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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
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# The Evaluation of the UNESCO Thematic Area “TVET” (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)

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# Executive summary<sup>1</sup>

## Background and purpose

UNESCO's [Strategy for TVET](#) has aimed at guiding the Organization's work in this field from 2010 to 2015. The thematic area has been ranked among the top four priorities in education (along with literacy, teachers, and sector-wide policy and planning) by the Organization's Member States, indicating their aspiration to privilege strengthening capacities for TVET. Given the increasing priority status of TVET in UNESCO, and the fact that the current Strategy for TVET will come to an end in 2015, the timing for an evaluation was opportune. The evaluation's purpose is two-fold: (1) to assess progress achieved in the implementation of the current Strategy for TVET (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and cooperation with partners) and (2) to inform the proposal for a follow-up of the Strategy for TVET in view of lessons learned and of the global debate around the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

The evaluation was conducted in the first half of 2015 by a team of four external evaluators with senior TVET expertise and two evaluators from UNESCO's IOS. The methodology of the evaluation comprised an extensive desk study, a number of site visits, three stakeholder surveys and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and partners.

## Findings

Key achievements that result from the present evaluation include:

(a) UNESCO's work in TVET is highly relevant given the Organization's mandate, global economic and social developments, and national needs. In the period 2010-2015 UNESCO established itself as an authority in the field of TVET, notably through the Third International Congress on TVET and the resulting Shanghai Consensus. The setup of a UNESCO TVET community (informal network of education specialists with portfolios in TVET at Headquarters, at the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre and in the field) has proved to be very beneficial and as a whole has contributed to the strong positioning of UNESCO in this field.

(b) UNESCO's approach to TVET extends beyond the economic goal of providing people with skills for work. It has shown global leadership in broadening concepts of TVET by bringing issues which are close to UNESCO's mandate, such as equity, social justice, lifelong learning and sustainable development, into countries' TVET reforms. This humanistic dimension clearly distinguishes UNESCO from other international actors working in TVET.

(c) UNESCO not only has a global mandate in TVET and authoritative normative role that extends to all stages of education, but it also manages a unique global network: the UNEVOC Network comprised of ministries, national TVET bodies, and research and training institutions at the national level, coordinated by the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre.

(d) Stakeholders at different levels (global, regional and national), acknowledge UNESCO's convening power. The evaluation found that UNESCO has been successful in bringing together international organizations that are active in TVET, in particular at the global level (such as through the Inter-Agency Group on TVET (IAG-TVET) and respective sub working groups on priority thematic areas) to cooperate on key issues and to produce joint publications.

(e) UNESCO's work in all three core areas of its TVET Strategy, as well as its approach to TVET are widely appreciated:

- UNESCO's provision of policy advice was found to be relevant to most national contexts and its expertise was greatly appreciated at the national level. Capacity-

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<sup>1</sup> This summary is contained within [197 EX/5, Part III](#).

building work, policy advice and policy reviews are in most cases feeding into current policy debates and/or developments.

- UNESCO's conceptual and normative work is seen as very valuable in helping Member States in setting up and improving their TVET systems. Key publications, conceptual clarification and normative instruments are among the areas where UNESCO has a clear added value.
- UNESCO's clearing-house function, mainly ensured through UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre, is highly appreciated by different stakeholder groups, among which are the UNEVOC Centres. In addition, the 2012 Third International Congress on TVET and the resulting Shanghai Consensus are well known among TVET policy-makers, and serve as a reference point for renewed policy awareness in the field.

A number of challenges were also identified, including:

(a) UNESCO does a lot with limited resources, but relies on too few people, instead of achieving results increasingly in cooperation with its extended networks and partners, especially in light of current and future resource constraints. This hampers the Organization's effectiveness and sustainability, especially at the country and regional levels.

(b) The potential of the UNESCO TVET community is not yet fully realized as roles and responsibilities are not consistently understood by all individuals and entities. Furthermore, the role of the regional offices and the involvement of category 1 education institutes as well as that of UNESCO staff working in related thematic areas in the implementation of the Strategy have so far not been optimized.

(c) Managing a unique global UNEVOC Network is a key added value to extend UNESCO's outreach in Member States. Despite advances in revamping the Network since 2010, its potential is yet to be fully realized and sustained in practice. The still insufficient level of activity of some individual UNEVOC Centres and the limited organizational capacity to manage and mobilise the Centres by UNESCO entities working in TVET, especially at the regional level, hamper the attainment of this objective.

(d) The effectiveness and sustainability of UNESCO's activities at the country level are at times compromised by the absence of a longer-term strategic approach that envisions the consolidation of results on a medium/longer term, and the still limited institutional commitment and involvement of a wider array of actors and partners.

(e) Despite the increasing outreach and cooperation with organizations, at the regional and national levels, UNESCO missed out on some opportunities to work together with other organizations active in TVET. In fact, these organizations are not always aware of UNESCO's activity in the same regions/countries.

(f) The UNESCO Strategy for TVET (2010-2015) has supported UNESCO in structuring and better organizing its work internally, but as a document it has so far been less useful as a way of communicating the Organization's messages on TVET at the global, regional and national levels.

## Way forward

Building on the achievements highlighted in the evaluation report and pursuing the recent ongoing reform processes towards improvements, the evaluation recommends that UNESCO continue its work by aiming at the following results.

More details on suggested actions are provided in the evaluation report.

(a) An organizational capacity (including adequate financial and human resources) further aligned with the needs for effectively implementing UNESCO's mandate in TVET in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. This includes a consolidated UNESCO TVET community with clear responsibilities and accountabilities for its individual entities towards the implementation of UNESCO's future Strategy for TVET.

(b) A dynamic network of active UNEVOC Centres that further contribute to enhanced international cooperation, capacity-building and policy development in the Member States

and in full cooperation with relevant UNESCO entities especially at the (sub)regional level by seeking greater outreach and increased opportunities for knowledge exchange, capacity development, and policy advice.

(c) Continued development of country- and increasingly regional-level interventions that are planned, designed, implemented and followed up in full alignment with the policy development stage in a country/region and embedded in the larger TVET policy debate to further strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of UNESCO's work.

(d) Inspiring, well recognized and effective normative instruments that – with the help of UNESCO and other development partners – and following the ongoing revision are translated into regional and national TVET reform processes.

(e) In addition to the partnerships already built at global, regional and national levels, partners and networks that are closely committed to UNESCO's mandate and willing and available to jointly work with UNESCO by taking mutual ownership of countries' TVET reforms in a comprehensive and sustainable way.

(f) As already planned, develop a well communicated new Strategy for TVET that consolidates UNESCO's visibility and role in the field of TVET by highlighting the Organization's unique vision for TVET, in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, and specifying how UNESCO, together with its networks and partners, will operationalize and fund it.

## Management Response

<b>Overall Management Response:</b>	
<p>The evaluation has identified a number of key achievements and some challenges which will help to inform the development of the new Strategy for TVET and its effective implementation. It has been timely as TVET is key for the post-2015 agenda. Some limitations of the evaluation methodology such as the limited evaluation field work may have restricted the full representativeness of the case studies represented in the report.</p>	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Management response</b>
<p><i>Building on the achievements highlighted in the evaluation report and pursuing the recent ongoing reform processes towards improvements, the evaluation recommends that UNESCO continue its work by aiming at the following results.</i></p> <p><i>Details on suggested actions are contained in the evaluation report:</i></p>	<p>(accepted / partially accepted / not accepted; justification)</p>
<p>1. An organizational capacity (including adequate financial and human resources) further aligned with the needs for effectively implementing UNESCO's mandate in TVET in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. This includes a consolidated UNESCO TVET community with clear responsibilities and accountabilities for its individual entities towards the implementation of UNESCO's future Strategy for TVET.</p>	<p><b>Partially accepted</b></p> <p>The organization will seek to further align its capacity and management plans with priorities defined in the context of the post-2015 agenda. Responsibilities and accountabilities will be defined taking into account the decentralised and crosscutting nature of UNESCO's work. The TVET Community will be further enhanced as a community of practices.</p>
<p>2. A dynamic network of active UNEVOC Centres that further contribute to enhanced international cooperation, capacity-building and policy development in the Member States and in full cooperation with relevant UNESCO entities especially at the (sub)regional level by seeking greater outreach and increased opportunities for knowledge exchange, capacity development, and policy advice.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>Significant improvements of UNEVOC Network work since 2012 have been acknowledged in the Evaluation report. This trend will be continued in line with the Medium Term Strategy of UNESCO-UNEVOC defined in 2014 and later as part of the new Strategy for TVET.</p>
<p>3. Continued development of country- and increasingly regional-level interventions that are planned, designed, implemented and followed up in full alignment with the policy development stage in a country/region and embedded in the larger TVET policy debate to further strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of UNESCO's work.</p>	<p><b>Partially accepted</b></p> <p>UNESCO's policy support is demand-driven and recognises the ownership of countries. While, the TVET Strategy provides the programmatic framework to guide UNESCO's work, country level activities take into account, in flexible manner, the development context and specific policy environment of each country. Furthermore, efforts will be continued to be reinforced to work with partners such as ILO to ensure sustainability of impact.</p>

<p>4. Inspiring, well recognized and effective normative instruments that– with the help of UNESCO and other development partners – and following the ongoing revision are translated into regional and national TVET reform processes.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The revision of TVET related normative instruments is ongoing, once accepted the revised normative instruments will guide UNESCO's work to support reform processes and initiatives at national, regional and global levels.</p>
<p>5. In addition to the partnerships already built up at global, regional and national levels, partners and networks that are closely committed to UNESCO' mandate and willing and available to jointly work with UNESCO by taking mutual ownership of countries' TVET reforms in a comprehensive and sustainable way.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>UNESCO will continue to reinforce partnerships at national, regional and global levels including through the Inter-Agency Group on TVET established since 2009.</p>
<p>6. As already planned, develop a well communicated new Strategy for TVET that consolidates UNESCO's visibility and role in the field of TVET by highlighting the Organization's unique vision for TVET, in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, and specifying how UNESCO, together with its networks and partners, will operationalize and fund it.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The Education sector is currently developing a New UNESCO Strategy for TVET that shall be informed, among others, by the findings and conclusions resulting from this evaluation and following a consultation process with Member States and other relevant stakeholders.</p>

## List of Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BEAR	Better Education for Africa's Rise
BSP	Bureau of Strategic Planning, UNESCO
C/4	Medium-Term Strategy, UNESCO
C/5	Biennial Programme and Budget, UNESCO
CapEFA	Capacity-Building for Education for All
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
DG DEVCO	European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ED	UNESCO Education Sector
EFA	Education for All
ETF	European Training Foundation
EX/4	Biannual Monitoring Reports on Programme Implementation, UNESCO
GEAP	Gender Equality Action Plan
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
IAG-TVET	Inter-Agency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training
IBE	International Bureau of Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IIEP	UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOS	Internal Oversight Service, UNESCO
IVETA	International Vocational Education and Training Association
NET-MED Youth	Networks of Mediterranean Youth Project
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
REC	Regional Economic Community
RP	Regular Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO-UNEVOC	UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Bonn, Germany
UNEVOC Centre	Established in TVET institutions and serve as focal points in the provision of services and platforms for international and regional cooperation in TVET
UNEVOC Network	Global platform for Technical and Vocational Education and Training made up of UNEVOC Centres, which are established in TVET institutions
VET	Vocational education and training
XB	Extrabudgetary
YLS	Section for Youth, Literacy and Skills Development, UNESCO Education Sector



# Chapter1 Introduction

With high levels of youth unemployment, rapidly changing labour markets, demographic changes, technological advancement, environmental concerns, globalization, and deep rooted social inequalities and tensions, together with increased interdependency of all countries in a context of intensified economic integration the development of skills for work and life through technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is increasingly emerging as a priority for many UNESCO Member States. Ensuring that all young women and men get the opportunity to develop the right knowledge, skills and attitudes through education and training is considered to be a pillar of sustainable economic and social, and environmental development.

In this context, UNESCO's work in TVET has called for the transformation of national TVET systems and aims to support Member States in the development of lifelong learning policies and strategies that provide individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to become responsible citizens and to access decent jobs, including through formal, non-formal and informal learning.

## 1.1 Background: A Strategy for UNESCO's work in TVET

UNESCO has been working in the field of TVET for many years. As early as the 1960's the Organization developed a Recommendation concerning TVET, which was followed by an international Convention.<sup>2</sup> Until 2010, however UNESCO did not have a clear written strategy for the thematic area TVET. With the adoption of the 2000 Education for All (EFA) goals, TVET was partly covered within EFA goal 3 "Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes". However, the co-existence of EFA and Millennium Development Goals, as well as the set-up of parallel funding mechanisms for education such as the Fast Track Initiative and Direct Budget Support Programs for Education directed the attention primarily on access to education, literacy and basic education while TVET and skills development beyond basic education were given relatively limited attention. The [Recommendations](#)<sup>3</sup> emanating from the second International Congress on TVET held in Seoul in 1999, did therefore at that time not lead to the development of an explicit UNESCO strategy in the field of TVET. The recent Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14, now states that the third EFA goal has indeed been one of the most neglected, not least due to the fact that no targets or indicators were set to monitor its progress.

With TVET now being widely recognised as a driver for economic and social development, global interest in TVET and Member States began indicating that support from UNESCO in the field was becoming important to them. Increasingly, an explicit mandate for UNESCO to work on TVET was considered necessary. Therefore, in order to better position UNESCO in the field, it was deemed necessary to establish a single Strategy for TVET that would clarify the Organization's role and structure its various activities in the thematic area. At the 179th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO (April 2008), requested by Germany and supported by many Member States, the decision was taken to develop a UNESCO Strategy for TVET for the period 2010-2015. Following an extensive consultation process with Member States and international partners, the Strategy was approved by the Executive Board in April 2009.

