

Analysis of Vocational Education and Training

Sierra Leone



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Sierra Leone

General

Since the mid-1960s, Sierra Leone has suffered from dramatic socio-economic and political instability that culminated into a brutal armed conflict, which lasted for just over ten years, from March 1991 to January 2002. The social, economic and political consequences of the civil conflict were devastating. An estimated 20,000 people were killed and thousands more injured or maimed. Over 2 million people were displaced (500,000 fled to neighbouring countries). There was a mass exodus of skilled professionals leaving the country drained from any skilled manpower. The damage extended to significant loss of property and the abduction of women and children for sex, labour and combat. Most of the country's social, political, economic and physical infrastructure was destroyed or completely vandalized. Mining and agricultural activities, the lifeline of the country, were essentially brought to a halt. Farms were rampaged or abandoned while the livestock population was almost entirely wiped out. Successive peace processes finally ended hostilities in 2001.

Over 6 million people live in the Republic of Sierra Leone. 60 % is Muslim, 30 % has indigenous beliefs, and 10 % is Christian. The language situation is rather fragmented: English is the official language, regular use is limited to literate minority. Besides Mende (principal vernacular in the south), Temne (principal vernacular in the north) and Krio (English-based Creole, spoken by the descendants of freed Jamaican slaves who were settled in the Freetown area, a lingua franca and a first language for 10% of the population but understood by 95%) are spoken (CIA, 2006).

Table: Age structure

0 – 14 year	44,7 %
15 – 64 year	52 %
65 year and over	3,3 %

CIA, estimation 2005

Sierra Leone has a young population with a high growth rate of 2,2 % (CIA, 2006)

Women and men do not have equal access to resources. Women cannot inherit or own land in rural areas. Access to official loans is more difficult for women than for men due to their lack of collateral. Women have very little to say on what, when and how to produce on the so-called family plot and have little influence on the use of income from this plot. Throughout the country, and particularly in rural areas, girls have a lower enrolment rate and a poorer level of performance in education, particularly at the secondary level. The gender gap increased at the tertiary level with males making up between 80 percent and 87 percent of new enrolments (ADB, 2005).

Economy

Sierra Leone's population of about 5.3 million people has been seriously affected by a debilitating combination of war and poverty. Its 2003 GDP per capita of US\$ 149 (800 US\$ purchasing power parity) and its UN Human Development Index ranking of 174 out of 174 countries makes it the poorest country in the world. After a decade of war, 80 percent of the population is living on less than US\$ 1 a day and the situation becomes worse with an increase in both the number of poor and the intensity of poverty. In 2000, the average income level was only able to cover about 50% of minimum household food requirements. The extreme poor are concentrated in rural areas and many spend virtually all their income on food alone. Such intense poverty levels have severely affected education and other social indicators: life expectancy is less than 38 years, maternal mortality at 1800 is three times higher than the average in sub-Saharan Africa, child mortality is a very high 286 per 1,000 and HIV/AIDS is a rapidly growing problem (AfDF, 2002).

There is a high level of youth unemployment. While the unemployment figures are unreliable, it is estimated that 60 percent of the youth (non-school going 15-year olds to 35-year old adults) is either unemployed or under-employed. One of the major impacts of the 11-year conflict was to accelerate rural to urban migration of this age group and deprive them of the opportunity to acquire the required skills for employment in both the urban and rural sectors. The plight of this category of the labour force is compounded by the slow expansion of the private sector and, by implication, the limited employment opportunities for unskilled labour (ADB, 2005).

Further unemployment rates are unavailable (CIA, 2006)

	% Labour force	% GDP
Agriculture	Na	49
Industry	Na	31
Trade and services	Na	21

The main agricultural products are rice, coffee, cocoa, palm kernels, palm oil, peanuts; poultry, cattle, sheep, pigs and fish. The main industrial products are diamonds mining; small-scale manufacturing (beverages, textiles, cigarettes, footwear); petroleum refining and small commercial ship repair (CIA, 2006).

Education

Adult literacy rates in Sierra Leone are among the lowest in the world. Of the total population only 29,6 % can read and write (39,8% of the males, 20,5 % of the females) (CIA, est 2000). Only one in 13 women in the Northern Region are reported to be literate and only one in 10 in the Eastern Region. Only around one percent of the adult population has received any formal literacy training. Public expenditure on adult literacy is minimal (Bennel, 2004).

