

GREATER PUBLIC PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATION CAN CREATE A MORE PRODUCTIVE TVET SECTOR IN NEPAL: FINDINGS FROM EMPLOYERS LANDSCAPE SURVEY

Summary

Engaged public and private sectors building and sustaining practical partnerships will pave the way for a balanced TVET in Nepal, according to a recent employers' landscape survey conducted by the European Union-funded Dakchyata TVET Practical Partnership Programme. The Government of Nepal has made significant efforts to engage private sector in TVET. However, the survey finds that central to successful TVET systems is to ensure continuous dialogue and engagement between government, private and non-government provisions of TVET.

Globally, skills development has proven to be effective when private sector is closely involved in designing and implementing TVET provisions. The study therefore recommends creating further spaces where private and public sectors are effectively engaged in informing national policy, guiding curriculum development, quality assurance systems, updating national labour market information, and the design and delivery of trainings among others.

Key Findings

Opportunity for user agencies to contribute to the Quality Assurance of TVET

It is largely recognised that TVET in Nepal is supply rather than demand-driven and as a consequence, employers find graduates often have limited skills relevant to the labour market. New curricula are often developed with fewer inputs from user agencies and lack institutional ownership. However, there are opportunities for systematic occupational and skill demand methodology to receive inputs from the private sector. These inputs could be strengthened further to help determine the types of training courses required to meet skills needs.

A demand for stronger public private partnerships frameworks in TVET

There are large gaps between engagement of individual employers and the development of TVET policies and strategies. At the same time, there are limits in the capacity of the private sector to both systematically collect data to them from their members and to feedback information from CTEVT. The latter provides an opportunity for a stronger policy and private public partnership frameworks in TVET.

Varied Governance systems for coordination with TVET actors and private sector TVET

Under the current planned reforms, a new legal provision would apply TVET policy and governance arrangements to as many as ten different ministries. Additionally, the new legal provision envisions a national fund to create a pooled funding mechanism for TVET to enable better coordination. Likewise, the newly formed TVET Division at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology aims to improve TVET coordination, provide policy support, improve quality and effectively engage private sector. These developments will enable a range of valuable mechanisms and platforms for both sectors to engage.

Given the emerging opportunities for increased employer engagement in Nepal, the findings from Dakchyata's employer study provides evidence for the following recommendations to support Government actions in this area.

Recommendations

Focus on quality: A reorientation of how both public and private sector understand quality in TVET should be discussed. Moreover, there is an opportunity to develop or review the quality assurance model/framework, including a regular and reliable system for tracer studies that track graduates' transition to the world of work.

Improve understanding of definitions: Definitions for TVET terminology (occupational classification versus training/curricula classification or occupational standards versus training/assessment standards) need to be clarified and harmonised to meet international standards.

Build capacity for enhanced communication and information sharing within and outside private sector associations and federations: It is largely recognised that strengthening capacity will enable a better flow of information in both directions. Associations need to be able to collect better data from their constituents to effectively use it to advocate at the policy or systems level and they also need to be able to communicate the information they receive from the TVET system to their members.

Separate strategies should be developed for associations and federations with differently sized constituents: Different industry associations represent firms of varying sizes in terms of staffing, labour market needs and interests. Smaller firms can be more fragmented and dispersed, and perhaps are not as aware of the new specialised occupations. Therefore, it may be worth examining different approaches to inform these varied types of industries on the benefits of hiring skilled workers as well as making them aware of new specialised occupations that have appeared in their industries.

Strengthen communication about CTEVT and proactively access information from employers: CTEVT should further be supported to help build stronger two-way information channels and strategies for private employers. Relatedly, there is a need to communicate or reorient employers to the idea that CTEVT also provides and facilitates short-term (3 months or less) skills training.

Improve communications to generate demand for CTEVT graduates: It can be argued that there is a need to demonstrate CTEVT's effectiveness to employers. In this regard, improved communication about CTEVT to employers is a first step; how CTEVT is different from other providers, and what students learn through the CTEVT curricula.

Recommend the development of an integrated Management Information System (MIS) for TVET supply: To complement the new TVET policy, there should be an integrated (cross-ministerial, not just MoEST) MIS so that different ministries can feed TVET supply information into a centralised database.

The full employers' landscape survey report can be accessed from Dakchyata website. For further information, please email dakchayta@britishcouncil.org.np.

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This policy brief is based on the findings of the full study that constitutes baseline information on TVET in Nepal as it relates to the Dakchyata project, and reflects a compilation of baseline research conducted in 2017 and June 2018. The findings are thus organised around the nature and extent of TVET quality assurance, private sector employer engagement, and planning, coordination, and governance.

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