### Strategy for TVET

The [Strategy for TVET](#) indicates that within that context and with the 34 C/4 overarching objective "attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning" UNESCO will strengthen assistance to Member States to improve their TVET systems and practices, in line with EFA goal

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<sup>2</sup> [Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education](#) 1962 (revised in 1974 and 2001), [Convention on Technical and Vocational Education](#) 1989

<sup>3</sup> The Second World TVET Congress resulted in the "Technical and Vocational Education and Training: A Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" which called for raising the status and the broadening of the traditional vision of TVE in view of launching new global strategy for TVE by UNESCO and ILO.

3 “ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access and appropriate learning and life skills programmes”. In this way UNESCO's Strategy for TVET aimed to directly contribute to the international education agenda. The Strategy for TVET divides UNESCO's work in three core areas.

Core area 1 “**Provision of upstream policy advice<sup>4</sup> and related capacity development**” aims to develop and review comprehensive national TVET policies and to establish coherent and cooperative multilateral approaches. Responding to requests from Member States, UNESCO conducts “TVET Policy Reviews” which are taking stock of the status of countries' TVET systems that intend to identify concrete options and strategies for improving their national TVET policies and systems. Furthermore, they aim to build national capacities to undertake strategic policy analysis and planning in TVET aligned with socio-economic priorities. In addition, UNESCO also provides TVET policy advice and technical support for countries that wish to develop or update their national TVET policies. Furthermore, UNESCO runs a number of capacity development programmes in countries through extrabudgetary projects such as [Better Education for Africa's Rise \(BEAR\)](#) Project and the TVET component of the [Capacity Building for Education for All \(CapEFA\) programme](#). These cover inter-ministerial coordination, curricula reform, entrepreneurship, qualifications frameworks and quality assurance, information systems, labour market analysis, and monitoring and evaluation of TVET. To undertake its work UNESCO promotes a multilateral approach of working with all in-country partners such as ministries in charge of TVET, teacher and trainer organizations, unions, and to some extent the private sector and civil society.

Core area 2 “**Conceptual clarification of skills development and improvement of monitoring**” aims to develop a joint definition of “skills”, to identify TVET indicators and to assess and monitor the normative instruments. Following a decision by the 37<sup>th</sup> General Conference, UNESCO suspended the monitoring of its normative instruments in TVET and has been working on revising the 2001 Recommendation in order to reflect new trends and issues in TVET. Following an extensive consultation process, the new instrument is expected to be presented to the 38<sup>th</sup> General Conference in November 2015. In addition to global-level standard-setting work, UNESCO has also been involved in a number of regional normative initiatives, such as in the SADC in Africa<sup>5</sup>, ASEAN<sup>6</sup> in South-East Asia, and in the Caribbean<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, through the Inter-Agency Group on TVET (IAG-TVET)<sup>8</sup> UNESCO brings together the main international players in TVET for exchange and joint work, such as on the development of global indicators for measuring TVET systems. UNESCO also provides technical assistance to Member States on collecting information and building TVET management information systems. UNESCO assists countries in understanding TVET and associated terminologies in different country contexts, such as through databases on World TVET, a glossary of terminologies (UNEVOC's TVETipedia).

Through Core area 3 “**Acting as a clearinghouse and informing the global TVET debate**”, UNESCO promotes global awareness of the importance of TVET. In 2012 UNESCO successfully organized the Third International Congress on TVET in Shanghai, which resulted in the adoption of the [Shanghai Consensus](#), containing recommendations as a roadmap for the transformation of countries' TVET systems for the years to come. UNESCO also works to strengthen South-South and North-South-South cooperation in TVET through its global network

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<sup>4</sup> Upstream policy advice is to be understood as a broad concept that can cover a wide range of interventions that were not necessarily detailed in the Strategy document.

<sup>5</sup> Strategic Framework and Programme of Action for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Southern African Region, 2011

<sup>6</sup> Establishment of an ASEAN qualifications reference framework (AQRf) in line with the recommendations of the Third International TVET Congress (Shanghai 2012) in regard to international guidelines and quality assurance for the recognition of qualifications.

<sup>7</sup> Montego Bay Declaration on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the Caribbean, March 2012

<sup>8</sup> Members of the IAG-TVET include the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank (WB), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), European Commission (EC) and the European Training Foundation (ETF) among others.

of UNEVOC Centres (TVET institutions) which is coordinated by the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre with the aim to develop platforms for cooperation, peer-learning and information and knowledge-sharing. Last but not least, UNESCO produces research and publications on specific issues related to TVET in the context of UNESCO's mandate.

The Strategy also provides some indication on administrative and financial implications for organizing UNESCO's work in TVET.

### Resources for TVET

For the past six years UNESCO's Strategy for TVET has been implemented by several entities that have become part of the 'TVET community' of the Organization. This TVET community consists of representatives from:

- **UNESCO Headquarters:** Section for Youth, Literacy and Skills Development (YLS) (as of May 2014), which was a section dedicated exclusively to TVET before then; the Executive Office of the Education Sector for the implementation of the TVET component of the Capacity-building for Education for all (CapEFA) programme; and the Social and Human Sciences sector that oversees the implementation of UNESCO Operational Strategy for Youth as well as related extrabudgetary projects such as the Networks of Mediterranean Youth (NET-MED Youth);
- **UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre in Bonn**, which as a specialised Centre of the Education Sector<sup>9</sup> has the status of a Section and is under the Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems just like the YLS Section at Headquarters;
- **UNESCO Category I Institutes:** UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), International Bureau of Education (IBE);
- Education Sector programme staff in UNESCO regional and national **field offices** with a mandate in TVET as well as TVET related project offices in other countries.

Furthermore, UNESCO disposes of a variety of networks and partners to implement its work:

- **UNEVOC Network:** a global network of 193 TVET institutions at country-level;
- **UNESCO-UNEVOC e-forum:** an online TVET experts community with nearly 4,000 members from 180 countries;
- **Inter-Agency Group on TVET (IAG-TVET):** group of international organizations working in TVET which include UNESCO, International Labour Organization (ILO), World Bank, European Training Foundation (ETF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), African Development Bank (AfDB), European Commission; and the respective Inter-Agency Working groups (IAWGs) on specific topics (such as on greening TVET or skills) represented by the same organisations. **UNESCO Chairs:** academic and research institutions and networks working on TVET.

Financial resources dedicated to TVET have fluctuated significantly over the six years of implementation of the current Strategy for TVET, including a serious budget shortfall affecting UNESCO's regular Programme since November 2011<sup>10</sup>. During the six years of implementation of the Strategy (2010-2015), TVET has received 5-7%<sup>11</sup> of the Education Sector's Regular Programme activity budget.

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<sup>9</sup> UNESCO-UNEVOC is currently the only specialised International Centre of the ED sector. There are 7 Education sector Category I Institutes with a specific global or regional mandate in one of the ED priority areas of the Organization. Different from the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre these have a more diversified funding base with contributions from different donors and Member States and a separate governing body.

<sup>10</sup> Following the admission of Palestine as a UNESCO Member State in 2011, funding for the Organization from the United States and Israel corresponding to about 22% of its Operating Budget was withheld. Consequently the Organization underwent a phase of severe budgetary reductions and efficiency measures. The response to the financial crisis included the identification of priority focus areas. (see 5 X/EX/Decisions)

<sup>11</sup> The Education Sector's regular programme operational (activity) budget for 2011-2010 was 57,424,454 USD, for 2012-2013 it was 29,914,426 USD and for 2014-2015 is 36,276,679 USD. (Source: SISTER)

**Table 1 Evolution of operational budget for TVET during 2010-2015 (USD)**

	2010-2011		2012-2013		2014-2015	
	RP	XB*	RP	XB*	RP	XB**
Budget	3,776,465	17,702,690***	1,540,178	9,052,885	1,812,341	19,788,683
% of Education Sector's activity budget	7%	10%	5%	5%	5%	10%

Source: SISTER, accessed 10 July 2015; \* XB expenditure per biennium; \*\* XB allotment for biennium; \*\*\* excludes CapEFA; includes UNESCO-UNEVOC

In the framework of the prioritisation exercise which was part of the financial crisis management measures of the Organization, in 2013 UNESCO's work in TVET was ranked among the top four priorities in education<sup>12</sup> by Member States, indicating their aspiration to privilege strengthening capacities in TVET. During 2014-2015, TVET received 5% of the Education Sector's Regular Programme activity budget and 10% of Extrabudgetary Funding for 2014-2015 (the figure is at 9% for Regular Programme and Extrabudgetary Funding combined and with the staff establishment it is at 10%). However, according to Table 1 above, during 2010-2011 TVET received a larger share of the Education Sector's Regular Programme budget (7%) and that without being explicitly ranked as a priority area at the time. According to Table 2 below, despite the ranking TVET still receives the smallest amount of Regular Programme activity budget of the four priority areas in education. Both Table 1 and Table 2 show that the prioritization of TVET by Member States has not been reflected in the activity budgets for this thematic area.

**Table 2 Education Sector budget allocation for top four priority areas (2014-2015)**

Thematic area	RP Allocation (2014 & 2015)	Extrabudgetary Allotment 2014&20015	Total Activity budget	% of Total ED Activity Budget	37C/5 Staff Establishment	% of Total ED budget (activities + staff)
Sector wide policy and planning	3,572,970	32,135,801	35,708,771	15%	9,251,345	15%
Literacy	2,369,867	28,580,415	30,950,282	13%	7,500,649	13%
Teachers	3,199,261	19,604,592	22,803,853	10%	8,592,232	11%
<b>TVET</b>	<b>1,812,341</b>	<b>19,788,683<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>21,601,024</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7,016,762</b>	<b>10%</b>
Total for top four priority areas	10,954,439	100,109,491	111,063,930	47%	30,161,841	48%
Total for Education Sector	36,276,679	201,833,106	238,109,785	100%	53,980,498	100%

Source: SISTER, accessed 10 July 2015, and BSP Draft 37 C/5 Staff Establishment

The UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre as a specialised International Centre of the Education Sector has received on average less than 10% of its funding from UNESCO during the past six years, while 90% has come from German stakeholders (BMBF, BIBB, BMZ, and GIZ<sup>14</sup>). The biennial funding of UNESCO-UNEVOC during the period of the Strategy for TVET (2010-2015) has ranged from 2,423,569 USD in 2010-2011, to 1,678,454 USD in 2012-2013 and to 2,963,312 USD in 2014-2015. This budget does not include the two fixed-term staffing positions

<sup>12</sup> The budgetary priorities for the Education Sector as decided by the Special Session of the Executive Board in July 2013 are policies and planning, literacy, teachers and TVET. (See [5 X/EX/Decisions](#))

<sup>13</sup> Additional 6 million euros were allocated in June 2015 for the implementation of an extrabudgetary project Plateforme d'expertise en Formation Professionnelle in Sub-Saharan Africa (PEFOP) which is managed by Pôle de Dakar (UNESCO/IIEP) for 4.5 years are not included in this figure. PEFOP aims at setting up a multi-country platform of expertise to support vocational training reform in African countries as a contribution to implementing renewed TVET policies.

<sup>14</sup> BMBF: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung; BIBB: Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung; BMZ: Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung; GIZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

financed by UNESCO or the additional funding (and seconded experts) coming from the BMBF, BMZ and other donors (Australian UNEVOC Centre).<sup>15</sup>

## 1.2 Evaluation Purpose and Scope

Given the increasing priority status of TVET in UNESCO; and the fact that the current Strategy for TVET will come to an end in 2015, the timing for the present evaluation is opportune, as it aims to inform the future direction of UNESCO's work in TVET in light of lessons learned from the past six years as well as the evolving post-2015 global sustainable development agenda.

The evaluation of UNESCO's work in TVET and its Strategy has a dual purpose as outlined in Box 1 below. For a detailed list of evaluation questions please see the Evaluation Terms of Reference in Annex A.

### **Box 1 Purpose of evaluation**

1. To assess progress achieved in the implementation of UNESCO's work in TVET during the period of its Strategy (2010-2015), providing insights as to the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness, the different implementation modalities including the distribution of roles and responsibilities, as well as the sustainability of the results achieved so far (Summative components):
  - 1a: To assess the achievements and challenges during the implementation of UNESCO's Strategy for TVET with respect to its three Core Areas; i.e. the progress in achieving its overall objectives and expected results as well as its relevance/added value, the efficiency and effectiveness of its implementation modalities and the sustainability of the results achieved.
  - 1b: To assess the quality of collaboration and effective coordination of the different entities within the UNESCO TVET community, including with the UNESCO-UNEVOC and the UNEVOC Network as well as UNESCO's coordination role and cooperation with external partners (reviewing good practices, capacities, distribution of resources, and accountability mechanisms).
2. To inform the proposal for a follow-up of the Strategy for TVET in view of lessons learned and of the global debate around the post-2015 development agenda (Formative components):
  - 2a: To identify lessons learned, the potential future focus areas, and the most appropriate implementation mechanisms for the follow-up to the current Strategy.
  - 2b: To identify opportunities for improved cooperation within the UNESCO TVET community, as well as opportunities for cooperation and fundraising with external partners.
  - 2c: To identify options for strengthening the functioning and mandate of UNESCO-UNEVOC.