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) is responsible for managing the education sector (AfDF, 2002). The key official policy documents are the New Education Policy of 1995, the National Education Master Plan 1997-2006, and the Education For All National Action Plan 2003-2015. The current major policy thrusts are nine years of basic education for all, the full implementation of the new 6-3-3-4 education structure with its strong scientific and vocational orientation, redressing gender inequalities, and increased cost recovery at the tertiary level (Bennel, 2004). The new system caters for early school leavers and weak students is facing immense difficulties. Inadequate vocational/technical training institutions, lack of basic tools and materials are major problems. Above all, graduate trainees are mostly not provided with start-up kits to facilitate the establishment of their own business enterprises (IPRSP, 2001).

The 6-3-3-4 model implies:

6 – means 6 years of primary schooling

First 3 – means 3 years of junior secondary school (These first two are included in BE)

Second 3 – means 3 years of senior secondary school

At this stage choices are made to pursue various Techvoc options

4 – means those with the right competence to pursue university education

The Basic Education (BE) sub-sector which is defined as:

- (i) primary and junior secondary schools,
- (ii) basic vocational and technical skills training institutions, including those conducting literacy training,

- (iii) non-formal education initiatives and emergency programmes that respond to war-affected school-age populations, and
- (iv) key institutions needed to manage and operate the basic education system.

The Government of Sierra Leone has reinforced its commitment to Education for All goals by making BE a nine-year cycle: six years Primary and three years Junior Secondary school. Free education was also recently introduced for Primary 1-6, which means no government-levied tuition fee and some provision of textbooks.

A Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) is administered at the completion of JSS with five passes needed for entry into Senior Secondary School (SSS). In October 2001 this was accomplished by 7,323 pupils or 38 percent of those sitting for the BECE. SSS consists of three years of academic or vocational/technical education as preparation for the tertiary level. The University of Sierra Leone, teachers' colleges and various technical institutes provide tertiary education. Early Childhood Education takes place in privately operated day care centres and nursery schools located mostly in Freetown (AfDF, 2002).

The three main components of post-basic education and training in Sierra Leone are senior secondary schools (SSS), post-JSS technical and vocational education, and tertiary education (the university, polytechnics and the teacher training colleges) (Bennel, 2004).

Opportunities for post-basic education and training remain very limited in Sierra Leone. Slightly more than 15,000 individuals are enrolled at the University of Sierra Leone and six other tertiary education institutions. Although there has been some improvement in cost recovery levels in recent years, these institutions rely mainly on government funding. The share of tertiary education in public education expenditure has fallen from around 30 percent in the early 1990s to 20 percent today. Acute funding constraints make it very difficult for these institutions to maintain acceptable standards of education and training. The qualification and experience profiles of teaching staff are very weak and the university is particularly reliant on part-time lecturers. There is a chronic shortage of essential infrastructure and learning materials (Bennel, 2004).

The schools in Sierra Leone are categorized as

	primary	secondary schools	technical/vocational institutions
Government	169	12	4
Government-assisted	2,676	218	51
Private	0	9	106

Pure government schools are run by district education councils or other local government bodies. Government-assisted schools are run by agencies or missions but teachers are employed by the Government. In addition to support provided by agencies and/or missions, schools are increasingly receiving support from international NGOs. A significant number of these are associated with the United Nations (AfDF, 2002).

A key feature of the Sierra Leone educational system is the partnership between different religious denominations and the government in the delivery of primary and secondary education. According to an agreement between the two entities, the Government pays teacher salaries, shares the cost of facilities and maintenance, develops curricula and standards, provides teacher training, and administers examinations. Today, 85% of the schools are administered by the missions. In addition, more than 90% of the schools that have been rehabilitated since year 2000 have been done in collaboration with international and national NGOs (AfDF, 2002).

The education sector is characterised by strong leadership at the policy level but has weak capacity at the programme, administrative and regional levels. These constraints reflect a longstanding lack of financial resources and an urban bias, and have worsened due to the

effects of a decade of civil war and destruction, including of records. With disarmament of ex-combatants and peace being consolidated, Sierra Leone now faces intensification of the nation's longstanding challenges in the provision and management of massive educational needs and demands (AfDF, 2002).

