



PRACTICAL PARTNERSHIPS PILOTS

Insights Series

QUARTERLY LEARNING REVIEW
LEARNING SUMMARY 4
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Key Learnings:

- Innovative solutions, such as short-term secondments, expert posts, and coordination committees, have supported TVET providers to embed private-sector expertise into the daily running of their operations.
- Retention rates are improved when TVET students understand the potential benefits of training, the investment they need to make in training, and can quickly identify improvements in their skills.
- Timely testing and proper certification of skills courses ensure that TVET students are employable as soon as they leave the TVET course.
- Market demand mechanisms flourish when they avoid being overly rigid in structure and can adapt to the context and needs of stakeholders.
- Robust monitoring procedures, which involve local authorities, employers, and stakeholders, offer the opportunity to bridge the gap between sound project implementation and long-term sustainability of impact.
- Whatever the stage of implementation, TVET providers need to provide a variety of access points so that awareness, consent, and endorsement amongst local authorities and employers from the private sector can be built.
- Inclusivity is a long-term improvement process that requires dialogue and insight on groups' specific needs and the ability of TEVT providers to meet these needs in a sustainable way.

The Practical Partnerships Pilots

Dakchyata: TVET Practical Partnership project is supporting ten new skills development partnership models developed and piloted across the tourism, construction, and agriculture sectors. Known as Practical Partnership Pilots, and launched in March 2020, they aim to:

- Encourage closer engagement and relationships between public and private sector actors.
- Test, codify, and refine TVET methodologies across the agriculture and food production, construction, and tourism sectors.
- Improve TVET students' access to technical and soft skillsets which boost their enterprise and employment opportunities.
- Embed shared sectoral intelligence, learning, and innovation about what works in TVET.
- Enables learning for the future through TVET experiences, captured in a Nepalese context.

This Insights Series regularly tracks and shares the progress and learning being generated through the pilots. It is intended to draw together emerging findings from the Practical Partnership Pilots each quarter to provide an overview of how the pilots are developing and implementing projects and adapting to the challenging circumstances posed by COVID-19.

Pilot Profiles

Since March 2020, ten pilot projects have joined the programme. Over the course of 18 months, these projects are spearheading the testing of new employer engagement models providing valuable insights for the public and private sectors on what works in TVET.



Commenced March 2020:

Hamro Krishi Sahakari Sanstha Limited (HKSSL)

Hamro Krishi Karyakram	Sarlahi & Mohatari	Enhancing rural young people's commercial farming techniques.	Agriculture
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Sajha Byawasaya Sip Bikas (SBSB)

Skills for Agro-Enterprise Project (SAEP)	Rautahat, Sarlahi, Mohatari and Dhanusa	Upgrading farmers' agro-enterprise knowledge and skills in off-season vegetable farming, dairy products, and poultry.	Agriculture
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National Environment and Equity Development Society (NEEDS)

Promoting market led technical and vocational skills for employment	Kanchanpur, Kailali and Bajhang district	Improving employability of unskilled and semi-skilled youths on agriculture, tourism, and construction.	Cross cutting through all 3 sectors
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TRACE Private Limited

Skill and Rewarding Employment Project	Kanchanpur, Kailali	Enhancing skills and employability for young people within the construction sector through a semi-apprenticeship and employment model.	Construction
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Commenced August 2020:

Brilliant Manpower Training Centre (BMTC)

Skilling Tourism Sector for Sustainable Employment Project	Kathmandu-Chitwan and Pokhara	Cater to changing needs of the tourism sector by training young people through innovative models including apprenticeship, employment, and space sharing to enhance their employability.	Tourism
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Deurali Janata Prabidhik Shikshyalaya (DJPS)

TVET Awareness, Skill Development, Capacity Strengthening and Employment Project	Butwal and Nawalparasi	Enhance employability in agriculture and construction sectors by training young people on demand-driven, market-oriented skills.	Agriculture
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Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP)

Enhancing partnership-based demand led technical skills	Bajhang and Bardiya	Train young people on new areas of agriculture through a field-based apprenticeship model to create employment and income generating opportunities.	Construction & Agriculture
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Commenced October 2020:

Central Tea Cooperative Federation Ltd. Nepal (CTCF)

Skill Development for Quality Tea Production	Dhankuta, Ilam, Jhapa, Lalitpur, Panchtar, Sankhuwasava, Therathum	Enhance the technical skills of tea farmers, cooperatives, and processing factories on tea cultivation, management, and processing for increased productivity of the tea sector in Nepal.	Agriculture
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Ilam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI)

Skill Development for Sustainable Employment	Ilam	Enhance the market relevance of tourism focused TVET based on sector needs and increase the supply of highly skilled tourism sector workers.	Tourism
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Nepal Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation Ltd. (NACCFL)