The evaluation is therefore expected to inform UNESCO's management and Member States on the most appropriate way forward for a follow-up to the current Strategy for TVET and the capacities and organizational arrangements required to lead the work under it.

The evaluation covers UNESCO's work in the implementation of the Strategy for TVET by UNESCO's TVET community, that is the work done by the HQ Section for Youth, Literacy and Skills Development as well as extrabudgetary project teams (BEAR, CapEFA and NET-MED Youth), by UNESCO-UNEVOC in Bonn; UNESCO Category I education institutes (UIL, UIS, IIEP, IBE), and its regional and national field offices.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the evaluation also considered the work undertaken within the Inter-Agency Group for TVET (IAG-TVET) and its thematic working groups, and the UNEVOC Network.

<sup>15</sup> UNESCO-UNEVOC Financial Information provided to the evaluators.

<sup>16</sup> Including the implementation through UNESCO's networks (including UNEVOC Centres) and partners.



The focus of the evaluation was on activities carried out and results achieved during the period of the current Strategy for TVET, that is during the 2010-2011, 2012-13 biennia as well as work done to date (in 2014-2015).

Finally, the evaluation is intended to serve as an important learning exercise for managers and staff in UNESCO working in the field of TVET.

### 1.3 Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation was informed by an evaluability study<sup>17</sup> of UNESCO's work in TVET and a (re)construction of a theory of change model for the Organization's Strategy for TVET. The aim of the theory of change was to help the evaluators and UNESCO staff to map out and understand the causal relationships behind the interventions in the area of TVET, with a focus on the three core areas of its Strategy for TVET. This exercise helped identify key inputs, causal assumptions as well as intended objectives of UNESCO's work to further guide this evaluation.

The evaluation was undertaken by a team of four external evaluators with senior TVET expertise and two evaluators from UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service (IOS). It was conducted in a participatory manner to encourage input and learning by all participants along the way. Its aim was both to assess achievements and challenges with a focus on outcomes and on potential impacts and to identify what works and why, where and under what circumstances. The evaluators have paid special attention to gender equality, priority Africa and human rights issues in the evaluation methodology, both in the development of evaluation questions, criteria and tools, as well as in the conduct of this exercise.

Data was collected for this evaluation using the following methodology:

- Desk review and analysis of relevant internal documents and online resources on UNESCO's work in TVET as well as key strategic documents and those of other entities and partners working in the area, including:
  - UNESCO Strategy for TVET in 2010-2015, the mid-term review of its implementation, and its indicative logframe;
  - UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy (C/4), Programme and Budget (C/5), Operational Strategy on Youth, Operational Strategy for Priority Africa, Gender Equality Action Plan, Education Sector Strategy;
  - Global and regional normative instruments in the field of TVET;
  - Shanghai Consensus 2012 and related follow-up documents;
  - EFA-Global Monitoring Report (EFA-GMR) and Documents related to the post-2015 education and development agenda;
  - TVET Policy Reviews and related Guidelines;
  - CapEFA country projects documents;
  - Project documents for BEAR, NET-MED Youth, etc.;
  - UNESCO-UNEVOC Publications and online tools/resources;
  - Previous evaluations of UNESCO-UNEVOC and the CapEFA Programme;
  - SISTER and EX/4 activity monitoring reports and related workplans;
  - TVET Strategies and related project documents of other organizations working in the field;
  - Outputs of the IAG-TVET including the Proposed Indicators for Assessing TVET;
  - Documents and reports from UNESCO (regional, cluster, national) field offices;
  - UNEVOC-Medium-Term Strategy document (2015-17);
- Country visits<sup>18</sup> to Benin, Botswana, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Malawi and St. Kitts and Nevis, to assess UNESCO's contribution to the development of each country's TVET system

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<sup>17</sup> The evaluability study was based on an initial document review as well as several preliminary interviews with key stakeholders.

<sup>18</sup> Countries were selected according to the following criteria: geographical balance with special attention to Africa; groups of countries (least developed, middle income, small island developing states, post-conflict post-disaster, land-locked); countries that have seen a full cycle of UNESCO activities in TVET; UNESCO presence (field office, UNEVOC Centre); countries involved in activities through regional economic communities; countries with private sector partnerships; countries not selected for field visits by the Evaluation of the CapEFA programme.

and a stop-over at the UNESCO Bangkok Office to collect information on regional perspectives;

- Two visits<sup>19</sup> to UNESCO-UNEVOC in Bonn, Germany;
- Attendance of the World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea in May 2015;
- In-person and telephone/Skype interviews with over 300 people including:
  - UNESCO staff (fixed-term and temporary), members of the TVET community, working on TVET at Headquarters, at UNESCO-UNEVOC and in the field, in particular regional Education offices;
  - Other UNESCO staff working in the Education Sector, Category I institutes, and UIS;
  - Representatives of the IAG-TVET and other regional and international organizations working in TVET;
  - UNEVOC Centres' cluster coordinators and staff;
  - Representatives of Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, including the "Friends of TVET<sup>20</sup>";
  - Country-level partners and beneficiaries;
  - TVET institutions; and,
  - Representatives of the private sector.
- Self-assessment questionnaire for UNESCO field offices working in TVET (21) – response rate: 67%;
- Online survey of UNEVOC Centres (193) – response rate: 32% (See Annex X for summary of results);
- Online survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners (626) – response rate: 15% (See Annex X for summary of results);
- Participatory workshops to reflect on findings and the way forward for UNESCO's work in TVET;
- Regular meetings and exchange with the Evaluation Reference group in order to provide additional quality assurance of the process and the deliverables.

## 1.4 Limitations and opportunities

The evaluation faced the following limitations, some of which resulted in opportunities:

- The lack of a clear previously defined intervention logic / theory of change underlying the interventions under the umbrella of the Strategy for TVET made it challenging to measure the achievement of results. At the same time, this provided the opportunity to use the evaluation exercise for joint reflection, testing and assessing the presumed and actual causal linkages and the underlying assumptions responsible for the success/or non-success of UNESCO's interventions in TVET. The evaluation raised awareness of the usefulness of this tool throughout the evaluation process, which can feed into the development of a Theory of Change as a basis for the new Strategy for TVET.
- Information contained in most official monitoring (EX/4 and project) documents is more activity- and output- than results-oriented, which made assessing longer-term outcomes and results challenging. The evaluation tried to compensate for this by collecting data on results information through interviews and during the field missions.
- Most of the country-level projects (CapEFA, BEAR, and NET-MED Youth) were still ongoing at the time of the evaluation; therefore, the evaluation was only able to assess intermediate results. The outcomes of the evaluation may be used for corrective measures for the remaining time of the programmes.
- UNESCO's monitoring systems did not fully capture information on the mainstreaming of gender equality into TVET programmes. The evaluation tried to compensate for this

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<sup>19</sup> The evaluators attended the Global Forum on Skills for Work and Life in October 2014 at UNESCO-UNEVOC and later went back to the Centre to conduct additional interviews with its staff and partners.

<sup>20</sup> An informal group of 14 Member States from around the globe with the aim of contributing to UNESCO's work on TVET issues in general and in particular to the elaboration of a new UNESCO Strategy for TVET.

by collecting information on this aspect through analysis of programme documents and interviews.

- A number of field offices did not complete the self-assessment questionnaire; therefore making it difficult to map the full extent of TVET activities world-wide as well as to get the full pictures of the resources being dedicated to this thematic area by all entities of the Organization.
- Fifteen out of the 193 UNEVOC Centres could not be reached by email; therefore, they may have not received the evaluation survey addressed to them. The UNESCO-UNEVOC made efforts to send the survey to these Centres by fax.
- Response rates for both surveys were relatively low. At the same time, the low response rate for UNEVOC Centres was a key indication of the limited responsiveness of a part of the UNEVOC Network and constitutes an important finding for this evaluation.
- The resources dedicated to this evaluation allowed for only a limited number of on-site field visits. Therefore, the findings from the field work are not fully representative of all the work conducted in the field of TVET, but these case studies were used to identify what works (or not), where, why and under what circumstances. There are many other relevant examples of UNESCO's work in TVET in countries which have not been visited and which therefore feature less in this evaluation report.

## 1.5 Structure of this evaluation report

This report is structured in three parts. Chapter 2 presents UNESCO's work in TVET during the past six years of the Organization's Strategy for TVET (2010-2015), using standard evaluation criteria, as well as an analysis of how the Organization works with its partners. Chapter 3 provides reflections on the current Strategy for TVET document itself as well as forward-looking perspectives for a future organizational Strategy for TVET in light of lessons learned. Finally, Chapter 4 presents overall conclusions and recommendations for the future.



## Chapter 2 UNESCO's work in TVET: Looking back at the past six years (2010-2015) and suggesting improvements for the future

This chapter presents UNESCO's work in the field of TVET during 2010-2015, using evaluation criteria: relevance (Section 2.1), added value (Section 2.2), effectiveness (Section 2.3), efficiency (Section 2.4), sustainability (Section 2.5) and collaboration within UNESCO and with other organizations (Section 2.6). The last section (2.7) presents suggestions to improve UNESCO's work in TVET.

### 2.1 Relevance of UNESCO's work in TVET

*This section assesses whether UNESCO's work in TVET is relevant in the context of the Organization's mandate, given global developments, as well as regional and national needs.*

#### **1) UNESCO brings issues related to its mandate (such as lifelong learning, peace and sustainable development, and equity) on the agenda and promotes TVET in a lifelong learning path (covering all education levels and non/informal learning environments)**

UNESCO's work in TVET responds to many of the objectives and priorities agreed by its Member States in key strategic documents (C/4 and C/5 documents). In addition to the socio-economic and world-of-work orientation of TVET it integrates and takes important issues and principles such as equitable access, sustainable development and youth issues into account. In addition, UNESCO emphasises the lifelong learning dimension of TVET (and the TVET dimension in lifelong learning). Going further than other organizations, UNESCO brings a humanistic and social justice perspective on TVET. This point is put forward by Professor Leon Tikly<sup>21</sup>: "In the case of financial institutions such as the World Bank, for example, policies to promote TVET are principally seen as an investment in human capital and as a means for supporting economic growth. The underlying view of development in operation is an economic one in which 'progress' is measured in relation to levels of economic growth and prosperity. UNESCO's long standing interest in TVET on the other hand has been linked to a more human-centred view of TVET as a means for supporting sustainable development."<sup>22</sup> Representatives of international organizations and stakeholders at national and regional level that were interviewed acknowledge the importance of a broad TVET concept going beyond an economic focus; not only being confined to a specific education sector or a specific stage in life.<sup>23</sup>

This broader vision has been the point of departure for UNESCO's work in TVET and inspires the Policy Reviews, policy advice, publications, discussions on normative instruments and the themes and topics that UNESCO puts on the agenda (for instance equity, lifelong learning,

<sup>21</sup> Professor Tikly's practical orientation has been impactful on policy and practice and is underpinned by theoretical questions, including how to conceptualise education as an aspect of the 'postcolonial condition', the impact of globalisation on the low income world and how to understand the relationship between education, inequality and social justice.

<sup>22</sup> Tikly, Leon (2011), *Reconceptualising TVET and Development: a human capabilities and social justice approach*: Background paper for the World Report on TVET, p. 1. Tikly also points to the issue about funding of TVET: "There was a disjuncture between the needs dictated by manpower planning and the realities of labour markets. Economists working within the World Bank also began to question the cost-effectiveness of vocational education and the rate of return to investments in TVET (Psacharopoulos, 1991, Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985). It was argued that unless the policy environment for TVET was reformed further investment would be an inefficient use of scarce resources (Middleton et al., 1991). It was argued that investment in basic education provided a much higher rate of return than did investment in secondary (including vocational) and post-basic education and this shift in emphasis provided an economic rationale for emphasising primary education within the MDGs. As a consequence of these criticisms funding for TVET dried up with TVET now accounting for just 8-9% of World Bank educational spending (Mclean, 2011)."

<sup>23</sup> This is also expressed in how international and regional organizations see TVET: See for instance ETF (2015), *Declaration: Moving skills forward together; emphasising the strong link between VET and social cohesion; and creating opportunities for individuals to transform their lives.*

and World Reference levels of learning outcomes). It is also expressed in the close collaboration between the UNESCO TVET community and UIL on the validation, certification and recognition of lifelong learning.

The above-mentioned themes are not only part of UNESCO's conceptual work at the global level, but are also fully integrated in Policy Reviews, policy advice and policy implementation. The box below provides examples of where UNESCO interventions in TVET stimulated development on specific UNESCO-topics.

## **Box 2 Gender Equality in TVET**

- *Malawi: UNESCO has succeeded in bringing issues of access and equity to the national TVET agenda and these are key pillars of the country's new TVET Policy. A gender focal point network has been set up to ensure that these issues are included in the ongoing TVET reforms.*
- *St Kitts and Nevis: UNESCO Policy Review raised issues such as gender equality and targeting disadvantaged groups, as well as the importance of integrating TVET into general education. These issues have also been integrated into the country's recently-developed TVET Policy.*
- *Laos: Policy Review raised key concerns about access to TVET by female students.*
- *UNESCO-UNEVOC hosted a moderated virtual conference on Women in TVET with over fifty TVET experts from around the world. The conference report reflected the gender bias in TVET and provided recommendations to eliminate gender barriers.<sup>24</sup>*

Specific topics are also explicitly addressed by the work of UNESCO-UNEVOC where greening TVET, Youth Skills and Employability and ICTs in TVET are among the key topics. This was made visible during the global forum and in UNEVOC publications, virtual conferences and discussions in the e-Forum. The survey of UNEVOC Centres results also show that UNEVOC Centres consider greening TVET as high on the agenda.<sup>25</sup>

The evaluation fieldwork and the interviews with national and global level stakeholders show that UNESCO is able to bring issues related to its mandate on the global agenda: such as lifelong learning, sustainable development, and equity. Furthermore, it supports the integration of these issues at the country level. In addition, UNESCO advocates for TVET as an area that transverses different sub-sectors of education throughout different stages of life, as well as offering opportunities for strategic inter-sectoral approaches in the areas of UNESCO's mandate, while being an important sub-sector itself.