The Government's effort to improve the education system in Sierra Leone has suffered serious drawbacks as a result of the conflict. A survey conducted by NCRRR on the restoration of Government in March 1998 shows that the destruction to educational facilities include 1,270 primary schools, 820 secondary, tertiary and vocational schools, three teachers training colleges and the Njala University College (IPRSP, 2001). Consequent to the level of destruction, the Government has continued to focus on rehabilitating and reconstructing the destroyed education institutions since 1999. A back-to-school campaign was also launched through the introduction of free-primary education policy in 2001. The free-primary education policy was based on the observation that primary school enrolment had declined from 55 percent of school age children in 1990 to about 42 percent in 2000. After the introduction of the free-primary education policy, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for primary schools increased to 90.4 percent in 2002 (ADB, 2005).

There are four major constraints confronting the development of the education sector in Sierra Leone: (i) a largely destroyed physical infrastructure and massive disruption due to war and neglect; (ii) a weak financial base; (iii) major human resource and consequent institutional capacity deficiencies; and, (iv) large boys-girls inequities (AfDF, 2002).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

How is VET defined? Formal, informal and non formal? Does it include training on the job?	" a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of economic and social life. It applies to all forms of technical and vocational education provided in educational institutions or through cooperative programs organized jointly by educational institutions at one hand, and industrial, agricultural, commercial and any other undertaking related to the world of work, on the other."
% children in general education, regional differences	
% Youngsters in vocational education and training, regional differences	According to the Integrated Household Survey, only 0.6 percent of adult females living in rural areas and 2.9 percent in urban areas have undertaken any kind of TVE. The corresponding figures for males are 1.5 percent rural and 4.2 percent urban (Bennel, 2004).
Share of flow from regular education to vocational education and training	The New Education Policy states that the 'envisaged destinations of young people after completing nine years of basic education are: 25 percent senior secondary schools, 25 percent technical and vocational education institutions, and 50 percent 'the world of employment'".
Gender ratio in VET on national level, regional differences	There is a high priority at governmental level to nivellate the gender differences.
Which institutions pay attention to VET?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Polytechnics (HND) 2. Technical/vocational institutes (OND / HNC) 3. Trade/technical/vocational centres (T/VC stage 1 -3) 4. Community education / animation centres

	(courses for early school leavers and adult learners to qualify them for access to T/VCs Informal: NGOs, religious based organisations.
In which regions are they active, share urban / rural?	Rural provision is very limited with only two districts having more than 10 centres.

There are around 250 technical and vocational education institutions registered with MEST, with a heavy concentration of provision in Western Area and the other main urban centres. Three-quarters lack basic equipment and tools and two-thirds of instructors are untrained. Less than five percent of MEST budget is allocated to TVE. Only two centres are fully funded by MEST (Bennel, 2004).

In Sierra Leone formal VET as well as informal and lower and intermediate VET is provided. Formal is integrated in Education System, informal VET is organized by organizations. The main aim of VET is to equip human resources with relevant practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge required to function at both social and economic environments (Questionnaire, 2006)

Formal TVET is organised in three levels:

Level 1: leading to a Technical / Vocational Certificate (stage 3, 2 and 1 during resp. 3 years, 2 years or 1 year)

Level 2: leading to an OND (ordinary national diploma) or HNC (higher national certificate) as its highest qualification (2 years, after stage 3 level 1)

Level 3 leading initially to the HND (higher national diploma) as its highest qualification (2 years after OND).

A three-tiered hierarchy of training institutions is to be established: Trade/technical/vocational centres providing three-year certificate level training. Technical/vocational institutes, which offer two-year Ordinary National Diploma and Higher National Certificate courses for certificate-level graduates; and two-year Higher National Diploma courses at polytechnics for OND and HNC graduates. In addition, there are two other types of TVE provision, namely technical secondary schools and Community Education Centres (which operate at both primary and JSS levels) (Bennel, 2004).

