



UNEVOC

International Centre  
for Technical and Vocational  
Education and Training

# Virtual conference on inclusion in technical and vocational education and training

*1-12 July 2019 on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVeT Forum*

## Topic at a glance

### Article 26 of the Declaration of Human Rights. 'Everyone has the right to education'

Every young person and adult has the right to education and training – this has been well established and recognized in numerous political frameworks, including UNESCO's [Convention against Discrimination in Education](#) (1960). Inclusion also features prominently in Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education, which calls on Member States to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. In particular, ensuring equal access to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is critical; due to its link to the labour market, TVET plays an important role in many countries as an enabler for social mobility, helping young people and adults' transition to employment and decent work.

Earlier discussions on inclusion in education and training, such as those that took place at the World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994) that culminated in the Salamanca Statement, focused on persons with disability or special education needs. However, the concept of inclusion in education includes all learners including groups that are excluded or at the risk of being marginalized. The upcoming [UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report](#) on 'Inclusion and Education' (2020) – UNESCO's flagship publication and comprehensive, analytical and authoritative reference for the global follow-up and review of education – puts particular focus on 'the poor and the most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health and those with special learning needs' (UNESCO, 2018, p.4).

This virtual conference focuses on inclusion in TVET and provides an opportunity for the TVET community to discuss and share knowledge and experiences in this area. The conference will enable participants to understand different aspects of an inclusive system; from policies and strategies to learning environments and the role of stakeholders (as well as others). Insights gained from the virtual conference will contribute to the preparation of the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report on 'Inclusion and Education'.

## Structure and expected outcomes

The virtual conference aims to:

- Discuss where TVET systems stand when it comes to ensuring inclusiveness, with special focus on particularly vulnerable groups
- Deepen understanding of issues and identify suitable measures to support inclusive TVET
- Gather insights and evidence from the international TVET community to contribute to the UNESCO's 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report under preparation

The following topics will be opened for discussion during the virtual conference:

Monday, 1 July	Thread 1	What is understood by inclusive TVET?
Tuesday, 2 July	Thread 2	National legal frameworks and policies/strategies for inclusive TVET
Thursday, 4 July	Thread 3	Inclusive learning environments – schools' infrastructure, curricula, and learning materials
Monday, 8 July	Thread 4	Teachers and trainers
Tuesday, 9 July	Thread 5	Communities, parents, and students
Wednesday, 10 July	Thread 6	Monitoring and evaluation
Thursday, 11 July	Thread 7	Transition to the labour market

At the end of this virtual conference, participants will be able to:

- Understand what is meant by inclusive TVET and identify different groups that are particularly vulnerable;
- Explore the role of national legal frameworks and policies/strategies that promote the development of an inclusive TVET system;
- Appreciate different approaches (mainstreaming/specific targeted interventions) to making TVET programmes inclusive (including in curricula and learning materials and assessment; pedagogical approaches; campus infrastructure; school policies; and career guidance and counselling);
- Identify obstacles to the implementation of programmes to make TVET more inclusive;
- Discuss the roles of different stakeholders (teachers, trainers, communities, parents and students) in making TVET programmes inclusive;
- Understand the role inclusive TVET can play to facilitate graduates' transition to the world of work.

## Threads and leading questions

### Thread 1: What is understood by inclusive TVET?

What is meant by inclusion in TVET? Conventionally, the concept of inclusion is used in reference to persons with disabilities. However, understanding of the concept has broadened to include all learners. The definition of inclusive education adopted by the 2020 GEM Report covers the 'full and effective participation, accessibility, attendance and achievement of all students especially those who for different reasons are excluded or at risk of being marginalized' (UNESCO, 2018, p. 4); particular attention is given to vulnerable groups such as 'the poor and the most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health and those with special learning needs' (as understood in the 2020 GEMR concept note). While discussions in this virtual conference will be guided by the definitions used for the forthcoming 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report, countries may have different understandings of inclusive education and training for various reasons. This thread aims to understand how inclusive TVET is conceptualized in different contexts.

#### Leading questions

- How is inclusive education and training defined in your country?
- What different groups are particularly vulnerable?
- Are there any groups of people that are prioritised and if so, could you explain why?

