



New Qualifications and  
Competencies in TVET



## TVET Pitso Forum

Innovation and Learning Practice

Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET (BILT) Project

**Submitted by the Human Resource Development Council, Botswana**

After acknowledging that TVET in Botswana did not enjoy the best reputation and was not adequately preparing learners for the world of work, the country's Human Resource Development Council came up with a platform for stakeholders to identify and introduce new qualifications and competencies into a revamped TVET system.

Start date: February 2019

Type of implementing institution: National body

Target group: Institutions and industry (sectors), professional bodies, development agencies in Botswana

## Human Resource Development Council, Botswana

Botswana's Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) was established in 2013. Acting in a supervisory capacity and as the government's advisor on human resource development, the HRDC provides a platform for the public and private sectors in addition to civic stakeholders to act in concert in driving the country's National Human Resource Development Strategy (NHRDS). HRDC coordinates efforts by all parties to study Botswana's education and skills development mechanisms, assess their impact on national priorities and identify barriers to the effective delivery of the NHRDS. The implementation of these targeted solutions is driven by a set of clear initiatives that are coordinated, promoted and overseen by the HRDC in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

## Description of activities

After recognizing a lack of proper coordination in TVET curriculum development and delivery in Botswana, HRDC established the country's TVET Pitso Forum in 2019. The Forum serves as a platform for dialogue with key stakeholders in TVET aimed at developing interventions to address TVET's reputation, inadequate funding and low absorption of TVET graduates by the labour market. Interventions and recommendations developed at the Pitso Forum are passed to the ministry in charge of developing and/or reviewing relevant TVET policy. TVET institutions review curricula, delivery and programme development based on the forum's findings and interventions with corresponding guidance and regulation from the ministry.

The Pitso Forum represents a holistic approach of involving the entire competencies ecosystem, and a method for bringing a wide range of stakeholders to the table to discuss new qualifications and competencies (NQC) for a relevant and attractive TVET.

## Relevance

### What shortcomings in the TVET system is the Pitso Forum meant to address?

TVET in Botswana suffers from an image problem, which is compounded by a lack of funding and resources. As a result, TVET graduates are often less employable due to an industry skills mismatch, are missing entrepreneurial and sector-specific soft skills and are not job-ready due to a lack of work-based learning. Proposed solutions to these problems include:

- prioritizing TVET through policy advice and resourcing,
- promoting participation of the industry in TVET reforms and provision,

- encouraging recognition and uptake of TVET by prospective learners, and
- advocating for quality and relevant TVET to enhance graduates' employability.

The Pitso Forum creates a platform for addressing these challenges and pursuing solutions among stakeholders in Botswana's TVET system.

### How does HRDC ensure that the Pitso Forum agenda aligns with priorities of the TVET sector?

HRDC took its cues from national strategies in Botswana, Vision 2036 and the National Development Plan, to address two key national problems: youth unemployment and poverty. The same strategies identified the need for education and skills development and a knowledge-based economy. Applied to TVET, this meant creating broad objectives and identifying thematic areas for facilitating discussion and developing solutions. Within this framework, HRDC was able to bring a wide range of relevant TVET stakeholders to the table. Enabled by HRDC's framework, these stakeholders took several significant steps for improving TVET and introducing NQC into the system for the benefit of young learners.

## Added value

### How did the Pitso Forum specifically address issues pertaining to curriculum or learning content?

In addition to addressing 'structural' issues such as proper funding for TVET programmes, the Pitso Forum specifically developed a workstream for examining quality and relevance of TVET to labour market needs. This resulted in two key findings that have impacted the identification and integration of NQC in the TVET system: the first was that a lack of dialogue between TVET institutions and industry players was contributing to the skills mismatch. The second was the need for regular review of curricular programmes to ensure outdated learning material was not being delivered. Memorandums of understanding between TVET providers and industry stakeholders (both represented at the Pitso Forum) have helped address the first issue, while revised policy has introduced regular review of TVET curricula and processes for updating or creating new curricula in response to the second issue.

### What permanent changes to the TVET system were facilitated by the forum?

Notable changes affecting NQC in Botswana's TVET system include a standardized model for attachments, apprenticeship training and student internships. This engaged stakeholders on all sides of the work-based training equation to create structures for these placements to occur in the first place, but also for identifying the skills and competencies to be learned and developing training standards and tools to facilitate delivery. TVET trainers have also benefitted from a shift in focus on train-the-trainer programmes; these are now more relevant and up-to-date with opportunities for trainers to take part in industry

placements. Finally, systems for review and monitoring have been put into place to ensure well-structured and coordinated TVET programmes informed by an industry skills-need matrix. This has resulted in new curricula that include key competencies such as entrepreneurship, research innovation and information and communications technology.