In 1995 the Ministry of Education, Science and technology also mentioned these different levels of VET schools as "to be established":

1. Polytechnics (HND)
2. Technical/vocational institutes (OND / HNC)
3. Trade/technical/vocational centres (T/VC stage 1 -3)
4. Community education / animation centres (courses for early school leavers and adult learners to qualify them for access to T/VCs

(MEST, 1995)

There are two types of institutions for literacy and vocational and technical skills training at levels 1 and 2 in Sierra Leone: (i) *Community Education Centres (CECs)*, and (ii) *Technical Vocational Centres (TVCs)*. About 50 such institutions are registered with the government.

Community Education Centres (CECs): As part of their mandate, CECs provide literacy classes as well as some skills training to both young and adult learners. CECs are situated in urban centres throughout the country and have the potential to contribute significantly to increasing the literacy rate and the number of youth with marketable skills. The need for CECs is all the more evident and urgent now with a large number of out-of-school and other war affected youth seeking and needing income-generating skills, and government's desire to meet this challenge (also to prevent idle youth taking up arms again). It is estimated that

as many as 500,000 children in the 10-14 year age range have missed some years of schooling because of the war. These children are mostly IDP (internally displaced person) or returned refugees and are now over age for their academic class levels. With the anticipated increase in enrolment in the accompanying literacy classes operating in CECs, many additional literacy facilitators must be trained to upgrade their pedagogical skills along similar lines as for primary school teachers.

Technical Vocational Centres (TVCs): TVCs are valuable post-CEC institutions particularly for those who may not benefit from formal schooling. Though 80-90 percent of students sitting the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) enter the JSS level the remaining 10-20 percent either opt to repeat or drop out totally. As the pass rate at JSS level is between 40-48 percent, thus over 50 percent of Primary completers either repeat or do not enter JSS. Most discontinue their formal education and add to the already high number of youths who are out of the system with few or no marketable skills. Those who are able to pay the fees enrol at a CEC or TVC, but there is still substantial unmet demand for skills training. This dilemma has produced a large number of unemployed and unemployable youth who are becoming increasingly disillusioned with the *status quo*.

The tri-partite institutional structure of 'centres', 'institutes' and tertiary institutions is based on the traditional conception of a craft-technician-professional occupational structure. The poor articulation between these institutions needs to be addressed. At present, for example, the polytechnics are defined as being both tertiary and TVE institutions. The challenge is to develop a common framework of skill levels and related qualifications, which a diverse range of training and other specialist service institutions are accredited to offer (Bennel, 2004).

Annex table 19: Enrolments at tertiary education institutions, 1993/94-2003/04

	1993/94	1999/00	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
University of Sierra Leone					
Fourah Bay College	1576	1800	2055	2202	2474
Njala University College	988	1100	1500	1774	2069
COMAHS	91	160	105	312	345
IPAM	357	328	412	777	872
Sub-total	3012	3388	4072	5065	5760
Other institutions					
Milton Margai CET	709	753	1050	3227	3671
Eastern Polytechnic	316	475	1010	1135	1335
Makeni Polytechnic	558	390	780	912	879
Bunumbu Teachers College	522	496	829	908	813
Port Loko Teachers College	494	498	805	780	865
Freetown Teachers College	346	429	870	1572	2212
Sub-total	2945	3041	5344	8534	9775
TOTAL	5957	6429	9416	13599	15535

Source: MEST and TEC

According to WFP, enrolments at 525 community education and other training centres are in excess of 50,000. A diverse range of NGOs manages and/or funds these centers. There has been a strong focus on the training of excombatants since 2000.

MEST records list a total of 231 TVE institutions with a heavy concentration in Western Area (97), and Bo and Kenema Districts (45 and 25 respectively). Most offer training at JSS and SSS levels. A recent survey reveals that three-quarters of these centres lack tools and basic equipment and two-thirds of instructors are untrained. There is neither a standardised curricula nor any national trade testing system.

The EFA National Action Plan identifies the following programme objectives for technical and vocational education. It should be pointed out though that a significant proportion of these proposed training activities is at the post-basic education level.