## **2) UNESCO's work is timely and relevant given global development needs**

Over the last decade, the world has seen a number of rapid changes that influence and impact education in general, and that have a particular impact on TVET. These concern for instance the effects of globalisation and related changing modes of work; migration of workforce; which were further accentuated by the financial and economic crisis from 2008 onwards. These developments called for a more flexible and interchangeable workforce.

In the last six years TVET has become increasingly prioritised by international organizations and governments across the globe and is now significantly more in the centre of attention than it was before 2008. Interviewed stakeholders indicate that after the economic downturn in 2008 something changed in the TVET policy discourse: TVET was reconsidered as a model that could support countries in their economic recovery. Awareness grew that firstly, young people can be educated, but may not be sufficiently prepared for employment; and secondly, that older people lack the capacity and flexibility to change career paths in order

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pubs/e-Forum\\_WomenAndTVET\\_2012.pdf](http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/pubs/e-Forum_WomenAndTVET_2012.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> 31% of the UNEVOC Centres selected Sustainable development and greening TVET as one of the most important areas addressed while sharing knowledge and experience, and /or cooperating with other UNEVOC Centres (Survey of UNEVOC Centres (Q: Please indicate the four most important thematic areas addressed while sharing knowledge and experience, and /or cooperating with other UNEVOC Centres).

to stay in the labour force. For both groups, young and old, TVET provides, at least the start of a solution, independent of the economic positions of countries (in down-turn economies TVET re-trains people for different jobs; in up-turn economies, TVET contributes to mobility and innovation). Many governments and organizations acknowledge the role TVET can play in combatting issues such as youth unemployment, social exclusion, skills mismatches, lack of diversification of the economy, slow advancement on the value chain, and stagnating economies.

While not based on explicit causal relationships, the discussions about UNESCO's work on TVET and the adoption of the Strategy for TVET in 2009, has been timely and has certainly increased attention to TVET globally in the years since. Many stakeholders, mainly at the country level, refer to the Shanghai Congress and resulting Consensus as a renewed impetus for working on TVET. This is also voiced by the fact that more than half of the UNEVOC Centres participating in the survey are aware of the Shanghai Consensus.

In many countries, UNESCO has succeeded in increasing national attention to TVET. For instance in Malawi, UNESCO was one of the few international organizations to support the country in the field of TVET and helped start a series of much needed reforms. The Policy Review conducted in St. Kitts and Nevis resulted in the development of a national TVET policy and has spurred the development of TVET policies in other countries in the region (e.g. St. Lucia). In many Member States, TVET has become a high priority on the Education agenda; for example, in Benin's ED sector development plan it is the second highest priority after primary education.

### **3) UNESCO provides an important knowledge base and exchange platform for professionals and organizations working in TVET (especially through the UNEVOC Network, the IAG-TVET, and the related Inter-Agency Working Groups (IAWGs))**

The exchange of knowledge is essential for all those involved in the development of TVET systems and programmes; for example, TVET authorities developing evidence-based policies at member state level; and, donors and implementing agencies that are designing and implementing interventions and projects. There is a need for information on different contexts in which TVET is provided; different systems which are in place; good practices which are available; and information on what other stakeholders are doing. For effective information exchange, it is beneficial to have a shared language, and have a common understanding of key concepts. This relies on conceptual clarification in the field of TVET.

UNESCO provides opportunities for knowledge sharing to different stakeholder groups through many of its activities, most notably the information exchange in the Inter-Agency Group on TVET (IAG-TVET), and its related Inter-Agency Working Groups<sup>26</sup> as well as the exchange platforms facilitated by the UNESCO-UNEVOC. The IAG-TVET is valued by all its members as being a necessary and effective exchange platform, not only to know what others are doing in the field, but also to come to a joint understanding on issues or to further deepen the understanding of member organizations' perspectives. In addition to the work of the IAG-TVET and UNESCO-UNEVOC, studies, reports, e-fora and conferences also contribute to knowledge exchange.

Networks can be established between organizations, but in many cases they are maintained by individuals. UNESCO's work in TVET is generally based on this reality and so is the e-Forum. Where the institutional activity level of the UNEVOC Network is relatively passive (see later on in this report), the exchange between individuals in the professional e-Forum is very rich, and continuously increasing, critically animated by committed members.<sup>27</sup> Through its networks, UNESCO therefore provides an important knowledge base and exchange platform for professionals and organizations working in TVET.

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<sup>26</sup> E.g. in 2013, the IAWG on greening TVET and skills development submitted to G20 policy recommendation to meet the skills demand in green jobs

<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=Online+library&lang=en&akt=id&st=adv&q=5542&unevoc=0>

<sup>27</sup> Currently, 12% of the total 4,000+ e-Forum members are associated with the UNEVOC Centres.

#### **4) Country level interventions (capacity building, Policy Reviews) are mainly relevant**

UNESCO's country level interventions are confirmed to be relevant to national contexts. With no exception, all stakeholders consulted in the evaluation agree that the capacity building work, policy advice and Policy Reviews are relevant and needed.

TVET Policy Reviews were considered to be important starting points in countries' TVET reforms. TVET is becoming a major priority of the government of Sudan, which created a National Council for Technical and Technological Education (NCTTE) under the vice-presidency. The Council requested UNESCO to undertake a TVET Policy Review as well as a market survey in order to determine national labour market and corresponding education and training needs. UNESCO hired two experts who visited five of the country's states to interview stakeholders and gain an understanding of its TVET system and future needs. It is hoped that the review will constitute an important step in preparing the ground work towards the development of a national TVET policy.

The Networks of Mediterranean youth (NET-MED Youth) Project, a 3-year (2014-2017) inter-sectoral extrabudgetary project is being implemented in nine Mediterranean countries. The YLS section at Headquarters is coordinating the implementation of the Youth Employment Component through UNESCO Field Offices in the region. The project aims to reinforce capacities of national institutions in better anticipating future skills needs and aims to increase youth organizations' role in national policy dialogue on youth employment and skills development. Through its Beirut Office, UNESCO is implementing the Networks of Mediterranean Youth (NET-MED Youth) Project for Lebanon and Syria.<sup>28</sup> One of its aims is empowering youth organizations in their role of designing and implementing policies, strategies and programmes that address youth skills development needs and transitions that are geared towards employment and business creation. The project also directly supports the implementation of the Lebanese National Youth Policy that identifies Labour and Economic Participation as the second priority area of focus for the country's youth. By addressing youth employment, the Project is therefore targeting key national priorities.

The BEAR project offers five African countries the possibility to improve TVET curricula and programme delivery in important economic sectors on the basis of labour market analysis and a fast-track curricula development. In Botswana for instance, the focus is on tourism (key economic sector); in Malawi on agro-processing; an important new skill in a largely agricultural economy.

The CapEFA programme implemented activities at country level in the field of TVET in Liberia, Madagascar, Afghanistan, Malawi, Benin, and formerly Cote d'Ivoire), in particular with the aim to support and build capacities for developing nationally agreed TVET strategies, to build data collection and information systems, as well as to enhance inter-ministerial cooperation, coordination, dialogue among key stakeholders in TVET.<sup>29</sup>

Nonetheless, some of the interviewees from international organizations voiced the concern that other organizations are better positioned and equipped to conduct country level work on a larger scale and questioned whether UNESCO, given its limited resources should be involved in country level interventions in the first place. Then again, other interviewees from international organizations, national partners and UNESCO staff highlight the need for UNESCO's country level work as it legitimizes UNESCO's position in TVET and enables UNESCO to bring unique perspectives on TVET to countries. Therefore, relevance of UNESCO's country level work needs to be also assessed by considering what UNESCO's comparative advantage is.

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<sup>28</sup> For further information, see: [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/sv13/news/youth\\_employment\\_in\\_the\\_mediterranean\\_towards\\_a\\_better\\_skills\\_needs\\_forecast/#.VbYUBaTtBc](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/sv13/news/youth_employment_in_the_mediterranean_towards_a_better_skills_needs_forecast/#.VbYUBaTtBc)

<sup>29</sup> An in-depth evaluation of the CapEFA programme was conducted in 2015.

## 2.2 Comparative advantage of UNESCO's work in TVET (added value)

*For the analysis in this evaluation, comparative advantage is defined by different dimensions. It refers to an Organization fulfilling a 'unique need (or set of needs/priorities), defined as its niche, backed up by positive and meaningful results and the necessary capacities and scale to make a difference.' This section presents how outside stakeholders perceive UNESCO's comparative advantage; how UNESCO's role compares to that of other organizations; the added value of the Organization's normative instruments; and what makes UNESCO's work in TVET unique.<sup>30</sup> Aspects of capacities, scale and where UNESCO is achieving meaningful results are also covered in the respective sections on relevance and effectiveness.*

### **1) Stakeholders acknowledge UNESCO's convening power**

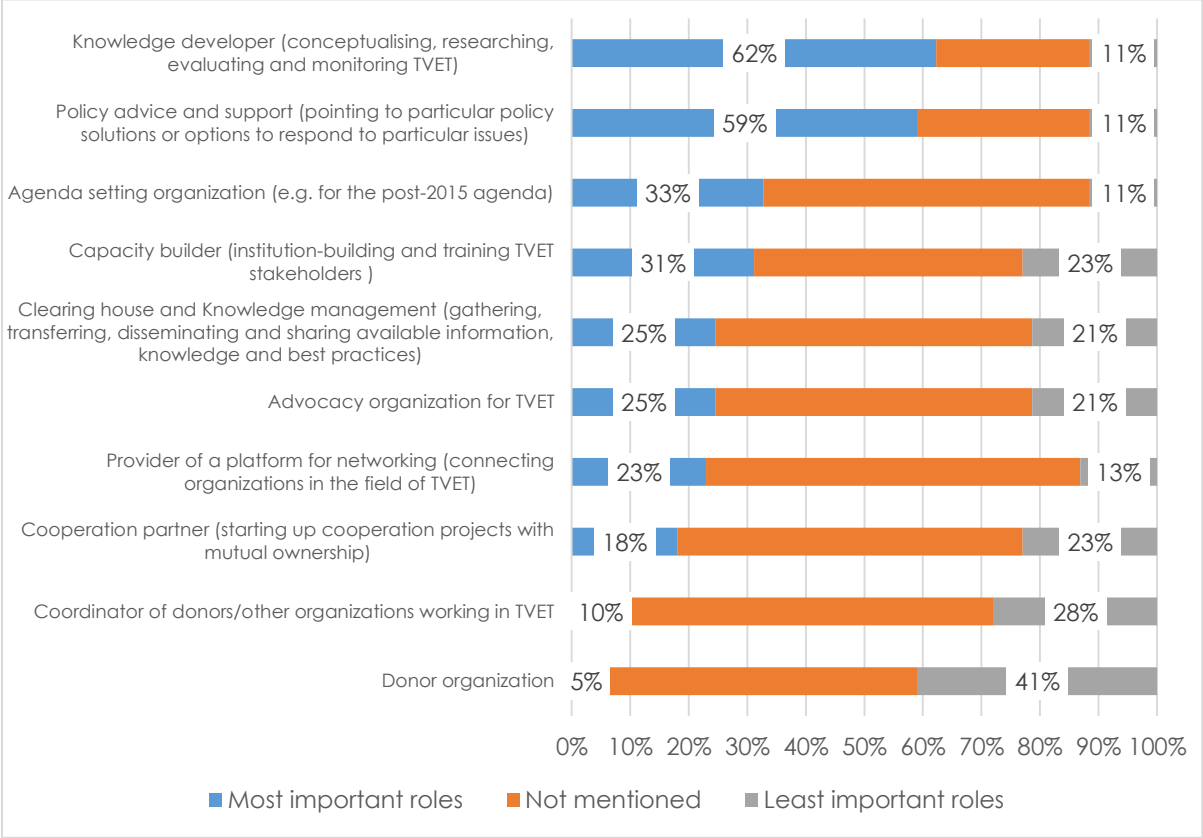
Stakeholder interviews and country studies clearly show that UNESCO is regarded as being a neutral support partner, referring to the perception that UNESCO is there to support countries and does not follow someone else's agenda. Furthermore, UNESCO has established a strong brand name and authoritative voice and its actions and opinions are taken seriously both at global and national levels. Based on its global mandate and brand name, stakeholders acknowledge UNESCO's convening power: they generally respond positively to a call from UNESCO to come together, even when there are no expectations of funding. Examples are the exchanges among the IAG-TVET when convened by UNESCO, the high level representation at the 2012 Shanghai conference and the development of the SADC Regional Framework for Action, as well as the aspiration of institutions to become UNEVOC Centres. At the national level, in Malawi UNESCO has helped harmonize the TVET system and clarify roles and responsibilities by bringing key actors together to engage in policy discussions. In Benin the Cap-EFA programme has managed to bring relevant stakeholders from the agriculture and construction sectors to the table; and, in Laos UNESCO is seen as an organization that could potentially bring donors together with national stakeholders in order to better coordinate their action.

