

TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE TVET SYSTEM: LESSONS FROM PRACTICAL PARTNERSHIP PILOTS



Introduction

Inclusion must be at the heart of TVET. This is not only because opening training provides career opportunities and livelihoods to traditionally excluded and underserved groups. It also widens the pool of skilled talent on which employers can draw, thereby increasing business success. This is good for individuals and local economies. Inclusion is therefore a core principle in the Dakchyata programme because a modern, open TVET system should benefit all.

Dakchyata supported ten skills development partnership models in the tourism, construction, and agriculture sectors. Launched in March 2020, they aimed to encourage closer engagement between public and private sector actors and develop new ways of working for the TVET sector in Nepal. Through these practical partnership pilots, Dakchyata has sought to learn approaches TVET providers can adopt to ensure training is inclusive and leads to longer term and sustainable employment.

Over the course of the pilots, Dakchyata identified three areas of focus for TVET providers to support a more inclusive TVET system:

- 1 Access: TVET is attractive, attainable, and open
- 2 Maintain: TVET motivates, prepares, and engages trainees for their learning journey
- 3 Thrive: TVET supports them with the skills, resources, and linkages needed to flourish

Key findings

1 Supporting access, ensuring training is attainable and attractive for all

Dakchyata's pilots coordinated with key local stakeholders and specialist organisations, such as women's and disabled people's groups and local authorities to gain insights on underserved groups and how best to adapt trainings to make them accessible. Often, these relationships served as an entry point to identify specific groups most at need of trainings.

For some groups, TVET is not accessible due to family/community or dominant cultural pressure. Dakchyata's pilots found family and community sensitisation can help to mitigate these barriers and foster an environment where underserved groups are encouraged and supported to enter TVET.

Dakchyata has learned underserved groups need to be engaged by TVET providers to reassure them TVET is the right place for them to learn. Dakchyata's wider work in raising the public profile of TVET in Nepal highlighted the power of role models to demonstrate TVET is open to a diverse range of people. Trainees need to see that people like them can flourish and excel within the TVET system.

2 Engaging trainees to maintain motivation and prepare for next steps

Dakchyata pilots invested in career counselling and life skills sessions before and during trainings to support trainees to be better informed and understand the decisions they could make during and after trainings. In some cases, these sessions and ongoing conversations with trainers and staff encouraged trainees to continue training rather than take international job opportunities.

For trainees, especially from economically vulnerable backgrounds, time spent during training means a loss of potential earning. Whilst not always feasible within the scope of the pilots, financial supports were seen to be vital input to reduce dropouts amongst vulnerable groups.

Technical skills will go a long way to help trainees build careers but for many, especially those from underserved groups, a wider range of supports are needed to thrive outside of trainings. Connections between trainees can be vital. Social media was found to be an effective way to share updates, ask for advice, and continue their professional development. During the hardship of COVID-19, trainee relationships and encouragement helped many to stay motivated and stay on track.

3 Creating an Environment for Trainees to Thrive

A key pathway trainees take is into self-employment, especially in the agricultural sector. Yet enterprise support, such as business trainings and access to finance, remain inaccessible for many coming from underserved and younger groups. Several Dakchyata pilots integrated business planning and skills into trainings, connecting trainees to loan providers and briefing trainees on access to finance. In such cases, trainees leave TVET with a clear business plan, able to build their enterprise and leverage resources.

Linking trainees and employers is a key success of Dakchyata's pilots. Close collaboration with employers and the use of semi-apprenticeship models raises their awareness about the skills and value of a diverse workforce. Importantly, it is a key to greater inclusion as underserved trainees get an opportunity to learn on the job and access jobs they may not have gained themselves.

Next steps

To continue to build inclusivity across the TVET sector, there is a need for providers and stakeholders to focus on:

- 1 **Strengthen relationships across stakeholder groups** to allow for the effective identification and engagement of those groups who most need TVET.
- 2 **Communicate and promote diversity among TVET trainees** to inspire prospective trainees and to continue to develop understanding amongst employers about the value of broadening employee demographics.
- 3 **Build linkages between employers and trainees** to secure apprenticeship, work opportunities and foster greater understanding of the value of skills of a diverse workforce.



For more information, visit the Dakchyata website: <https://www.dakchyata-nepal.org/>

Dakchyata: TVET practical partnership is a skills development programme, funded by the European Union and delivered by the British Council in partnership with the government of Nepal, to realise the potential of young people who – equipped with the right skills – can contribute to national economic success in the agricultural, tourism and construction industries.

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