Sustainable Rural Employment Project	Chitwan, Dhading, Jhapa, Kathmandu, Makwanpur, Morang	Promote young people's employment through market-relevant commercial farming and agro-industry skills training.	Agriculture
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Progress & Insights

Pilots in Numbers:



PPP Pilots Learning Areas

ADAPTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS	COLLABORATION	SCALABLE MODELS AND APPROACHES	INNOVATIVE, IMPACT FOCUSED, AND SUSTAINABLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to respond to changing circumstances. 2. Technological adaptation, including through COVID-19. 3. Responding to market conditions and employer needs, through use of labour market information and feedback loops. 4. Robust, evidence-based, project management contributing to sound implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective methods for collaboration in project design and delivery. 2. Productive dialogue and collaboration with key stakeholders/employers. 3. Capacity development, engagement within organisations and between organisations and their stakeholders. 4. Equitable decision making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflecting national TVET goals and policies and local and national market needs. 2. Clear model/TOC that describes the change process. 3. Credibility/legitimacy with stakeholders/locally owned and embedded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addressing long standing challenges in new ways. 2. Evidence of developing capacity and understanding through changed norms and adoption of common practices. 3. Green, low-emission, climate resilient outputs and outcomes. 4. Providing clear evidence of intended outcomes and, where possible, wider system impacts. 5. Generating real-word outcomes for trainees, employers, and local economies.

Key Insights

Through the PPP pilots we are developing a body of evidence against 4 key areas of learning:

ADAPTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS

Market demand mechanisms flourish when they avoid being overly rigid in structure and can adapt to the context and needs of stakeholders:

The pilots have designed and implemented mechanisms to promote coordination amongst market value chain actors so that the most in demand skills can be identified. These structures, such as NEEDS' Employer Dialogue Forum (EDF) or SBSB's Market Information Sharing Forum (MISF), have already identified key insights from market stakeholders. The MISF, for example, identified the value of hiring of sector experts to conduct technical follow up with trainees after three months of training.

Over this period, many of the market demand mechanisms have adapted, based on the feedback and their increasing ownership by local TVET stakeholders. This has seen the scope of these mechanisms expanded to help advise and support the pilots in areas of implementation other than market demand. For example, NEEDS' EDF has provided direct support and supervision over beneficiary selection and ongoing monitoring of training. In another example, one of SBSB's local MISFs has requested that the Forum is renewed to ensure only the most active members are engaged. The adaptability of these mechanisms demonstrates to stakeholders both that they can effectively influence processes and these structures are a valuable investment of their time.

Robust monitoring procedures, which involve local authorities, employers, and stakeholders, offer the opportunity to bridge the gap between sound project implementation and long-term sustainability of impact: The pilots have established formal monitoring procedures and bodies, such as BMTC's Monitoring Committee, which allow pilots to conduct ongoing reviews of project progress and be accountable to the mandate granted to them by the local authorities.

The inclusion of local authorities and stakeholders, and their active ownership of the process, can, however, support monitoring procedures to go beyond a purely project management and performance approach. Their

active engagement in monitoring procedures provides exposure and encouragement for TVET trainees to showcase their progress and potential to employers or stakeholders who may be able to support their long-term progress. Several local authorities and employers have already made short-and long-term commitments to provide additional support to the project or trainees based on what they have witnessed during monitoring. For example, HKSSL has been offered additional seeds, technology, and information from the municipality after their staff visited training centres.

COLLABORATION

Innovative solutions, such as short-term secondments, private sector expert posts, and coordination committees, offer TVET providers the opportunity to embed the expertise of employers into the daily running of their operations: All the pilots have developed structures and roles to allow local authorities, private sector employers, and stakeholders to become a formal part of implementation. A key process local authorities and employers have been involved with in this last period has been trainee selection. Their local knowledge on how to shape selection criteria, which groups require training most, and how best to engage them has been invaluable in this period to all pilots.

UCEP has invested in secondments and the hiring of private sector actors with extensive experience of their sector to serve as Training Assistants in the project. These short-term temporary posts of three months bring in private sector expertise to help identify the key needs of the sector from those who have the best knowledge of it. These types of roles are mutually beneficial; pilots benefit from the sector knowledge of the private sector and the private sector has a chance to learn more about TVET and influence the sector directly.

Where pilots have integrated local authorities into decision making and implementation processes, they are beginning to see emerging and positive signs of future partnerships with them which will extend reach and effectiveness of TVET. For

example, a Ward President has recommended that NEEDS continues to generate new training ideas which address relevant skills gaps in the local area with the intention that such TVET initiatives are integrated into local planning processes.