- Revision and expansion of existing TVE programmes using the findings of a baseline survey
- Establishment of new TVE programmes
- Staff development including overseas training for 600 lecturers at six new polytechnics
- Construction and equipping of new TVE institutions – four polytechnics, 28 skills training centres (at the secondary school level), and 300 community education centres.
- Rehabilitation of existing skills training centres
- Curriculum development and provision of learning materials
- Improved monitoring and evaluation

(Bennel, 2004)

The New Education Policy states that the 'envisaged destinations of young people after completing nine years of basic education are: 25 percent senior secondary schools, 25 percent technical and vocational education institutions, and 50 percent 'the world of employment''. However, the latter group 'may not find income generating employment unless they are equipped with skills to work for themselves'. The mass provision of TVE is, therefore, a central component of educational policy (Bennel, 2004). Technical and vocational education needs to serve not only the majority of school leavers, but older adults as well. The present (1995) provision of technical and vocational institutions fall short of what is needed to support and sustain development, and is deficient in both quantitative and qualitative terms. There are, however, some technical institutions that are models of appropriate and good practice (MEST, 1995).

The National Recovery Committee survey lists 1524 courses at 148 establishments with a total enrolment of 22,394 students in May 2003. Rural provision is very limited with only two districts having more than 10 centres. Information on the numerous training projects and other initiatives that target poor and disadvantaged groups is very limited. Certainly, very little is known about the livelihood impacts of these activities. Overall provision is very fragmented and generally small-scale. As in most other countries, the TVE system, as defined by the New Education Policy, focuses very heavily on fulltime pre-employment training for high and middle occupations in the formal sector. The principal beneficiaries of this training are secondary school leavers who are generally not from poor households. There is also a strong emphasis on male-dominated craft and technician-level occupations. Only a relatively tiny number fraction of the population has undergone this training. According to the Integrated Household Survey, only 0.6 percent of adult females living in rural areas and 2.9 percent in urban areas have undertaken any kind of TVE. The corresponding figures for males are 1.5 percent rural and 4.2 percent urban (Bennel, 2004).

Equitable access to appropriate skills training is a key policy objective. Thus, the Government of Sierra Leone attaches very high priority to the establishment of new skills training programmes, especially for disadvantaged youth including ex-combatants.

Insufficient teaching and learning materials (TLMs) at schools, CECs and TVCs has been a longstanding woe of teachers and students. This situation has been exacerbated by the rebel war and the indiscriminate plunder and destruction of homes and school property. Families have been uprooted, and TLMs are among valuable possessions lost -- which schools also find difficult to replace. The GoSL is keenly aware of the predicament of parents during this period of hardship, has reviewed the situation with donors and has now has a policy of free and universal Primary education (1-6) in the country, which in principle includes the provision of free textbooks (AfDF, 2002).

TVE provision needs to be comprehensively reformed in order to ensure high quality, relevant and cost –effective provision (Bennel, 2004).

Financing of TVET

Financing is provided mainly by the government, donor community and the private sector. Government has increased spending to the sector but the total amount of funds available remains grossly inadequate when compared to the needs of the sector. The dearth of resources has been caused by the need for high expenditures for national security due to the rebel war, and because major sources of traditional government revenue came under the control of rebel forces. Table 2-1 shows the 2001 allocation of government expenditure by level of education and projections for 2002 and 2003.

Table 2.1 Government Expenditure by Level of Education (in '000 Leones)

	SUB-SECTOR	FY 2001		FY 2002 Est.		FY 2003 Est.	
1	Basic Education	9,965.3	31.68%	11,786.70	33.09%	14,084.90	34.42%
2	Secondary Education	2,926.8	9.30%	3,226.80	9.06%	3,557.50	8.69%
3	Tertiary and Teachers Education	13,319.0	42.34%	14,820.30	41.61%	16,895.60	41.29%
4	Technical/Vocational	1,200.0	3.81%	1,323.00	3.71%	1,458.60	3.56%
5	Physical and Health Ed.	122.9	0.39%	135.30	0.38%	149.40	0.37%
6	Planning + Dev. Services	103.0	0.33%	113.60	0.32%	125.20	0.31%
7	Office of the Perm. Sec.	2,865.7	9.11%	3,159.40	8.87%	3,483.30	8.51%
8	Inspectorate Division	150.7	0.48%	166.10	0.47%	183.20	0.45%
9	Youth and Sports Div.	806.7	2.56%	889.40	2.50%	980.50	2.40%
	TOTAL	31,460.1	100.00%	35,620.60	100.00%	40,918.20	100.00%

A considerable proportion of technical and vocational education and training is funded and, in some cases, provided by other ministries, in particular in the following sectors: agriculture, health, defence, local government, police, transport and youth development. Less than five percent of the MEST budget is allocated to TVE. Only two TVE institutions are fully funded by MEST. However, another 57 centres receive subventions (22 Western Area, 9 North, 16 South, and 4 East) (Bennel, 2004).