### **In what way has a mindset shift occurred among stakeholders?**

With its large emphasis on NQC, participation in the Pitso Forum was an eye-opening experience for many stakeholders in the TVET system. For example, industry participants realized they were not always fully prepared to take on TVET learners for work placements or internships. Engagement with TVET providers and learners has increased as industry stakeholders became aware of the mutual benefits of work placements. In addition, many sectors realized they were behind the curve when it came to in-demand skills and competencies – the need for a labour market observatory has been recognized and is being pursued. Ministries and departments tasked with supervising and steering TVET have discovered new roles and functions after observing that the fragmentation of the existing system was ineffective and contributing to Botswana's TVET sector problems.

## **Transferability**

### **How can the benefits of the Pitso Forum be realized in other country contexts?**

The main takeaway of the Pitso Forum is that a clear agenda for TVET reform helps facilitate stakeholder dialogue on addressing challenges and finding solutions. The Pitso Forum included a wide range of stakeholders, such as ministry representatives, industry partners, TVET institutions, international bodies, universities, local administrations, and regulatory bodies. Collectively, they addressed five objectives, which were divided into four sub-themes (a breakdown can be found in the executive summary of the **Pitso Report 2019**). In other contexts, it might make sense for fewer stakeholders to tackle just one objective or unpack a few items covered in the sub-themes. This could be in a less formal setting than a dedicated event like the Pitso Forum or as part of a collaboration that already exists.

### **HRDC has a central role in TVET in Botswana – how can decentralized stakeholders launch such an initiative?**

Due to its position in Botswana's TVET system, it was appropriate for HRDC to take on a leadership and coordinating role in developing the Pitso Forum. While not all TVET stakeholders have the mandate or resources to replicate this task, the **Pitso Report 2019** contains detailed information about contributions and responsibilities taken on by a variety of stakeholders in each of the forum's objectives and sub-themes. By identifying a similar contributor in the Pitso Forum context, stakeholders in other TVET systems can gain a sense of what is appropriate, feasible and effective for them to bring about change to TVET systems and contribute to the identification and implementation of NQC.

**HRDC's TVET Pitso Forum is one of the BILT project's Innovation and Learning Practices that address systemic challenges within the five work streams of the project. Specifically, HRDC's initiative addresses new qualifications and competencies in TVET:**



### **New Qualifications and Competencies**

- *Identifying new qualifications and competencies in a timely manner;*
- *Integrating them into appealing and flexible curricula and training regulations; and*
- *Implementing them in innovative training approaches*

### **Additional Innovation and Learning Practices cover the following areas:**



#### **Digitalization in TVET**



#### **Entrepreneurship in TVET**



#### **Greening TVET**



#### **Migration and TVET**

---

#### **Contact person:**

Dr Ellah Matshediso, Director, Human Resource Development Planning Supply, Botswana  
[ematshediso@hrdc.org.bw](mailto:ematshediso@hrdc.org.bw)

For more information about this practice:

The **Pitso Report 2019** mentioned above is intended to reference HRDC's starting point.

More insights can be gained from the **Pitso Report 2021** and **related documents**.

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors; they are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

© UNESCO, 2021

This document is available in Open Access under the Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO (CC-BY-SA 3.0 IGO) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/igo/>).

By using the content of this publication, the users accept to be bound by the terms of use of the UNESCO Open Access Repository (<http://www.unesco.org/open-access/terms-use-ccbysa-en>).

Cover photo: [gorodenkoff/Gettyimages.de](https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/stock-photo/gorodenkoff)

Design: Christiane Marwecki

---

## About the BILT Project

UNESCO-UNEVOC's Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET (BILT) project is a reference point for innovation and learning in TVET. It utilizes the international UNEVOC Network to create opportunities for collaboration and a platform for bridging innovation and learning between Europe, Africa and the Asia-Pacific region. BILT complements developments at the national level in supporting innovative, market-oriented and attractive modes of learning and cooperation in TVET.

The BILT project explores the process of identifying, integrating and implementing new qualifications and competencies in TVET. This is known as the 'three I's process'. In addition to the broad focus on new qualifications and competencies, BILT addresses four complementary themes: Digitalization and TVET, Greening TVET, Entrepreneurship in TVET, and Migration and TVET.

For more information, please visit

[www.unevoc.unesco.org/bilt](http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/bilt)

or contact us at

[unevoc.bilt@unesco.org](mailto:unevoc.bilt@unesco.org)

## New Qualifications and Competencies in TVET

- Identifying new qualifications and competencies in a timely manner;
- Integrating them into appealing and flexible curricula and training regulations; and
- Implementing them in innovative training approaches

## Entrepreneurship in TVET

Unlocking the potential of innovative entrepreneurial activities and fostering entrepreneurial culture

## Greening TVET

Responding to new development paradigms for sustainability and reduced environmental impact

## Digitalization in TVET

Providing response to new skills demands, as technology has permeated the world of work and is changing the profile of jobs

## Migration and TVET

Accelerating the integration of migrants into their host communities, and allowing them to become productive members of the workforce

IMPLEMENTED BY



WITH SUPPORT OF



SPONSORED BY THE

