



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Third International Congress on  
Technical and Vocational Education and Training  
Shanghai, People's Republic of China, 14-16 May 2012

ISSUE NO.  
December 2016

6

# SHANGHAI UPDATE



Follow-up on the UNESCO Third International TVET Congress

## Editorial

### What UNESCO is doing for sustainable development



David Atchoarena © UNESCO

UNESCO's TVET strategy is both a call to action and a clear explanation of how the transformation of TVET can contribute to sustainable development. Indeed, the strategy, with its focus on the economic (youth employment and entrepreneurship), the social (equity and gender equality) and the environmental (the transition to green economies), is all about sustainable development.

We would like to use this sixth edition of Shanghai Update to tell you about the work UNESCO is doing to put this strategy into practice. We hope this can provide some inspiration for your own efforts to transform TVET and make it an even more powerful tool for contributing to sustainable development.

A top priority of our work has been supporting Member States to review and develop their TVET systems to meet the demands for skills of individuals, economies and societies. We have also been working in Latin America and Caribbean, South African Development Community and ASEAN where we are advancing the regional TVET agenda, peer learning and capacity building.

At the COP22 climate talks last November, we aimed to highlight once more the important role that TVET and skills can play in preparing for new forms of work as countries move to make their economies and societies more green and inclusive. Working with other organizations has long been a part of the UNESCO ethos. In the past few months, we have been continuing to do so as part of the Inter-Agency Group on TVET, where our partners share our concern with youth employment and equitable access and outcomes in TVET and where all are busy considering the future of work and its implications for skills in times of rapid change.

Our ongoing work with qualifications experts on developing a set of World Reference Levels for TVET cuts across all three pillars of the TVET strategy. It is all about building learning pathways, breaking down the barriers between different parts of the education system and facilitating the comparability and recognition of skills and qualifications within and across borders.

Finally, UNESCO-UNEVOC's TVET leadership programme is a way to help senior managers of TVET institutions become agents of change at grassroots level. It aims to facilitate their efforts to green their institutions and to reach out to the world of work.

**David Atchoarena**  
Director, Division for Policies and  
Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO

## Putting UNESCO's 2016–2021 TVET strategy into practice

**A** strategic document, such as UNESCO's blueprint for supporting Member States' efforts to reform TVET over the coming five years, is an important milestone. But the way it is put into practice could be even more so.

Known informally as the roadmap, UNESCO's action plan for implementing its new *2016–2021 TVET strategy* was approved in October 2016. The document gives plenty of information on how UNESCO aims to help Member States transform their TVET systems and meet some of the challenges of the new 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

Like the strategy, the roadmap is structured around three priority areas and cross-cutting themes. It also comes equipped with targets and expected results.

In the area of youth employment and entrepreneurship, UNESCO will continue to provide policy support and capacity building to Member States, helping countries to renew their policies and create better conditions for creating decent work and opportunities for young people. Fostering partnerships with the private sector in TVET is another area of work. "It is not just about asking the private sector to contribute to the cost of TVET, it is about involving it in the governance and steering of TVET" says Borhene Chakroun, Chief of UNESCO's Youth, Literacy and Skills Development Section. UNESCO has developed a methodology which governments can use to engage with the private sector for setting priorities and forecasting how much resources can be mobilized. Meanwhile UNESCO-UNEVOC has launched a TVET leadership programme which aims to empower senior managers of TVET institutions.



Creative Commons © Flickr/Amira

When it comes to equity and gender equality, a tough problem persists. "Where there is access for women, it often doesn't translate into a good job," says Mr Chakroun. Women typically train for a limited number of trades, such as hairdressing or retail, for which there is little demand on the labour market. Therefore UNESCO is developing tools for mainstreaming gender issues in TVET policies and programmes and is compiling relevant promising practices in order to produce a set of guidelines. It is encouraging countries to work on improving career guidance, mobilizing employers and ensuring TVET institutions provide a conducive atmosphere and the right facilities to attract and accommodate female students as well as easing their transition into work once qualified.

Facilitating the transition to green economies and sustainable societies is a complex affair where UNESCO is working on several fronts. UNESCO-UNEVOC has developed a guide on greening TVET institutions due to be published soon. UNESCO is now working on a framework which countries can use to gauge how ready their education and training systems are to start the transition to green economies and societies.

The impact of digitization of economies and societies on the demand for skills is another important area. "In Member States you have new ICT jobs, mobile, automation, the Internet of objects, the use of data analytics and all of this is changing the landscape of the labour market and the demand for skills," says Mr Chakroun, "we are trying to support countries to see what strategy they need to stay ahead of the game."

## Education for sustainable development – changing behaviour at COP22

**E**ducation is key when it comes to climate action. It can raise awareness about the need to take care of the planet while at the same time promoting the changes in behaviour needed to do so. The vital role of education for the environment has been enshrined in international agreements from the 2014 Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development or ESD to the new Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 13 or the Paris Agreement at COP21. It also explains why a whole day, 14 November, was dedicated to education and skills at the recent COP22 climate talks in Marrakesh, Morocco.