Serious consideration should be given to establishing a national skills development agency in Sierra Leone (Skills Sierra Leone), which would manage various funding windows including the Skills Development Fund for poor target groups.

The image of VET is growing fastly and attractive in the eyes of target groups as the surest way of attaining a utility function that satisfies the social and economic life. The government assumes a role model in setting up examples of VET in the country and all other institutions do exist to compliment such effort. It is a fact that neither government nor any other NGO etc can do it alone (Questionnaire, 2006).

Policy and organisation of VET

From the Science and Technology point of view: MEST's mission includes;

- Promotion of technical and vocational education through, among other things, middle-level manpower skills training
- Development of interest in Science and Technology starting at the Primary level
- Provision of equipment and materials for science and technical / vocational education.

(Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2006)

The National Education Master Plan (NEMP, 1997-2006) was prepared with wide stakeholder participation and provides the current educational policy framework. It is based on the six major objectives of the Master Plan which are to:

- (i) increase access to basic education;
- (ii) develop a broad-based education system;
- (iii) improve the quality and relevance of education;
- (iv) expand and upgrade technical/vocational education;
- (v) promote adult literacy, non-formal, and informal education;
- (vi) and develop relevant attitudes, skills and values in children.

In line with these objectives, the government has instituted free primary education for classes 1-6, increased the number of textbooks provided to primary schools and launched new initiatives for in-service teacher training and school reconstruction and rehabilitation. Government education policy is also focused on increasing access to vocational and technical education and strengthening non-formal educational alternatives for those who have been out of school due to the war, who are ex-combatants or who have never received formal education. This challenge is pursued in partnership with numerous local and international NGOs and donors who provide input to the policy dialogue (AfDF, 2002).

The main goals on VET in national policy

The main New Education Policy goal for TVE is to 'increase the number of indigenous, skilled, lower-middle level blue-collar workers' (Bennel, 2004).

The general goal of TVET is to stimulate entrepreneurship (Questionnaire, 2006)

The core objective of VET is to combat the general shortage of skilled manpower through organised and sustained support of good practice in technical skills training and the network of such example throughout the country. This shall require investment in technical teacher training, upgrading institutions and courses, as well as the criterion of new institutions for this sector (MEST, 1995).

Aim of VET:

The development of self reliance and self actualization in individuals as well as the progressive development of the society and the economy of the country through technical and vocational training in all areas of urgent need, especially the agricultural, industrial and commercial sectors (MEST, 1995).

Objectives of VET:

- Fill the technical / vocational manpower need gap by substantially increasing the number of indigenous skilled lower middle level blue collar worker
- Produce a more literate, numerate and enterprising lower middle level technical/ vocational workforce and thus speed up national development.
- Encourage women and girls to participate in national development through the acquisition of technical and vocational skills
- Correct the present geographical imbalance in distribution of technical and vocational resources
- Develop appreciation and understanding of the increasing complexity of science and technology
- Create an enabling environment for the development of appropriate indigenous technology
- Provide training for technical and vocational instructors, teachers and lecturers
- Develop an appreciation of cultural and aesthetic values in productive work.

(MEST, 1995)

Relation government and trade and industry (private) companies and private initiatives in VET

The New Education Policy also highlights the importance of encouraging a national apprenticeship scheme and introducing access courses at training centres for young women who lack the requisite formal qualifications (Bennel, 2004).

NA

International donors / INGOs involved in VET

Donor support to Education responds largely to the rehabilitation needs of the basic education infrastructure and for the training of facilitators and instructors for literacy, vocational skills training and peace education initiatives for out-of-school youth. The current weak capacity of the administration and the dispersion of many of the interventions makes it difficult to provide a complete and accurate information on this support (AfDF, 2002). Cordaid, Care and World Vision (Questionnaire, 2006)

Networks around VET

The partner of Woord en Daad Cotton Tree Foundation, states that there are networks around VET consisting of NGOs operating on national level. The main activity of these networks are to expand the idea of VET. At International NGO and donor level there are several constraints in almost all situations during the course of project implementation through national NGOs, due to practical issues such as: Lack of respect for local manpower, which as a matter of fact is more suitable to the realization of results, low rewards comparatively to rewards for international labour, to name but few. The relation between the networks of local NGOs and the government is cooperative and good with the trade and industry sector. The Chamber of Commerce is creating an enabling environment by sharing information on technology for instance (Questionnaire, 2006).