Besides the convening power on which most if not all stakeholders agree, many other roles are also attributed to UNESCO's work in TVET. The following figure indicates what Member States representatives and partners see as the most and least important roles UNESCO plays in the field of TVET.

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<sup>30</sup> The evaluation acknowledges that there is a high potential of complementarity and synergy among interventions from different organizations working in the field of TVET.

**Figure 1 What do you see as the most and least important roles of UNESCO in the field of TVET? Please select up to three for each.**



Source: Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners

The roles of knowledge developer and policy advisor are selected most frequently as the most important for UNESCO (respectively 62% and 59%). Agenda setter follows as the third most important role mentioned. Although most external stakeholders agree on the most important roles and those that are clearly not associated with UNESCO's work in TVET (donor, or donor coordination), there are a number of areas (such as capacity building, clearing house and advocacy) on which stakeholders disagree: some see them as the most important roles, others as the least important roles.

The survey results are confirmed by interviews that indicate that stakeholders, depending on the type of their involvement in TVET, all have their own specific perspectives regarding the set of roles and positive associations attributed to UNESCO. UNEVOC Centres see the role of UNESCO in capacity building more so than members of the IAG-TVET. Donor organizations see UNESCO as a cooperation partner, whereas Ministries of Education regard UNESCO primarily as a clearinghouse.

There is a downside to this overall positive perspective on UNESCO. Stakeholders from other regional and international organizations indicate that UNESCO takes up too many roles and responsibilities, with the risk of not actually being able to clearly distinguish itself from other organizations and finally not to live up to the expectation of each stakeholder in delivering results.

**2) UNESCO plays a leading, and much valued, role in conceptualising TVET**

TVET is a challenging field to define and conceptualise. It is directly concerned with both the direction and content of courses, and the delivery and governance of programmes and certificates. Furthermore, the orientation of TVET towards the world of work together with further learning opportunities and pathways cuts across various parts of the education system as well as stages of life: a technical/vocational orientation can be provided in secondary, higher and adult education; and, learning a vocation can take place, both in the classroom



and in the workplace. Finally, countries have rather different traditions when it comes to TVET. For these reasons, conceptualising TVET at a global level remains a constant challenge, which is recognized by UNESCO and is constantly reflected in its work. Stakeholders acknowledge that UNESCO is best placed to play a leading role in conceptualising TVET at the global level (see Table 3).

In the field of TVET, UNESCO is not operating alone. There are other organizations working on developing knowledge on TVET and on supporting TVET development, including some with very different constituencies determining their perspectives and agendas.<sup>31</sup> These comprise the others members of the IAG-TVET as well as bilateral and intergovernmental organizations.<sup>32</sup> Many of these have a long history in working in the field. For some, similar to UNESCO, TVET has not always remained at a high priority level, but it re-gained attention in the last five to eight years (this is for instance the case for the OECD and World Bank). The section below presents a selection of relevant organizations with specialized mandates or focus on TVET. These are discussed in terms of their scope and scale of work in the area. These include international organizations, network organizations, and donor organizations (as a proxy for donor organizations, GIZ and European Commission (DG DEVCO) were selected; for the financial institutions, the World Bank was selected).

- The **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** covers its 34 member countries<sup>33</sup> but occasionally conducts analysis in non-member countries as well. It covers a broad range of topics, including education and employment in different directorates. The main focus of OECD's work in TVET is on work-based learning and adult learning and skills (PIAAC)<sup>34</sup>. Its work on TVET is enforced by two strategic documents: The OECD Skills Strategy (2011) and the report on Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives: A strategic approach to skills policies (2012). The OECD VET team (responsible for the Policy Reviews of VET) consists of 8 staff members<sup>35</sup>.
- The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)** is the EU's decentralised agency that supports the development of European vocational education and training (VET) policies and contributes to their implementation. It focuses on analytical and conceptual work, but is shifting more and more to (analytical) support for the implementation of VET policies. CEDEFOP covers a broad range of topics including governance and financing of TVET, lifelong learning, skills mismatch, and qualifications (learning outcomes and qualifications frameworks). CEDEFOP has an annual budget of approximately 18 million Euros including around 55 staff members working in specific thematic teams.
- The **European Training Foundation (ETF)** is a decentralised agency of the EU, contributing to the development of education and training systems of EU partner countries.<sup>36</sup> Its main focus areas are TVET governance, quality assurance, qualifications systems and frameworks, VET system assessment, entrepreneurship, employment, skills and migration, learning and teaching. In 2010, ETF launched the Torino process, a biannual participatory analytical review of the status and progress of vocational education and training in ETF partner countries. The results of the second

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<sup>31</sup> For example the International Labour Organization (ILO) has a tripartite constituency (government, employer, and worker representatives) with a strong social partnership approach and a more labour market oriented perspective on TVET.

<sup>32</sup> Bilateral organizations include Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Agence française de développement (AFD), and the Luxemburg Development Cooperation (LuxDev). Intergovernmental and regional organizations include the African Union, Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

<sup>33</sup> Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, and United States.

<sup>34</sup> PIAAC: Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies

<sup>35</sup> See: <http://www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/theoecdvetteam.htm>

<sup>36</sup> The ETF currently works with 30 partner countries: Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia And Herzegovina, Egypt, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Russia, Serbia, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

round of reviews were presented in June 2015.<sup>37</sup> ETF has an annual budget of 18 million Euros, including a staff of 75 experts in its operations departments, divided in systems/ policy, county analysis and thematic policy units.

- For **DG DEVCO (European Commission)**, TVET is one of the main sectors in supporting developing countries. In 2014-2015, 30 countries benefitted from projects in the field of education, focussing on TVET having a total value of 328 million Euros. The EC supports reforms and modernisation by focussing on technical assistance in quality assurance, relevant education, teacher training, institutional frameworks and governance. Work in the field of TVET is often linked to economic sectors (such as agriculture). In 2014 a concept note was published setting out the concepts that underlie the preparation of VET reforms and other VET-related projects by EU Delegations or teams within the EC.<sup>38</sup>
- The **World Bank** is active around the world (operations in 71 countries) focussing on increasing labour market productivity by examining how education can play a role in addressing the skills mismatch. One of the focus areas of the World Bank Group Education Strategy 2020<sup>39</sup> is fixing the wide disconnect between skills development, higher education and the labour market. The World Bank provides support on improving educational infrastructures (for instance building schools). In the fiscal year 2014, the World Bank's support for education totalled \$3.6 billion, which is \$0.7 billion more compared to 2013.
- The **ILO**, among many employment-related topics is focused on skills, knowledge and employability. TVET and especially apprenticeships have been gaining importance in recent years. Currently, there are 6 staff members working at HQ and 12 staff members in the field on TVET. Despite regaining importance, the capacity is far from what it used to be in the 1990's when 70 people were working on TVET.
- **IVETA** (International Vocational Education and Training Association) is a network of vocational educators which includes vocational skills training organizations, business and industrial firms, and other individuals and groups interested or involved in vocational education and training worldwide. IVETA is a network organization with a small executive secretariat.
- **GIZ** (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) operates on many different topics in developing countries, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). GIZ operates in Germany and in more than 130 countries and has 16,410 staff worldwide. In the field of TVET GIZ runs between 60/80 projects per year focussing on cooperation between governments and companies; learning processes (work-based learning); staff (teacher/trainer) development; recognition of standards; and labour market research.

Some of the above organizations have regionally or otherwise geographical limited mandates: CEDEFOP works within the EU, the ETF in roughly 30 EU partner countries, and the OECD mainly in its member countries, whereas the other organizations can work world-wide.

With regard to topics covered by the different organizations, some such as work-based learning, labour market research/skills mismatch, quality and, teachers are key themes that are covered by a number of them, including UNESCO. Other topics such as sustainable development and greening TVET, equity, and lifelong learning, among the key priorities of UNESCO, are covered by a more restricted circle of organizations. In addition, interviews with stakeholders and the survey of government representative and partners confirm that together with the other organizations, UNESCO is well positioned to work on key issues such as improving the image and attractiveness of TVET, informal apprenticeships, international recognition of TVET qualifications, and cooperation between the world of work and the world of education, among others.

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<sup>37</sup> ETF (2015), Torino process 2014 a cross-country report moving skills forward together, trends, challenges and successes in vocational education and training in the ETF partner countries.

<sup>38</sup> European Commission; DG Development and Cooperation (2014), Concept note: Vocational Education and Training in Development Cooperation: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/concept-note-tvet\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/concept-note-tvet_en.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> World Bank (2011), World Bank Group Education Strategy "Learning for All, Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development"



The following Table 3 maps organizations according to their key roles in TVET and compares UNESCO's work to theirs.

**Table 3 Mapping of roles of UNESCO and of other organizations active in the field of TVET (√ = limited role; √√√ = important role).**

	UNESCO TVET		OECD	European Union			World Bank	ILO	IVETA	GIZ
	Indication on whether UNESCO or other organizations are best positioned to take up the role <sup>40</sup>			CEDEFOP <sup>41</sup>	ETF	DG DEVCO				
Knowledge developer (conceptualising, researching, evaluating and monitoring TVET)	√√√	UNESCO best: 63% Others best: 18%	√√√	√√√	√√√	√	√	√√	√	√
Policy advice and support (pointing to particular policy solutions or options to respond to particular issues)	√√√	UNESCO best: 65% Others best: 11%	√√	√√	√√√	√√	√√	√√	√	√√
Provider of a platform for networking (connecting organizations in the field of TVET)	√√√	UNESCO best: 63% Others best: 15%	√	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√√	√
Agenda setting organization (e.g. for the post-2015 agenda)	√√√	UNESCO best: 61% Others best: 11%	√√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√	√
Clearing house and Knowledge management (gathering, transferring, disseminating and sharing available information, knowledge and best practices)	√√√	UNESCO best: 66% Others best: 6%	√√	√√√	√√√	√	√	√√	√	√
Advocacy organization for TVET	√√√	UNESCO best: 55% Others best: 16%	√√	√√√	√√√	√	√	√√√	√√	√
Capacity builder (institution-building and training TVET stakeholders)	√√	UNESCO best: 47% Others best: 27%	√	√	√√	√√√	√√	√√√	√	√√√
Cooperation partner (starting up cooperation projects with mutual ownership)	√√	UNESCO best: 50% Others best: 26%	√	√	√√	√√√	√√	√√√	√	√√√
Coordinator of donors/other organizations working in TVET	√√	UNESCO best: 40% Others best: 31%	√	√	√√	√	√	√√	√	√
Donor organization	√	UNESCO best: 29% Others best: 44%	√	√	√	√√√	√√√	√√	√	√√√

Source: Interviews with national and global stakeholders; assessment by authors; Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners.

As shown by the mapping above and by their mandates, there is clearly overlap in the roles of these organizations. There is however a distinction between three types of organizations. Firstly, there are organizations that primarily develop TVET systems by providing analysis and

<sup>40</sup> Based on the Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners (Q: In your view, is UNESCO best positioned to take up the following roles, or are other organizations better positioned?)

<sup>41</sup> Both CEDEFOP and ETF are decentral agencies governed by Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion. Their priority areas are in line with the priority areas of the DG.

conceptual clarification. Secondly, there are organizations that rather develop TVET systems by implementing projects and providing direct support. Thirdly, there are organizations that do both. Examples of the first are the OECD and CEDEFOP. Although both organizations conduct country studies and reviews, they impact systems by benchmarking countries with peers. Examples of the second type are the financial and donor organizations (DG DEVCO, World Bank and GIZ). ILO, ETF and UNESCO all have a more hybrid approach. They are both involved in conceptualisation and knowledge development on the one hand, and national project implementation on the other. Some roles are not taken up sufficiently by any of the organizations. This concerns for instance the coordination of donor and other organizations working in TVET.

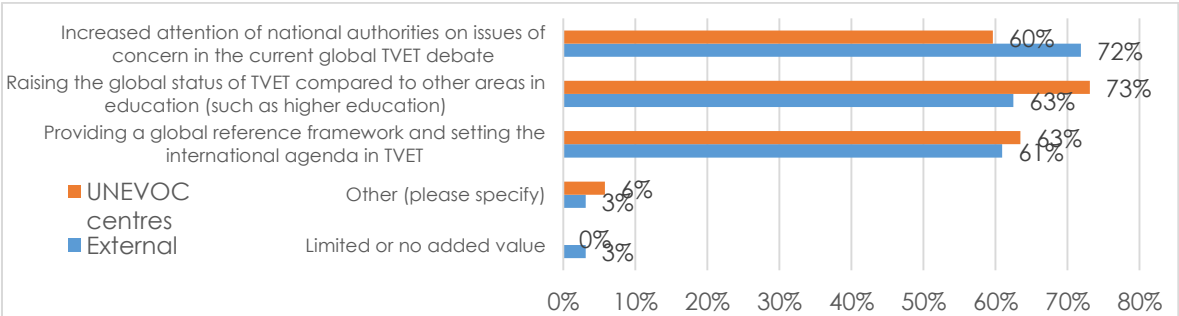
External stakeholders associate many roles with the broad mandate of UNESCO, but there are some roles that, according to the Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners, more than 60% of respondents consider UNESCO is best positioned to take up, when compared to others. These include: conceptual and analytical work, clearing house and knowledge exchange, policy advice, networking platform, and agenda-setting. The roles which external stakeholders feel other organizations are better positioned to take up include being a donor organization; being a coordinator of donors; and being a cooperation partner (starting up projects with mutual ownership).