UNESCO and its partners organized plenty of events to mark the occasion. These included a discussion on what policies are needed to enhance skills for the transition to green growth and employment, co-organized by UNESCO's Section on Literacy, Youth and Skills and UNESCO-UNEVOC. With panellists from the *International Labour Organization*, Canada's *CIRADD* and Burkina Faso's Mama Light Initiative, it discussed the key building blocks for successful policy implementation and how these could work on multiple levels and across different sectors. The role of the private sector and institutions who can deliver local solutions was also considered to be important.

On November 15, UNESCO-UNEVOC and seven UNEVOC Network members discussed their experiences of adapting TVET curricula and teacher training to integrate the concept of sustainability. Experiences in introducing sustainable practices to the way institutions are run, conduct research and engage with local communities were also presented.

Greening TVET is one more way education contributes to sustainable development. Writing a recent *commentary* for Project Syndicate, UNESCO's Irina Bokova and Christiana Figueres, former Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, spelled out the rationale. "Education provides the skills people need to thrive in the new sustainable economy, working in areas such as renewable energy, smart agriculture, forest rehabilitation, the design of resource-efficient cities, and sound management of healthy ecosystems. Perhaps most important, education can bring about a fundamental shift in how we think, act, and discharge our responsibilities toward one another and the planet."



Panel discussion on investing in skills development at Marrakesh © UNESCO-UNEVOC

## Future of work and skills focuses minds in Geneva

**H**ow to connect education and work in the Sustainable Development Agenda and how skills development should prepare for the changing nature of work were major topics of debate at the recent meeting of the Inter-Agency Group on TVET (IAG-TVET) in Geneva, Switzerland on 10 November 2016.

The search for synergies was behind the efforts to co-ordinate work on Sustainable Development Goal or SDG4 on education and SDG8 on decent work. The presence at the meeting of Dankert Vedeler, Co-chair of the SDG Education 2030 Steering Committee, was an important step in this direction. "The very spirit of the 2030 Agenda is to see the mutual interdependency between the 17 goals and how they support and complement each other," he said, inviting the IAG-TVET members to join forces with the committee.

Following a presentation by the ILO on how it intends to monitor progress towards SDG8, the agencies agreed that indicators could be the best way to connect work on the two goals, especially through the specific targets for vocational skills.

The spread of digital technologies, creating a trend towards flexible, project-based employment, is having a huge impact on work and skills development. The extent to which this will present opportunities or disruption for workers and for society in general is something that agencies such as UNESCO, the International Labour Organization, the *Organisation for*



Future of jobs and skills at the heart of the debate © UNESCO/Aleksandrs Dunasovs

*Economic Co-operation and Development* and the European Commission are all exploring. At the meeting, participants agreed to share information on this area and to decide whether it should become a specific focus of IAG-TVET's work when it meets in Turin, Italy next June 2017.

Another example of inter-agency cooperation came in the form of a UNESCO-Cedefop global conference – Skills, jobs and sustainable development; global trends, local challenges – held in Paris, France on 20–21 October 2016. Attended by over 125 policymakers, stakeholders and experts from around the world, the event looked at global tendencies and local challenges in matching skills to a fast-changing job market.

## TVET qualifications – in search of a common language

**Qualifications experts moved forwards with the work on developing a set of world reference levels of learning outcomes (WRLs) at the fifth meeting of this expert group in Brussels, Belgium on 24–25 November 2016.**

Convened by UNESCO, the group aims to facilitate comparing and recognising TVET qualifications between countries. It uses a bottom-up approach of connecting the regional qualification frameworks that are currently being developed around the world, in response to a recommendation made by the Shanghai Consensus in 2012.

In Brussels, experts reviewed progress with these regional frameworks and discussed a global analysis of level descriptors and what this could mean for WRLs. A comparative study of referencing processes, also presented, found there is no single model for referencing used across the world, although examples such as the European Qualification Framework have had some influence globally.

Jens Bjornavold, senior expert at *Cedefop*, presented the European handbook on defining and writing learning outcomes for VET. Still being developed, the handbook launched a discussion on how subject-related outcomes

could be linked to work requirements and the different ways terms and concepts are understood in different parts of the world. This was followed by presentations on the US's Connecting Credentials Initiative, the prospects for an African Qualification Framework and progress on UNESCO's quality assurance of qualifications guidelines in Asia-Pacific.

Borhene Chakroun, Chief of UNESCO's Youth, Literacy and Skills Development Section, expressed satisfaction with the constructive dialogue that has been launched since the first meeting in 2014. Developing a set of WRLs remains a long-term ambition but "I feel we have made progress. We have put the issue of recognising TVET qualifications firmly on the international agenda when before this was not the case. Now, with the refugee crisis for instance, people see the value of such tools," he said.

## UNEVOC leadership programme: a passion for changing TVET

**T**wenty-two senior managers of TVET institutions from around the world attended UNESCO-UNEVOC's first programme on TVET leadership in Bonn, Germany on 17–28 October 2016. The intensive two-week programme, the first of its kind, aims to empower leaders of TVET institutions so they can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in their daily work. "One of the main bottlenecks to change is the lack of transformational leaders at grassroots level – this programme provides an excellent opportunity for institutional leaders to become change agents in their institutions, localities, nations and regions," writes Head of UNESCO-UNEVOC Shyamal Majumdar in the programme foreword.