Education of teachers

Apart from low salaries driving people out of the teaching profession in search of better prospects, the decade long civil war has also taken a toll on the human resource capacity of the education sector -- the teachers. For 554,307 children in primary schools in 2000-2001, there were only 14,932 teachers -- making for an average pupil teacher-ratio of 37:1. Moreover, the quality of primary educational provision is even worse in that over one-third (5,550) of these teachers are unqualified and untrained. With large numbers either displaced, killed, maimed or migrated, the GoSL has randomly recruited unqualified and untrained teachers (UUTs) to meet the high demand in some schools while others make do with a disproportionate number of students per teacher. The quality of educational provision is contingent largely upon the education and quality of teachers and availability of TLMs (AfDF, 2002).

In order to attract qualified teachers back to the profession, government needs to provide inducements such as free or low cost housing, regularly paid salaries and/or other recruitment incentives. These provisions should be for teachers recently under Internally-Displaced Person (IDP) or refugee status or who are voluntarily working in neighbouring countries. Such an endeavour would involve establishing a separate unit within the MEST to assess the claimed credentials of teachers and work out the logistics for their deployment to schools in need of their teaching skills (AfDF, 2002).

Two-thirds of instructors are untrained (Bennel, 2004).

VET specialisations

Comprehensive and detailed information on types of courses and providers, enrolments and outputs, and qualifications at technical and vocational education (TVE) and other kinds of skills training institutions is not available. The overall demand for particular types of skills training is not known, but it is generally believed that TVE institutions are not in a position to meet the demand for artisans and technicians (Bennel, 2004).

The most important subjects on VET are:

- (a) Auto Mechanic
- (b) Carpentry
- (c) Masonry
- (d) Welding
- (e) Tailoring
- (f) Craft
- (g) Cosmetology
- (h) Textiles (Gara tie dying, batik local industries)
- (i) Commercial farming / agricultural technicians

Craft has less attention (Questionnaire, 2006)

There is a strong emphasis on male-dominated craft and technician-level occupations.

Strengths and weaknesses

Information on the numerous training projects and other initiatives that target poor and disadvantaged groups is very limited. Certainly, very little is known about the livelihood impacts of these activities.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Some NGOs have developed innovative skills development models for the urban and rural poor.	The innovative skills development models developed by NGOs are usually relatively high cost with small numbers of trainees
	Most courses are poor quality, high cost, with limited outputs and low placement rates in training-related jobs
	Different skills development strategies are needed for priority groups. As in most other countries, the TVE system, as defined by the New Education Policy, focuses very heavily on fulltime pre-employment training for high and middle occupations in the formal sector. The principal beneficiaries of this training are secondary school leavers who are generally not from poor households.
	Public sector training has been widely criticised as invariably being too top-down and supply-driven with uncompetitive and thus poorly functioning training markets.
	Far more attention needs to be given to meeting the training needs of the mass of the labour force who do not go beyond basic education.
	There is no common qualification framework and no well-defined pathways for progression. There is neither a standardised curricula nor any national trade testing system.

	A recent survey reveals that three-quarters of the VTCs lack tools and basic equipment and two-thirds of instructors are untrained.
	Rural provision is very limited with only two districts having more than 10 centres.
	Overall provision is very fragmented and generally small-scale.
	There is a strong emphasis on male-dominated craft and technician-level occupations.
	Insufficient teaching and learning materials (TLMs) at schools, CECs and TVCs has been a longstanding woe of teachers and students. This situation has been exacerbated by the rebel war and the indiscriminate plunder and destruction of homes and school property.
	There is a heavy concentration of provision in Western Area and the other main urban centres.
	Three-quarters lack basic equipment and tools and two-thirds of instructors are untrained.
	Less than five percent of MEST budget is allocated to TVE. Only two centres are fully funded by MEST (Bennel, 2004).

Information sources available

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