**3) UNESCO's normative work concerning TVET is well known by stakeholders at the global level, but less known and used as a reference at the national level**

UNESCO's global normative instruments (1989 Convention and 2001 Revised Recommendation) and the regional frameworks (such as the SADC Framework for Action) are considered by many stakeholders as important to guide Member States in TVET policy development.

According to the surveys, UNESCO's normative instruments concerning TVET provide a reference for agenda setting and prioritising specific issues. Generally, stakeholders are aware of the normative instruments: only 14% of the respondents of the Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners indicate that they are not at all aware of them; among UNEVOC Centres the number is 23%. Most respondents are either somewhat, or very much aware, or even participated in the revision process of the 2001 Revised Recommendation. The external stakeholders' and UNEVOC Centres' responses slightly differ with regard to the main added value of an up-to-date UNESCO normative instrument (see Figure 2 below).

**Figure 2 What do you see as the main added value of an up-to-date UNESCO normative instrument concerning TVET? Please check all that apply**



Source: Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners / Survey of UNEVOC Centres

A large share of UNEVOC Centres (73%) see the main added value of an up-to-date UNESCO normative instrument in raising the status of TVET within the education agenda, which is confirmed by 63% of the external stakeholders. The majority of external partners (72%) indicate that the added value of the normative work is 'Increased attention of national authorities on issues of concern in the current global TVET debate'. Of the UNEVOC Centres, only 60% indicate the same. Both types of stakeholders agree on the added value of

providing a global reference framework and setting the international agenda in TVET (external: 61%, UNEVOC Centres: 63%).

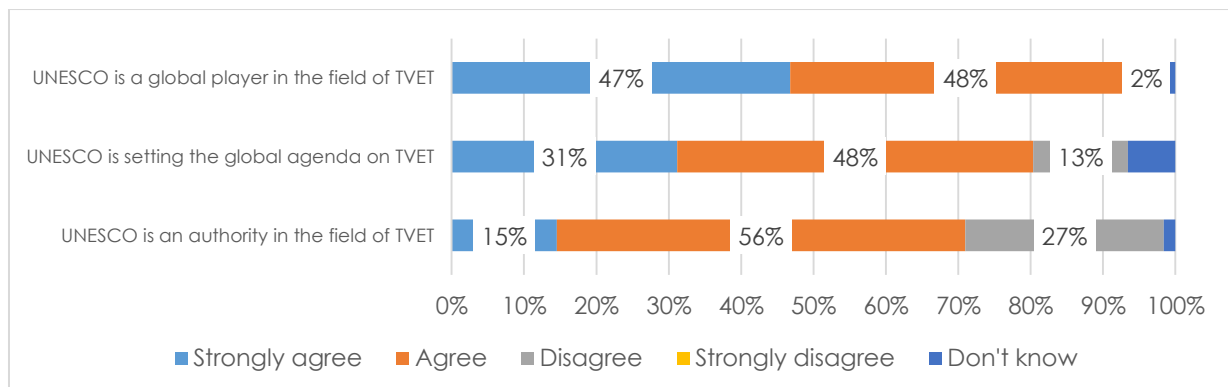
Despite the awareness of the normative instruments, the evaluation found that the normative work has not made much of a difference at the national level. Considering first of all, that only 17 Member States have ratified the 1989 Convention on Technical and Vocational Education and that its monitoring was suspended pending the revision of the 2001 Revised Recommendation, the country visits confirm that neither the 1989 Convention nor the 2001 Revised Recommendation serve as a principal reference point for policy development. The evaluation found that stakeholders at the national level face difficulties using the normative instruments for their reforms, not knowing how to translate their provisions into their national contexts, what messages to extract from them and how to apply them.<sup>42</sup>

In contrast, interviews with stakeholders involved in regional initiatives such as the creation of sub/regional economic communities (ASEAN, ECOWAS, CARICOM, etc.), indicate what was already confirmed by many other stakeholders: that standard-setting work at regional level is considered increasingly important. While seeking global reference points, countries or regional bodies primarily look for comparison with counterparts within the region on issues such as the development of regional/national qualifications frameworks, mobility of workers at the regional level, and comparability of systems that allow cross-border comparisons.

#### 4) UNESCO has a global network and outreach

UNESCO is acknowledged by stakeholders at the global level to credibly guide policy debates through its normative work, conferences, studies and reports. The external stakeholders generally agree on the fact that UNESCO is a global player in the field of TVET; that it is setting the global agenda and that it is an authority in TVET (see Figure 3 below).

**Figure 3 Agreement with statements on UNESCO's global role**



Source: Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners

Almost all surveyed external stakeholders agree that UNESCO is a global player and almost 80% agree that UNESCO is setting the global agenda. The authoritative position of UNESCO is still highly acknowledged (71% either agree or strongly agree), but is less supported by the survey than the other statements: only 15% strongly agree and 27% even disagree with this statement. These findings are for the most part confirmed in the interviews with national and global level stakeholders: In the field of TVET UNESCO has a strong voice that is heard. Conferences jointly organized by UNESCO, supported creating momentum on TVET globally: the Shanghai Congress and resulting Consensus is known by many and is seen as a major driver of the global TVET agenda. At national level, key stakeholders refer more often to the Shanghai Congress and Consensus than to UNESCO's normative instruments in the field of TVET.

<sup>42</sup> In view of improving the visibility and application of normative instruments, enhancing cooperation, supporting capacity-building and making better use of normative instruments as tools, UNESCO's Education Sector has developed a new [Strategy on standard-setting instruments in the field of education \(2015-2021\)](#) which is to be presented to the 197<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board.

In many aspects, as indicated earlier, the work of UNESCO interrelates with that of other organizations. For instance, the OECD, World Bank, ETF, ILO and CEDEFOP are all involved in conceptual clarification work; the World Bank, other financial institutions and bilateral donor organizations conduct country level interventions; and some organizations have different constituencies, outreach and mandate. While acknowledging other organizations' different perspectives and mandates, the challenge for UNESCO is to mobilize them as partners to complement and advance its agenda, particularly in the dimensions that extend beyond initial TVET within education such as continuing training and professional development.

Few organizations combine their roles and functions with a global mandate and network. Except for ILO (and to some extent the World Bank), no other organization than UNESCO has a global mandate in TVET, but UNESCO is the only one that also has a unique global network: the UNEVOC Network of TVET member institutions, connecting practitioners, policy makers and experts working in TVET. This global network is recognised as a key added value of UNESCO, though its potential is not yet fully realized in practice. The analysis of the self-assessment shows a varying level of active mobilisation of the individual UNEVOC Centres, and limited organizational capacity to manage, mobilise and monitor the UNEVOC Network, especially at the regional level has been found to be another reason for the still unused potential of the UNEVOC network. The evaluation acknowledges however, that major efforts to revamp and mobilize the network have led to significant improvements since 2009. (See Box 3 below.) Furthermore, UNESCO-UNEVOC is currently developing monitoring tools to measure how UNEVOC Centres cooperate and engage with each other and how they are translating global-level initiatives at the national level.<sup>43</sup>

### **Box 3      UNEVOC Network: activity rates and cooperation**

The UNEVOC Network is one of UNESCO's flagship initiatives in TVET. The network is coordinated by the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre in Bonn and links institutions working in the area of TVET throughout the world with the aim to further mainstream South-South and North-South-South cooperation. The Network is made up of national UNEVOC Centres, some of which are designated UNESCO Centres of Excellence in TVET. The UNEVOC Centres are established in TVET institutions in UNESCO Member States through an application process, which includes official endorsement by the UNESCO National Commission in the respective countries. They are aimed to be focal points in the provision of services and platforms at the national, regional and international levels.

The Survey of UNEVOC Centres shows that most Centres consider themselves as predominantly active members, participating in joint work with other Centres. However, an analysis of the survey's responses demonstrates that almost half (47%) of respondents are primarily passive, indicating that they are simply recipients of information on Network activities and occasionally sending their representatives to UNEVOC workshops.<sup>44</sup>

This is further supported by the answer to how many UNEVOC Centres the respondent has been in contact with over the last two years on a regular basis: 22% of the respondents indicate having no contact with other UNEVOC Centres on a regular basis, 20% only with one Centre, 33% with between two and five Centres, 16% with between five and ten centres; and, 10% had regular contact with ten or more UNEVOC Centres.<sup>45</sup> The analysis on reported

<sup>43</sup> In order monitor and evaluate the activity levels of UNEVOC Centres within their national context, and in terms of their global/regional/cluster engagement, the UNEVOC-International Centre is currently developing monitoring tools on two dimensions: a) on how UNEVOC Centres are translating learning outcomes from their global engagement into their national level interventions, and b) on how UNEVOC Centres are demonstrating their cooperation and engagement to the global/regional/cluster level network.

<sup>44</sup> Survey of UNEVOC Centres (Q: Please select the statement(s) which best represent your involvement in the UNEVOC Network).

<sup>45</sup> Survey of UNEVOC Centres (Q: With approximately how many UNEVOC Centres have you been in contact over the last two years on a regular basis?). On the basis of this, a distinction can be made between two groups of UNEVOC Centres: those that participate actively in the network and cooperate with a large group of Centres (category Between 2-5, between 5-10 and 10 and more) and the Centres being involved in network activities on a

cooperation partners in the Survey of UNEVOC Centres shows that most Centres cooperate with other Centres in their region.<sup>46</sup> For instance, African UNEVOC Centres' partners are almost exclusively (96%) based in Africa; the same is true for Central and Latin America /Caribbean States UNEVOC Centres (85%) and the Mashreq States / North Africa / Arab States (75%). Furthermore, the analysis shows that cooperation is often happening on a bilateral basis between institutions that traditionally work with each other. According to the Survey of UNEVOC Centres, the main reason for having contact with other Centres is sharing good practices on TVET policies (almost 70% of respondents). Mutual participation in events is also mentioned often (65%), while staff exchange and mobility is only indicated by less than 20% of the Centres. A rough estimation is that one-third of the UNEVOC Centres can be considered to be actively involved; one third as increasing its activity rate; and again one third as predominantly passively involved.

Membership to the UNEVOC Network in the decade until 2013 had been based on expanding the quantity of Centres rather than scaling up the quality and level of engagement.<sup>47</sup> In 2014 and 2015 steps have been taken to stimulate an increase in the level of activity and quality of engagement amongst UNEVOC Centres. For new members, efforts were made to clarify what is expected from UNEVOC Centres from the time of induction. The same has been conveyed to existing Members through the revised 'Manual of Operating Procedures'. Among the criteria for becoming a UNEVOC Centre it is indicated that the "institution must be a TVET institution of national importance in a Member State of UNESCO. It should play a key role in the development of TVET in the country, and have the potential to serve as a national hub in an international and regional context."<sup>48</sup> In addition, the Manual introduces sunset clauses for Centres that are not sufficiently contributing to the Network. Although the modified procedures and guidelines have been frequently communicated, their full adoption and implementation by the individual UNEVOC Centres still requires support. With the aim of improving coordination and Network structure, in 2013 UNEVOC introduced the UNEVOC Network cluster<sup>49</sup> with active Cluster Coordination functions to promote collective working and share responsibilities. The UNEVOC International Centre continues acting as a hub coordinating all regional sub-clusters. This reflects better how the UNEVOC Centres cooperate within the network.

There is consensus amongst the respondents, both inside and outside the UNEVOC Network, on the fact that the incentives for cooperation and collaboration between UNEVOC Centres should be enhanced<sup>50</sup> (see confirmed in figure below). The UNEVOC Network should also be better positioned and more actively involved in the implementation of UNESCO's work on TVET, especially at the regional and national levels. UNEVOC Centres agree on the issue that the heterogeneity of the Network is an asset (this is more pronounced for the passive members; and even contested by UNESCO internal staff and global level stakeholders). There is less agreement among the UNEVOC Centres, however, on the clarity of roles and responsibilities of members, although this is explicitly outlined in the 'Manual of Operating Procedures'. The same is true for conditions for membership: whether it should be conditional,

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limited basis (category none and 1). Thirty Centres fall in the first group, twenty-one in the second (approximately ten Centres did not answer this question). This distinction is taken into account in discussing some of the survey findings.

<sup>46</sup> See Survey of UNEVOC Centres (Q: With approximately how many UNEVOC Centres have you been in contact over the last two years on a regular basis?).

<sup>47</sup> The most prominent purpose of the UNEVOC Network was then to gain international branding. With the adoption of the UNESCO Comprehensive Partnership Strategy by the 192nd Executive Board in 2013, the role of the UNEVOC Network was defined as 'to foster further development and improvement of TVET in the Member States and strengthen their capacities to develop comprehensive and evidence-based policies and support the development of sustainable societies.'