Marcia Rowe, Senior Director of TVET Development and Support Systems at Heart Trust NTA in Jamaica, was attracted to the programme by the focus on leadership skills. "How do I get others on-board, how can I lead effectively through others by igniting their passion for change?" she asked. Like Luis Cateura, Manager of the Self-Sufficient Schools Programme at Fundación Paraguaya in Paraguay, he also valued the session



Participants in the UNEVOC TVET Leadership Programme © UNESCO-UNEVOC

on writing proposals. "We have lots of good ideas but we often fall down when it comes to writing them down," said Mr Cateura.

During the second week, the participants each developed a proposal for change to take home. Working with TVET heads from Brazil and Mexico, "we want to achieve the first green TVET school in Latin America," said Mr Cateura, "this doesn't just mean using renewables, it means changes which go much deeper."

Ms Rowe proposes improving the support for capacity building for Jamaican teachers. "What comes after you have done the workshop?" she asked, "you can't just go back to your institution and make changes all by yourself." She is now talking to colleagues about the possibility of creating a portal where people who have done training together could share relevant content and stay in touch to keep motivated and provide mutual support. "It is important to put mechanisms in place to support the learning when you have finished the workshop," she said.

The next *UNEVOC TVET Leadership Programme* is expected to be held in autumn 2017.

## Recent and upcoming events

**Third Expert Meeting on quality assurance of TVET qualifications in Asia-Pacific. 31 October–1 November 2016, Bangkok, Thailand**

International experts and national stakeholders from ten countries held a review of the study of quality assurance mechanisms in 12 Asia-Pacific countries conducted recently by UNESCO Bangkok.

**Skills and Technical Education Programme inception workshop in Southern Africa. 18 November 2016, Lilongwe, Malawi**

60 TVET stakeholders met to discuss the Skills and Technical Education Programme in Malawi. Funded by the European Union, the project aims to promote equitable and gender-balanced TVET in Malawi, while boosting quality and relevance and strengthening managerial capacity.

**TVET as a means to achieve sustainable development. 1–2 December 2016, Quito, Ecuador**

Organized by *SETEC* and Ecuador's Ministry of Knowledge and Human Resources with support from UNESCO's Quito Regional Office and UNESCO-UNEVOC, the forum brought together over 200 TVET experts and stakeholders from the Andean region. They

discussed Ecuador's recently developed TVET qualification system and looked for ways of further strengthening the TVET sector in line with the international frameworks and policy developments.

**Enhancing partnerships between TVET institutions and the world of work in the Arab States. 18–20 December 2016, Amman, Jordan**

This regional learning policy forum gathered over 25 participants representing TVET institutions and the private sector from 9 countries in the Arab region to discuss how to build and sustain partnerships between the worlds of education and work. The forum was organized by the *NCHRD* in Jordan, supported by UNESCO-UNEVOC.

**Virtual conference: Private sector engagement in TVET. 16–20 January 2017, UNESCO-UNEVOC TVeT Forum**

The seventeenth edition of this virtual conference will look at ways of engaging the private sector in the financing of TVET.

**Sub-regional workshop in South Asia. 20–22 February 2017, Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Organized by UNESCO-UNEVOC, this sub-regional workshop will share experiences and expertise on innovations and promising practices in quality assurance of TVET in South Asia. The forum is organized by the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission in Sri Lanka, supported by UNESCO-UNEVOC.

**Third International Conference on TVET in the Caribbean. 10–12 May 2017, Kingston, Jamaica**

Entitled TVET for Sustainable Regional Development, this international conference aims to encourage actors from the region to integrate sustainable principles into TVET policies, practice and programmes.

## Recently published

**Global Education Monitoring Report, 2016. Education for people and planet: creating sustainable futures for all. UNESCO, 2016**

**Learning knowledge and skills for agriculture to improve rural livelihoods. Anna Robinson-Pant, 2016**

**Making youth entrepreneurship a viable path. How can TVET institutions help promote entrepreneurship. UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2016**

**UNESCO-UNEVOC Biennial report 2014–2015. UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2016**

Shanghai Update  
Issue No. 6, December 2016  
ISSN 2308-5487

Published by



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Third International Congress on  
Technical and Vocational Education and Training  
Shanghai, People's Republic of China, 14–16 May 2012

UNEVOC

International Centre  
for Technical and Vocational  
Education and Training

UNESCO  
Section for Youth, Literacy  
and Skills Development  
7, place de Fontenoy  
75352 Paris 07 SP, France  
Tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 10 00  
Fax: +33 (0)1 45 67 16 90  
3TVET@unesco.org  
www.unesco.org/education

UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre  
for Technical and Vocational Education and Training  
UN Campus  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1  
53113 Bonn, Germany  
Tel. +49 228 815 0100  
Fax +49 228 815 0199  
unevoc@unesco.org  
www.unevoc.unesco.org