Whatever stage of implementation, TVET providers need to provide a variety of access points so that awareness, consent, and endorsement amongst local authorities and employers can be built: The pilots have continued to host regular events to build stakeholder awareness and buy-into their projects. For example, BMTC has found that local authorities and the tourism industry have limited experience of apprenticeship-based models of TVET and therefore require briefings on the mutual benefits of creating an apprenticeship-based workforce to get them bought-in and interested in the process.

"Without coordination and collaborating on common objectives we cannot accomplish our goals. This apprenticeship model has characteristics which can address the requirements of all stakeholders; so, when stakeholders understand the model, we think, they are able to meaningfully participate."

BMTC Project

One pilot reflected that some local authorities were initially hesitant to engage with them and their project. In some cases, this reflected that other TVET providers in the area had previously failed to involve local authorities adequately which had led to their disengagement with TVET.

SCALABLE MODELS AND APPROACHES

Inclusivity is a long-term improvement process that requires dialogue and insight on groups' specific needs and the ability of TVET providers to meet these needs in a sustainable way.

Inclusive TVET models therefore go beyond issues of parity within training centres: The

TVET Policy (2012) stated that a primary objective for TVET in Nepal must be to expand access and inclusion. The pilots have all made adaptions to increase accessibility and inclusion. There have, however, been persistent calls by trainees for greater financial support to facilitate their attendance, often citing other TVET providers who provide incentives. Whilst the pilots have sought to manage expectations on the provision of allowances, the lack or limited nature of additional support does reduce the ability of some people to engage with the training. CTCF has reflected that the long-term gains of receiving qualifications as a Tea Technician do not reduce the daily financial needs of trainees' families. For some trainees, a long-term unfunded training course with associated costs, such as travel, is beyond their means. Whilst the drop-out rate has been low to date, this may also suggest that the pilots are yet to engage fully with those who are the most underserved.

Case Study

Building skills and confidence for success

"Since arriving from my village, I have been seeking an opportunity to support my living expenses and had tried but I was helpless. I realised that it was due to a lack of skill and experiences. However, my dreams came true when I enrolled myself in the level 1 technical and vocational training of Hotel Assistant offered by CCI Ilam.

Now, I am working as paid staff in the same hotel where I was trained and skilled. I can support my living and other associated expenses on my own by learning on the job. In the long run I hope to build my experience and capital to start my own business. I am heartily grateful to CCI Ilam for the opportunity that I have been afforded".

**Chandrakala Gurung, Hotel Assistant Trainee,
CCI Ilam**

INNOVATION, IMPACT FOCUSED, AND SUSTAINABLE

Retention rates are improved when TVET students understand the potential benefits of training, the investment they need to make in training, and can quickly identify improvements in their skills. Since September 2020, 1,735 people have been trained by the pilot projects with over 40% female and nearly 40% young person (aged 15-24 years). The dropout rate has remained impressively low, at 0.12%. Given the many challenges facing trainees during COVID-19, such as higher levels of stress and apathy, alongside pre-existing barriers which reduce access to TVET, it would be logical to expect a higher-than-average dropout rate; yet this has remained low. This is in part down to the efforts of pilots to motivate and maintain trainees. Key activities have included sharing trainee success stories, providing skills and career counselling so that trainees can make informed choices, and integrating new skills such as medication, as ICCI have, to support trainees to handle the challenges they face.

Timely testing and proper certification of skills courses are required to ensure that TVET students are employable as soon as they leave the TVET course. Several pilots were delayed in submitting trainees for skills testing with the National Skills Testing Board authority due to challenges in NSTB'S digital system which pushed back the certification of the trainees. Certification of skills is vital for trainees to access employment opportunities. When delays occur, it means students do not have the evidence to prove the capabilities and they are at risk of accepting lower qualified jobs and pay or they struggle to access work at all.

Key Next Steps

Continuation of technical training and life skills provision: The ten pilots will continue to support current and new trainees to access TVET courses and receive additional life skills and career counselling.

National skills testing of trainees: Five pilots will put forward their trainees to be tested and accredited by the National Skills Testing Board of Nepal.

Employment linkages and enterprise training: Pilots will invest in private sector linkages to develop new employment opportunities or provide entrepreneurship training to support TVET trainees to develop a micro-enterprise.

Gather insights on inclusive programming: The Dakchyata team will continue to work with pilots to explore the issue of inclusivity and how to reach and retain those from underserved groups.

Structures and resource development: The pilots will continue to develop curriculums, resources, and quality assurance mechanisms which strengthen the market relevance of their approaches and bring together the knowledge of key stakeholders.

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CTEVT will support to develop next level of curriculum including tea cultivation, processing, and marketing. Employer's commitment is required to provide employment to trainees with minimum wages. If such commitment is available, we are ready to develop long-term curriculum based on apprentice model (2 years)”.

CTCF: Mrs. Kalpana Shrestha
Sub-director Curriculum Department of CTEVT

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