<sup>48</sup> UNESCO-UNEVOC (2015), The UNEVOC Network: Manual of Operating Procedures, p. 17:

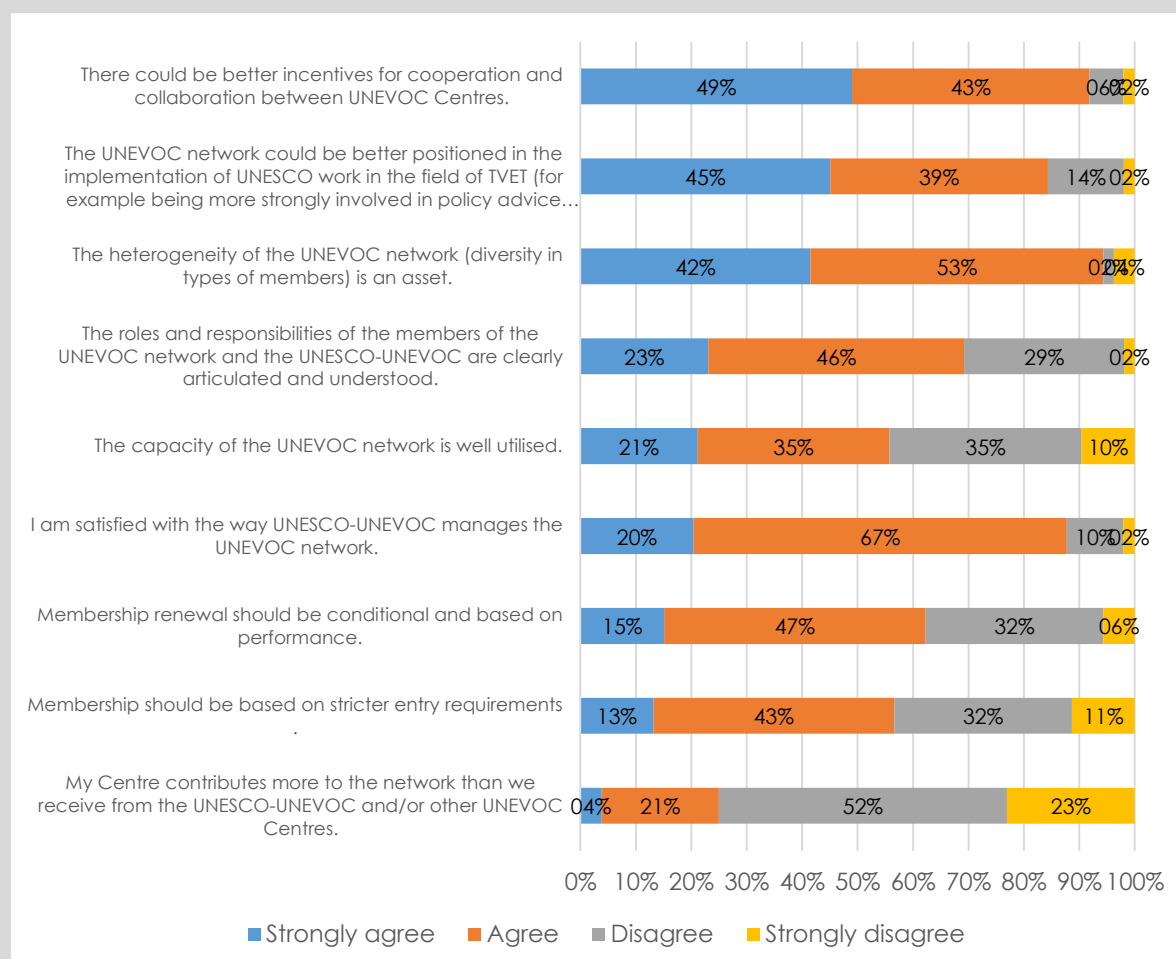
[http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pubs/UNEVOC-Network-Manual\\_en.pdf](http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/pubs/UNEVOC-Network-Manual_en.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> Currently, the UNEVOC Network regions are coordinated with 13 clusters: Arab States (3), Africa (2), Asia-Pacific (3), LAC (2) and Europe, North America and CIS (3)\_

<sup>50</sup> The UNEVOC Medium Term Strategy (2015-2017) proposes some measures to enhance incentives for cooperation and collaboration.

based on stricter entry requirements and whether the capacity of the Network is well utilised (active members tend to disagree more often on the last statement than passive members). The Centres disagree on the statement that their Centre contributes more to the Network than it receives; providing an indication that most Centres expect primarily to benefit from their membership, and more than to contribute.

**Figure 4 Agree or disagree on statements concerning the UNEVOC Network**



Source: Survey of UNEVOC Centres

### 5) Upstream policy advice is based on expertise and best practices from around the world

When delivering policy advice to Member States, UNESCO does not impose a particular model or approach, but provides the opportunity to learn from best practices from around the globe. Donor organizations often have their preferences on what type of TVET model to work towards, while UNESCO is seen to have a more neutral and diversified stance towards different models working in different contexts while insisting on specific core values and principles for TVET systems (equity, sustainable development, governance, lifelong learning). This is considered to be a key added value of UNESCO by many stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation; it is mentioned by national stakeholders and confirmed by respondents from international organizations.

National stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation also indicated that UNESCO staff and consultants are seen as highly qualified and capable of providing expertise and experience from around the globe: national stakeholders confirm that they benefit from these global and regional experiences and knowledge of best practices.

## 2.3 Effectiveness of UNESCO's work

*This section assesses whether interventions, both at global and national level, yield results; whether UNESCO is able to reach out equally to all parts of the world; and what was achieved in the countries where UNESCO was active.*

### 1) Global level interventions have a limited effect at the country level

UNESCO plays an important role in conceptualising TVET, but also in shaping and steering the global TVET debate. Through conferences, particularly the Shanghai Congress, contributions to publications, and key notes, UNESCO is able to steer and guide debates on TVET and introduce new topics for general consideration such as World Reference levels of learning outcomes and greening TVET<sup>51</sup>. Stakeholders indicate that UNESCO is able to serve as “a barometer for indicating what is really important in TVET”. The only recently published publication ‘Unleashing the Potential: Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training’ in the form of background papers and case studies is aimed at becoming a landmark report in the field of TVET. As the ‘result of a sustained collaboration between leading specialists and scholars around the world’ who provided contributions, it demonstrates that UNESCO has the convening power in bringing the voices of global experts and senior TVET specialists and researchers together to inform a global report that is gaining high credibility and is expected to be authoritative in the global debate on TVET.<sup>52</sup>

On the other hand, the evaluation found that the global level interventions generally do not trickle down to the country level. According to the stakeholders interviewed during the country visits, the normative instruments and high level publications are barely known nor read by national TVET authorities and stakeholders. Furthermore, stakeholders at the national level often appear not to have the knowledge how to apply them. Of all UNESCO documents, the Shanghai Consensus seems to be the best known document to national stakeholders, understood as the key reference document for TVET policy development. From a national stakeholder perspective there is often confusion between the UNESCO Strategy for TVET, the 2001 Revised Recommendation and the Shanghai Consensus, and stakeholders are unaware of the different purposes of these documents.

As indicated above, UNESCO is the only international organization having both a global mandate and network (UNEVOC Network). This is a key added value, however, in terms of effectiveness, despite major improvements over the years the evaluation found that there are still challenges for the effective functioning of the UNEVOC Network. The evaluation acknowledges that the recently published new operating guidelines are aiming to address a number of these challenges, but given the short timeframe the results of their implementation could not be observed and documented during data collection:

- The network does not yet sufficiently take advantage of its heterogeneity and a significant number of members are largely passive recipients of the network and its services (see Box 3 above);
- There is a lack of an institutional approach: country case studies revealed that at country level, key staff at the institutions sometimes are not aware of the institution being a UNEVOC member, and/or ignorant of the potential services and benefits of the network; a sign that the involvement is not mainstreamed into the institutional approach and that the exchange, to a great extent, is happening between individuals rather than institutions. The evaluation came across several cases where

<sup>51</sup> See: Chakroun, B.; Daelman, K. (2015). Developing world reference levels of learning outcomes: potential and challenges. In: UNESCO (ed., 2015). Global Inventory of Regional and National Qualifications Frameworks Volume I: Thematic Chapters, pp. 55-60:

[http://uil.unesco.org/fileadmin/keydocuments/LifelongLearning/en/Global%20Inventory%20of%20Regional%20and%20National%20Qualifications\\_v1.pdf](http://uil.unesco.org/fileadmin/keydocuments/LifelongLearning/en/Global%20Inventory%20of%20Regional%20and%20National%20Qualifications_v1.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> See: UNESCO (2015), Unleashing the Potential: Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training. As the report was only recently published it was not possible to fully assess the appreciation, perception and consideration of its stakeholders.



individuals discontinued the network activity with no report or handover within the institution (e.g. the only UNEVOC Centre in Benin was disconnected from the network since the retirement of the focal person, and most representatives of the TVET authority were not knowledgeable about the network and its activities).

- Some of the services and resources provided by UNESCO-UNEVOC are not sufficiently well known and thus not effectively utilised. A number of UNEVOC Centres' staff interviewed for this evaluation expressed need and interest in services such as a database of good practices and information on TVET systems in other countries without knowing that these already exist in the UNESCO-UNEVOC website portal. This demonstrates a need for a more targeted dissemination of resources and stronger incentives to access the UNEVOC website resources.

## **2) Despite being global, UNESCO's outreach does not extend equally to all regions**

An important aspect of UNESCO's work that was appraised throughout the evaluation positively both in terms of relevance and added value is UNESCO's global mandate in terms of network and outreach. In practice however, the evaluation found that UNESCO's outreach does not equally extend and speak to all regions. This relates in particular to the outreach of the UNEVOC Network, and to the fact, to what extent countries see UNESCO as a global centre of expertise in TVET, or an organization supporting less developed countries.

In the UNEVOC Network activities, it became evident that Latin America and Africa are less represented, while Asia is significantly more active. To some extent the image of TVET in a country/region and the level of priority granted and resources dedicated to TVET at the national level have been found to be among the reasons for the variation in activity level. Despite some efforts to increase multi-lingual resources the evaluation found that UNEVOC activities, resources and services are still available mainly in English only and thus have a very limited or no reach in Latin America and Francophone Africa. UNEVOC Cluster coordinators confirmed this as being the main reason for the low network activity in these regions. Previous attempts to establish Spanish and French information and exchange platforms had not been successful and were consequently abandoned to make better use of the already limited resources. Although this decision is justifiable from an efficiency perspective, it runs counter to the ambition of representing a truly global network: without diversified language coverage, the Network will not be able to appeal to and serve its members equally. Furthermore, the UNEVOC Centres in Europe and Asia make use of the Network by cooperating mostly with Centres from their own or other regions in English. UNEVOC Centres in Africa and Latin America tend to cooperate more with Centres in their country or region that share a common language.<sup>53</sup>

Furthermore, the current status of UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre to some extent limits its ambition of becoming a truly global institution that manages a world-wide Network of National UNEVOC Centres. The UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre, the only such specialised centre of the Education sector, in terms of reporting lines holds the same status as a section of UNESCO's Education Sector at Headquarters. Funded 90% from Germany and located in Bonn with a strong support from the host government, the evaluation found that UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre still lacks a reputation as a truly international specialised institution with a global mandate and outreach, especially compared with other UNESCO Institutes of the Education sector with a specialised mandate that have separate Governing Bodies representing their different constituencies, and holding a diversified funding base.<sup>54</sup> A challenge for UNESCO-UNEVOC is to engage with the ILO and other constituencies important for TVET, such as international employers and unions.

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<sup>53</sup> See Survey of UNEVOC Centres (Q: With approximately how many UNEVOC Centres have you been in contact over the last two years on a regular basis?).

<sup>54</sup> UNESCO has currently 7 Category I Education Institutes (see: [Review of Education sector Category I Institutes](#) ) with a specialised global or regional mandate in one of the education related priority areas of the Organization. As such these are integral part of UNESCO, but enjoy a large amount of functional autonomy. The Education sector Category I Institutes are governed by separate governing bodies that include representatives from different subject – related constituencies and a diversified funding base.



With regard to countries' perspectives on UNESCO, the evaluation observed that a distinction can be made between the developed and the developing world. For the developed world, UNESCO often is seen as a development/aid organization and therefore it is the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (responsible for aid-programmes) that relate to UNESCO's work. On the other hand, developing countries see UNESCO as a knowledge hub and expertise organization in TVET providing guidance in improving TVET systems. Here, it is Ministries of Education or Labour, responsible for TVET, that relate to UNESCO's work. As different ministries responsible for different topics (respectively aid programmes and TVET) are involved, content-related North-South-South knowledge exchange on TVET organized by UNESCO remains a major challenge.

Furthermore, developed countries are often very active on a bilateral basis; they also work directly with organizations such as the OECD, the agencies of the European Commission (CEDEFOP, ETF), and their regional TVET centres of expertise, and feel less of a need to have their TVET policies being inspired by UNESCO; which may also be holding back the global outreach of UNESCO's global policy development initiatives. Recently, some UNESCO Member States countries launched the initiative 'Friends of TVET'<sup>55</sup> acknowledging the potential for North-South-South mutual learning and with the aim of utilizing UNESCO as a platform for peer learning of policies that have proven successful.

**3) UNESCO has provided expert policy advice and support in the countries where it has been active; through UNESCO-UNEVOC, a larger set of countries is also supported. The effectiveness of country level interventions is hindered by a number of factors.**

The Strategy for TVET indicates that in 2010-2011, Policy Reviews and advice on TVET would be provided to some 15 to 20 countries around the world. In the biennia 2012-2013, 2014-2015, these interventions were to be scaled up to include a greater number of countries. In total, in the three biennia of the Strategy for TVET, close to 40 countries have received direct support from UNESCO in the form of Policy Reviews, capacity building activities, policy advice, and cross-national projects.<sup>56</sup> Priority Africa is clearly taken into account as Africa is represented by 15 countries. In total 16 of the countries are labelled as least-developed countries (LDC); 4 as small island developing states (SIDS); 13 as middle-income countries (MIC); 2 as developed countries; 10 as post-conflict/post-disaster countries (PCPD); and 9 are landlocked countries.

