pacific countries. This regional engagement will benefit from the participation of a broad range of Asia-Pacific TVET experts.

As the main outputs of the meeting, a **synthesis report** of the case studies will be produced and solid **policy recommendations** will be offered to Member States. These outputs aim to support Member States in developing TVET policies and action plans that can help boost employment and entrepreneurship in line with the national economic plans.

Workshop Objectives

In the context of SDG4 implementation, the specific objectives of the expert meeting are to:

⁴ P.T.M. Marope, B. Chakroun and K.P. Holmes. (2015). [Unleashing the Potential: Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training](#).

1. Introduce regional trends, issues, challenges and opportunities related to fostering youth employment and entrepreneurship;
2. Share the major findings of country cases on TVET for employment and entrepreneurship from selected Asia-Pacific countries;
3. Encourage Asia-Pacific countries to develop and/or adapt good practices that can be applied to national contexts by learning from other Asia-Pacific countries; and
4. Agree on policy recommendations to support in developing TVET policies and action plans, in line with the national economic plans, that can help boost employment and entrepreneurship.

Expected Impact

Contribute to poverty reduction, inclusive economic growth and decent work

Expected Outcomes

- Member states' capacities enhanced to develop TVET Policies aiming at strengthening skills for employment and entrepreneurship
- TVET policies focused on increasing skills for employment and entrepreneurship

Expected Outputs

- Priority areas for policy actions regarding employment and entrepreneurship identified
- A synthesis report, including country cases and policy recommendations, developed

Expected Participants

- Policy makers and ministry officials in charge of developing TVET policies
- Vocational institutions and TVET institutions
- Private sector
- Civil society organizations
- International agencies (e.g., the European Union, DVV International, GIZ)

Date & Venue

23-24 May 2018
Radisson Blu Hotel, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Methodology

Through presentations, discussions and group work, the workshop participants will identify the most critical issues and agree on policy recommendations to develop TVET Policies that can help to strengthen skills for employment and entrepreneurship.

Language

English and Russian will be the working language of the workshop.

Organizers

- UNESCO Bangkok
- UNESCO Almaty
- UNESCO Tashkent

Tentative Programme

Day 1 (Wednesday, May 23rd)

- Opening Remarks
- Meeting Objectives
- Project Background and Global and Regional Overviews
- Case Studies: TVET Policies for Employment and Entrepreneurship
- Panel Discussions

Day 2 (Thursday, May 24th)

- Field trip to professional colleagues in Tashkent
- Recap of Day 1
- Group Work: TVET Policy Recommendations on Employment and Entrepreneurship
- TVET in the Context of Lifelong Learning – Cases from Central Asia