#### Learning material

- UNESCO. 2017. *A Guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000248254.locale=en>

## Thread 2: National legal frameworks and policies/strategies for inclusive TVET

Laws, policies, and strategies are very important for ensuring inclusive TVET. They demonstrate governments' commitments while also providing the framework within which actions can be taken and followed through by stakeholders. While many countries have ratified international laws and conventions – including the Convention against Discrimination in Education, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees – there are variations in how these are reflected in national frameworks. In many implementation lags behind. The aim of this thread is to understand how the legal and policy frameworks in place at national levels promote inclusive TVET.

### Leading questions

- How is inclusive and equitable education addressed in legal frameworks and policies?
- Is there a specific legal framework or national strategy that aims to make TVET inclusive?
- Which stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of such legal frameworks and policies/strategies?

## Thread 3: Inclusive learning environments – learning environment, curricula, and learning materials and assessment

While policies and strategies can provide a framework, access to and full participation and achievement in education and training depends on the extent to which learning environments cater to the needs of each learner. This includes the provision of infrastructure, curricula and learning materials that accommodate the needs of learners, but also assessment taking into account such needs.

### Leading questions

- Are TVET programmes in your country inclusive?
- What are the different approaches (mainstreaming/specific targeted interventions)?
- What are the obstacles to the implementation of programmes to make TVET more inclusive?

## Thread 4: Teachers and trainers

In addition to ensuring inclusive learning environments (in terms of infrastructure, school policies, curricula and training materials, etc.), training institutions also need to equip teachers and trainers with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to deal with diversity effectively.

### Leading questions

- What skills, knowledge and attitudes are important for TVET teachers and trainers to have to operate in inclusive learning environments?
- How is inclusion addressed in pre- and in-service training for teachers and trainers?
- How can teachers be prepared to address the diverse needs of learners?

## Thread 5: Communities, parents, and students

Stakeholder partnerships have always been central to the delivery of TVET. While the involvement of all TVET stakeholders is important, there is little evidence on the role of communities, parents, and learners in promoting inclusive TVET systems. The aim of this thread is to gather evidence regarding the involvement of parents, communities and learners in the decision making and delivery of inclusive TVET in your countries. This discussion is important because research shows that where parents are involved in the provision of inclusive education, outcomes are positive. On the other hand, when they do not understand the goal of inclusive education, their behaviours inhibit progress (Palmer, Fuller and Nelson, 2001).

### Leading questions

- What are the roles of communities, parents and students in the implementation of programmes that aim to make TVET more inclusive?
- How are the different stakeholders approached and included in such initiatives?
- What are the obstacles to reaching out and including such stakeholders?

## Thread 6: Monitoring and evaluation

Inclusion is a process, but records of progress made help to identify successes and challenges that can be worked on. Data and monitoring framework are very important to assess the needs and respond effectively to those. In this respect, participants are asked to contribute to the leading questions below.

### Leading questions

- Are policy and programme interventions in inclusive TVET being monitored and assessed?
- How are policy and programme interventions monitored and evaluated? What data is collected?
- How is the presence, participation and achievement of learners from particularly vulnerable groups documented?

## Thread 7: Transition to the labour market

While ensuring equal access to quality education and training increases graduates' chances of gaining access to decent employment, the transition from training to employment is sometimes challenging for some groups of people such as ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and forced migrants. For example, persons with disabilities can face challenges related to support of family and employers, the structure of work and the work environment. Alla-Mensah et al (2018) also map some of the issues that confront migrants in the labour market and how TVET can be better organized to respond to their needs. Some of these include recognition of skills and prior learning, support learning the local language, advice and guidance. This thread will take into consideration the nature of work and focus on factors that help and inhibit graduates to transition to the labour market.

### Leading questions

- What are the opportunities and obstacles when it comes to young and adult learners' transition to the labour market?
- Are there any support systems that facilitate graduates' transition to the labour market (at the school and system level)?
- Is the private sector involved in the development and implementation of policies/strategies and programmes that aim to make the labour market more inclusive? If yes, how are they approached and what is their role?

## About the moderator



Joyceline Alla-Mensah is a doctoral student at the School of Education, University of Nottingham, with research focus on TVET in formal and informal contexts and international education and development. She was part of a team that produced a report on human migration and TVET for UNESCO-UNEVOC in 2018 and aspects of that work featured in the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report. Prior to pursuing a doctoral programme at the University of Nottingham, she was a junior fellow at United Nations University in Tokyo. She holds an MSc in Development Studies from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a BA in Political Science from the University of Ghana.

## References

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