

Summary of the DRC report on the E/T continuum

The technical and vocational education (TVET) sub-sector is considered to be part of the education system and is a priority for the DRC government. Its purpose is to create a skilled and competitive workforce which the country needs in order to pursue its development and solve the difficult problem of youth employment, which is a source of social unrest. For these reasons, in December 2014 the government established a ministry to specifically deal with TVET.

1. Basic data on education among the population

- a) **EFA gross enrolment ratio:** by 2015, almost 100% of children were at primary school against, compared to 66% in 2012.
- b) **EFA gross completion rate:** 62% in 2014, compared to 29% in 2000. However, there is a high dropout rate.
- c) **Rate of transition to secondary education:** 70% in 2012 for transition between primary school and the two-year cycle of lower secondary education, and 58% between lower and upper secondary school.
- d) **Rate of transition to higher education:** there has been a significant increase in the number of students, from 264 to 476 per 100,000 of the population. The gross enrolment ratio in higher education in the DRC is 6.5% compared to an average of 8.2% in sub-Saharan Africa. The GER for 2025 will still be below 10%.

The education budget increased from 6.4% of the national budget in 2010 to 13.5% in 2014. However, 95% of expenditure goes on teachers' salaries, which means there is little left to spend on efforts to improve quality.

2. Basic data on technical and vocational training/TVSD

The 1-2-3 surveys in 2005 showed that there is a direct causal link between poverty and employment. Indeed, 70% of the poor are either unemployed or underemployed. Furthermore, among those aged 15 to 35, who account for over 25% of the population, 28% are unemployed, whereas the national average is estimated to be 6%. The fact that the unemployment rate for young people aged 15 to 24 is 17.8%, and that they account for more than half of the workforce means that it is necessary to reform vocational training policy and strategies for helping young people into the labour market.

- EFA enrolment rate: 20% of learners.
- The number of young people in traditional and reformed apprenticeships: these schemes come under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Humanitarian Action and National Solidarity (MAS), which plans to train 360,000 young people a year through skills development and job training schemes.
- The number/rate of young people trained on the job: the National Institute of Professional Preparation (INPP) is responsible for helping people find

occupations and jobs as well as for intensive training schemes for new young and adult workers.

- The number of young people neither in education, employment or training: 82% of children aged 5 to 17, around 7.6 million, of whom a large proportion are girls and children from disadvantaged backgrounds, are still excluded from education.

There is a significant lack of data on vocational training and the labour market in the DRC, which explains the lack of reliable information on this subject.

3. Reasons for the lack of continuity between education and training, and possible ways to remedy the problem

The causes of the lack of continuity can be analysed as follows.

- The lack of quality and relevance of education and under-qualification of teachers. Only 17.4% of public secondary teachers are qualified and 63% of them teach in urban areas.
- TVET is underdeveloped and there are serious deficiencies in terms of content, education levels and equipment.
- The material conditions for students are poor: 60% of establishments have no water source and 87% have no electricity. 90% have inadequate equipment or none at all.
- Parents' financial contributions can be as high as 70% of the cost in some provinces.
- TVET is perceived as a teaching reserved for students who have failed.
- TVET content is obsolete, ill-adapted to the socioeconomic situation and there are no partnerships with businesses.
- There is a lack of cooperation between the sub-sectors of education. This is reflected in the fact that schemes run by ministries directly responsible for primary, secondary (including TVET) and higher education are considered to be formal, while those which come under the responsibility of the MAS or the Ministry of Sports and Youth (MINEJES) are considered to be non-formal.

The best way to tackle the lack of continuity is to develop non-formal schemes implemented by the MAS. They are as follows:

- Three-year remedial primary school education for 9 to 14 year olds who are outside school or who have dropped out.
- Literacy schemes (lasting 1 to 3 years) for young people allowing them to acquire basic skills.
- Three-year vocational training courses in centres to prepare young people to enter a trade.
- 1 to 6-month functional literacy schemes for adults and skills development through modular training courses.

4. Analysis of different education and training options on offer

The formal education system is characterised by limited the geographical coverage of secondary schools and higher education establishments. Poor attendance, under-qualified teachers and above all limited internal efficiency have led to very high drop-out rates. The non-formal system also has shortcomings, given the high drop-out rate

and high level of illiteracy, and despite the existence of numerous remedial education, vocational training and lifelong learning programmes.

The illiteracy rate remains high: it is 30.3% (17% for men and 42.8% for women). The aim is to reduce the rate by 10% per year by developing remedial primary education, by setting up initial, educational and functional literacy schemes, and by supporting apprenticeship and vocational training. Data available for the 2006/2010 period shows that while the numbers in remedial education doubled over this period, those for literacy and vocational training schemes fell sharply. Measures have been taken to develop pathways between formal and non-formal education. The creation of the TVET ministry should increase the number of skills development programmes, in particular with the help of the INPP and the new Chamber of Trades and Crafts.

5. Bringing about the continuum by recognising all forms of lifelong skills acquisition

The METP (TVET ministry), which was created in 2014, has been tasked with:

- Creating a national qualifications framework (NQF);
- Improving links between knowledge and skills;
- Matching skills more closely with labour market needs;
- Making the system more coherent.

The NQF currently being developed aims to redefine technical qualification levels, develop short dual training courses and set up a system for the accreditation of prior learning and experience (APEL). It will thus be possible to start vocational training after the EFA cycle or through APEL, and to acquire the certified tradesperson (A4) level. Once this level has been attained, young adults will continue to train in order to acquire technician level A3 or A2, with the latter giving access to university. The training scheme giving access to the A4 certified worker level entails a combination of classroom learning and on-the-job work experience. It is aimed at young people aged 14 and over as well as adults which the company wishes to recruit. Even though it is already in place, the NFQ will only become a “one stop shop” s from 2030.

Conclusion

Although the situation regarding TVET and the lack of continuity between education and training are disappointing, a policy memorandum was signed by the four ministers involved in education and training in order to launch a common policy to explore ways of modernising the country through inclusive education and the development of a clearer training path for young people. Furthermore, a sectoral strategy for the 2016/2025 period has been developed in conjunction with donor agencies and the TVET Ministry is finalising its own strategy for the end of 2016. While much still remains to be done, the creation of tools for managing the system bodes well for the development of education and training as a means of pursuing the country's progress.