



## Workshop 22

# Developing Skills and Labour Force Competencies including TVET in Support of Sustainable Development

**Time:** 2 April 2009: 9.00 – 13.00h

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### TVET AND A 'NEW DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM'

1. Moving towards the goal of sustainable development requires fundamental changes in human attitudes and behaviour – in our personal lives, in our community activities, and in our places of work. Successfully making these changes is critically dependent on education and training. This is no more important than in the area of developing skills for employability, citizenship and sustainability in the world of work.
2. Thus, the Second International Conference on Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) (Seoul, 1999) concluded that a new paradigm of both development and of preparation for the world of work was needed:

We have considered the emerging challenges of the twenty-first century, a century that will be an era of knowledge, information and communication. Globalization and the revolution in information and communication technology have signalled the need for a new human-centred development paradigm. We have concluded that Technical and Vocational Education (TVE), as an integral component of lifelong learning, has a crucial role to play in this new era as an effective tool to realize the objectives of a culture of peace, environmentally sound sustainable development, social cohesion, and international citizenship.<sup>1</sup>

3. This “new human centred development paradigm” was elaborated through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).<sup>2</sup> Achieving the MDGs necessitates action on issues such as poverty, hunger, education, gender equality, child and maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS, safe water, upgrading slums, and global partnerships for development that include technology transfer. Effective TVET is integral to finding and implementing solutions to all of these issues. In this way, TVET underpins all the MDGs and the achievement of sustainable development.
4. Thus, a broadening of TVET from the narrow task of providing training for industry- and occupation-specific skills to the broader task of workforce development and lifelong learning for sustainable development and citizenship is currently underway. For example, the international Education for All programme emphasises vocational preparation within a context of social and environmental responsibility. Similarly, the Final Report of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development emphasised the need for all countries and international agencies to meet “capacity needs for training, technical know-how and strengthening national institutions in ... economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound” development in order to eradicate poverty, improve human health and access to safe water and hygienic sanitation, conserve the

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31 March – 2 April 2009  
Bonn, Germany

natural resource base upon which social and economic development depends, and foster the use of technologies for foster cleaner production and renewable energy.<sup>3</sup> As a result, one of the objectives listed for TVET in the joint 2002 ILO and UNESCO *Recommendations on Technical and Vocational Education for the Twenty-First Century* is to “Empower people to contribute to environmentally sound sustainable development through their occupations and other areas of their lives.”<sup>4</sup> This is particularly important as many people are increasingly looking for work that they consider to be personally fulfilling and socially worthwhile. Such are often to be found in the field of environmentally friendly technologies and the companies that promote and service them.

## UNESCO'S CONTRIBUTION

5. One of key aims of the UNESCO-UNEVOC Centre in Bonn is to ensure that TVET systems and institutions, their staff, and the businesses with which they engage, are aware of the important contributions that TVET can make to advancing sustainable development. This has included convening seven international and regional workshops: Bonn (2004), Bangkok (2005, 2006), Bahrain (2005), Ho Chi Minh City (2006), Ahmedabad (2007) and Melbourne (2008). UNESCO-UNEVOC has also:
    - established a TVET and Sustainable Development section on the UNESCO-UNEVOC website;
    - published detailed reports of these meetings on this website, including all presentations;
    - initiated an e-Forum titled “Two pathways, one destination – TVET for a sustainable future” that attracted 106 participants from 49 countries;
    - sponsored the Asia Pacific Network for International and Values Education to develop a curriculum on ESD and TVET, titled *Learning to Do*;
  - sponsored joint projects between UNEVOC Centres to address the issues of ESD and TVET (e.g. between Griffith University and Zhejiang Technology Institute of Economy UNEVOC Centres);
  - conducted two high level meetings with the corporate sector to identify ways in which the business and industry can integrate education, training and capacity building for sustainable development into its CSR programme; and
  - sponsored theoretical rethink on the role of TVET and sustainable development as well as a publication of a 36-chapter book of case studies on initiatives around the world to reorient TVET for Sustainable Development.<sup>5</sup>
6. UNESCO-UNEVOC along with BiBB, InWEnt, CPSC and other national and international partners have also sought to align TVET with other sectors of education, seeking synergies and partnerships with secondary education and universities, seeking to enhance pathways for the school-to-work transition in order to embed sustainability in all areas of learning for the world of work.<sup>6</sup>

## GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

7. International support programmes and other initiatives may be noted in many parts of the world – at the levels of national policy, in TVET systems, in individual schools, in TVET institutes and in companies.
8. Several national initiatives have worked with the concept of ‘competencies’. These include for example: research to identify sustainability competencies for the world of work in Canada; establishing a framework for including sustainability competencies in Industry Training Packages in Australia; and a rethinking of the very concept of ‘competencies’ and ESD in South Africa, based upon three kinds of competencies – practical,



foundational and reflexive – to be integrated into all TVET programmes. In Azerbaijan, the concepts of ‘decent work’ and ‘sustainable livelihoods’ are being applied to the informal economy as a to up-skill workers for jobs in the expanding oil and gas industry. A national programme called ‘Learning to Last’ has been undertaken in the UK and a range of grant and support projects established to encourage TVET institutes to review their curricula and their campus operations. Germany has been very active in this area also and has initiated a national policy process and performed a pilot program on ESD through BiBB.

9. There have been many exciting initiatives in individual schools and TVET institutes. For example, in countries as diverse as Colombia, Japan, Kenya and Australia many have established school-based enterprises that focus on designing, making and selling sustainable products. In China, one TVET Institute is re-skilling migrant workers displaced by major dam construction. Many are also exploring ways in which they can respond to the opportunities and challenges of climate change by rethinking the content of training programmes, especially in the construction and environmental auditing industries.
10. The corporate sector is increasingly becoming engaged in using education, training and capacity building as strategies in their CSR and sustainable development activities. This includes at least four types of activities: training for employees on corporate sustainability goals, training for employees of firms along supply chains to ensure they have the capacity to achieve corporate sustainability goals, ESD programmes for the communities that form the constituencies for different firms, and corporate support for ESD in schools, TVET colleges and universities.

## WORKSHOP QUESTIONS

11. Unfortunately, these many examples of initiatives to reorient TVET for ESD are not widespread at a global scale. They remain ‘lighthouse’ activities that need to be scaled up and, where appropriate adapted for local implementation, and made part of mainstream practice in TVET.
12. Ways of achieving this goal is the focus of TVET and Sustainable Development workshop. A highly interactive process will be used to explore the following questions:
  - What is the role of TVET in supporting Sustainable Development?
  - What are the opportunities and responsibilities of Member States, businesses, associations, educational institutions and civic society organisations in supporting the reorientation of TVET for Sustainable Development?
  - What role can UNESCO with national and international partners play in supporting the reorientation of TVET for Sustainable Development?
  - What lessons of leading practice can be distilled from the analysis of shared experiences?
  - What are the priorities for further advancing TVET for Sustainable Development over the next five years of the DESD?

1 UNESCO (1999) *Final Report, Second International Conference on Technical and Vocational Education*, UNESCO, Paris, p. 61.

2 See <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

3 World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) *Plan of Implementation*, Johannesburg, para. 19.

4 UNESCO and ILO (2002) *Technical and Vocational Education for the Twenty-First Century: ILO and UNESCO Recommendations*, UNESCO, Paris and ILO, Geneva, p. 9.

5 Pavlova, M. (2009) *Technology and Vocational Education for Sustainable Development: Empowering Individuals for the Future*, Dordrecht: Springer; and Fien, J., Maclean, R. and M-G Park (2008) *Work, Learning and Sustainable Development: Opportunities and Challenges*, Springer. Dordrecht.

6 For details of the examples mentioned in this section, see various chapters in *Work, Learning and Sustainable Development: Opportunities and Challenges*.

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