UNESCO's expertise and assistance was highly appreciated by national stakeholders in all the countries visited for the present evaluation. The main outcome of all Policy Reviews was a rich policy dialogue among national stakeholder and partners, resulting in a number of cases in TVET policy development. For instance, a TVET policy has been developed with UNESCO's assistance in Malawi (see box below); another example is St. Kitts and Nevis where the Policy Review set in motion the development of a TVET policy and inspired neighbouring countries to follow the same path. In other countries, such as Lao PDR, the Policy Review recommendations have not been further implemented and the subsequent CapEFA interventions that primarily supported the collaborative development of a Quality Assurance Manual with stakeholders, also remained at the stage of pilot use of the manual, while the rollout has not materialised. Among the reasons for the lack of implementation and follow-up in Laos the evaluation found the still limited capacities at the level of national authorities, and a decreasing level of ownership once the activities provided by UNESCO were completed. Furthermore, in some countries the activities were not embedded as part of a broader policy process and UNESCO did not engage with or facilitate engagement with other organizations

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<sup>55</sup> To manifest the priority given to TVET by UNESCO, and at the initiative of the Swedish Delegation of UNESCO in January 2015, 14 Member States from around the globe created an informal network, 'Friends of TVET', with the aim to contribute to UNESCO's work on TVET issues in general and in particular to the elaboration of a new UNESCO Strategy for TVET, in view of the lessons learned and of the global discussion on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and to the revision of the UNESCO recommendation for Technical and Vocational Education (2001).

<sup>56</sup> Africa: Benin, Botswana, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Senegal, Zambia, Zanzibar; Arab states: Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan; Asia and the Pacific: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste; Europe and North America: Israel, Kazakhstan; Latin America and the Caribbean: El Salvador, Haiti, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, Suriname.

that are active in TVET, and who could potentially have complemented or followed the process that was initiated with the help of UNESCO. National stakeholders were expecting continuation of backstopping and advice from UNESCO which could have helped them to keep the process ongoing.

#### **Box 4 TVET policy development in Malawi**

In 2013, with assistance from UNESCO, Malawi developed a new Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) Policy. Responding to recommendations of the UNESCO Policy Review from 2010, the new TEVET Policy focuses on four priority areas: access and equity, quality and relevance, research and development, and governance and management. The Policy also links TEVET with the country's second Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MDGS) and stresses the importance of integrating and mainstreaming of TEVET in other policies. Finally, the document outlines institutional arrangements for the implementation of the policy and defines the roles of a number of national stakeholders involved in TEVET. A detailed implementation plan with responsibilities and timelines is annexed to the Policy.

The main outcome of the new TEVET Policy was the clarification of the roles and responsibilities among the main national stakeholders working on TEVET. Stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation indicated that these needed to be spelled out once and for all and praised UNESCO for bringing different parties together to reach an agreement. A number of stakeholders, however, also indicated the need to revise the TEVET Act of 1999 so as to avoid any conflict between the Act and the new TEVET Policy. Another important outcome of the Policy is the provision for the establishment of new body responsible for quality assurance, assessment and awards in TEVET. While the Policy does not specify further, it officially launches the process for the establishment of such a body. UNESCO is providing assistance to national stakeholders for the implementation of this policy recommendation under the second phase of its CapEFA programme.

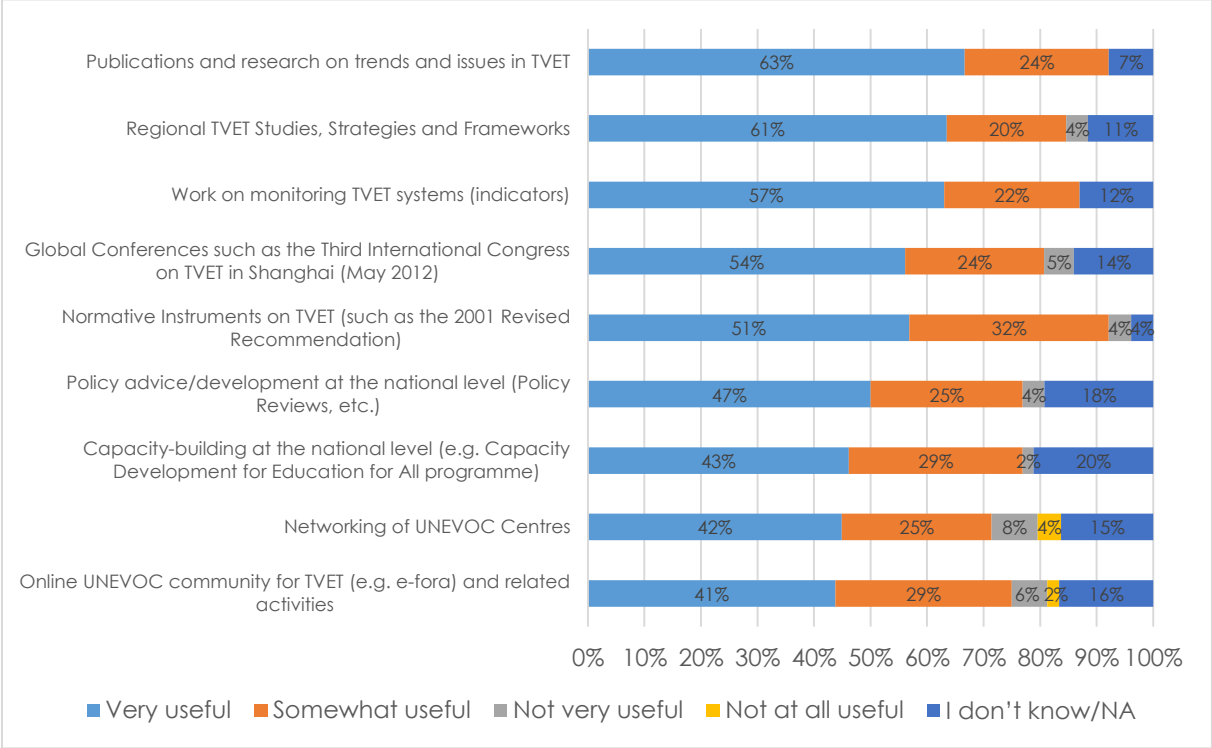
Despite the successful adoption of the new TEVET Policy, its formal acceptance by Cabinet took over a year and the Policy was officially approved at the end of 2014. Implementation of its four areas of focus has therefore only just begun and is already behind the schedule. Malawi is facing a number of challenges in implementing this Policy, one of which is important resource constraints. Other factors include the perception of TEVET by national stakeholders, weak teacher capacities (due to the absence of national teacher training institutions as mentioned earlier), a lack of data on TEVET, and the need for more research to inform policy implementation. Malawi will require assistance for the implementation of this Policy for many years to come. UNESCO has started providing support with the second phase of its CapEFA programme and other international donors/cooperation partners are also stepping in (most notably the European Commission).

In countries where UNESCO is not resident or active at the national level, it remains difficult to see whether it has an impact (for instance through its global services, global initiatives such as the UNEVOC Network or its normative work). Despite this, stakeholders generally appreciate UNESCO's products and services and find UNESCO's services very useful (see figure below). From an organizational perspective (the external stakeholders are mostly ministries), the publications on trends and issues, regional studies and work on monitoring are considered most useful. The UNESCO reports are considered to be of high quality, bringing together views and analysis of specialists in the field, and providing useful perspectives on how to further develop TVET in the countries.<sup>57</sup> The online UNEVOC community is considered useful as well; however, it is considered the least useful from the list provided in the survey.

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<sup>57</sup> See for instance: UNESCO (2015), *Unleashing the Potential: Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training*.

**Figure 5 Please assess how useful each one of the following UNESCO activities is for the work of your organization**



Source: Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners.

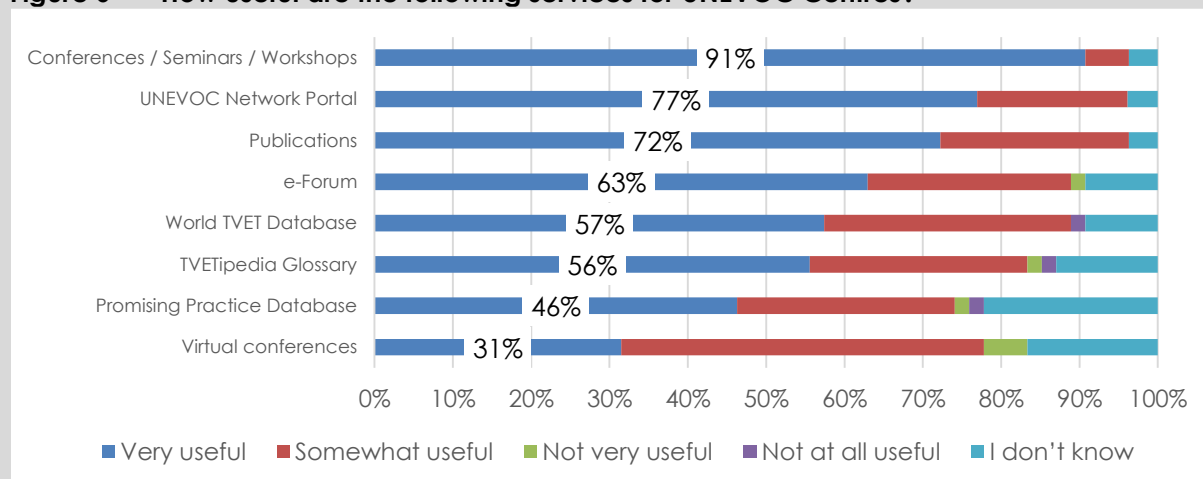
The UNEVOC Centres find the UNEVOC Network to be very useful, first of all, as knowledge exchange platform on global TVET related issues, and, secondly, as a way to access international expertise on TVET, providing an indication that in countries where there are no specific UNESCO activities, the broader TVET community has an influence on TVET policy debate.<sup>58</sup> Further findings on UNESCO-UNEVOC services are provided in the box below.

<sup>58</sup> See Survey of UNEVOC Centres (Q: What do you consider to be the three most and three least important value added / main benefits of being a UNEVOC Network member?).

## Box 5 UNESCO-UNEVOC Services

In general, **UNESCO-UNEVOC services are highly valued** by most UNEVOC Centres. Conferences, seminars and workshops are considered to be very useful (91%). The UNEVOC Network portal, the publications and the e-Forum are amongst the highest valued services (respectively 77%, 72% and 63%). In the evaluation survey, only a few Centres indicate 'not very useful' in relation to some services (such as virtual conferences). A larger share indicates, not being familiar with the services.

**Figure 6 How useful are the following services for UNEVOC Centres?**



Source: Survey of UNEVOC Centres

The e-Forum is a unique TVET experts' and practitioners' community in its kind as it has facilitated a lively discussion on TVET issues between professionals world-wide. On average, about 100 messages are shared every month - each of them reaches more close to 4000 e-Forum members from more than 180 countries.

The different country-level interventions (Policy Reviews, policy advice, and extrabudgetary projects such as BEAR, CapEFA) show varying levels of success. The evaluation found specific circumstances/factors that can limit the effectiveness:

- **A lack of analysis of countries' readiness for interventions, makes UNESCO's approach not always sufficiently tailored to countries' development contexts:** the evaluation found that despite the attempts to strengthen the relevance, interventions – in practice- do not sufficiently embrace the stage of development and the level of capacities (individual/organizational/ institutional) and institutional culture at the national level. Therefore, an approach that may work within a specific national context, may not work in another where necessary enabling factors linked to the institutional arrangements, national capacities and the local donor environment are not equally in place. For instance the BEAR Project approach, applying the same design in five countries, was found to work well in Botswana, but not so well in Malawi. In Botswana, the infrastructure was in place to absorb the lessons from project experts (sufficient expertise in curriculum development, labour market analysis, learning materials and facilities to train the students). In Malawi, on the other hand, this infrastructure is not (yet) in place: limited experience with curriculum development and labour market analysis; poor in-college facilities. The BEAR approach could therefore not be applied and grasped in Malawi in the same way as in Botswana. At the design stage, the CapEFA programme in Benin was clearly tailored to country and stakeholders' needs during several days of workshops and consultations with a wide range of national stakeholders, and developed as a follow-up of the TVET policy review's recommendations that had been validated during the policy review process. However, at the time of the current evaluation, few years after finalisation of the

policy review, the analysis of the Policy Review was still appreciated, but its recommendations were now considered too ambitious, and although theoretically still valid, and to some extent not demonstrating sufficient consideration of the practical implications and context specific challenges. Local stakeholders from the national authorities and development partners found that the recommendations would have required better consideration of the administrative and political constraints within the local circumstances. Unless additional resources are secured, further implementation is unlikely. (The same applies to Lao PDR). The Policy Review approach, although considered successful in the initial analysis phase, would have benefited from a phased follow-up approach, allowing for implementation at a pace that is realistic in a specific country. More closely differentiating the country specific context and securing capacities and resources necessary for its follow-up are therefore a pre-condition to secure a level of sustainability.

- **A lack of ownership and accountability by national stakeholders may hinder the process and outcomes of UNESCO interventions feeding into the national policy cycle:** Some interventions have not succeeded in their intentions of creating ownership, commitment and accountability among national stakeholders. For instance, Policy Reviews take place upon request from the countries, and in line with the expectations by the Government for an independent review of the sector, in several cases the policy reviews were primarily conducted by external and UNESCO experts. Even though these consulted with national stakeholders, the evaluation found that the latter saw themselves as recipients of a service and not owners of the process and the final result was seen as a UNESCO product, instead of a product of the country itself. The Policy Review reports remained, in a sense, external publications and, although considered highly relevant and valuable for initiating policy debates, did in many cases not create sufficient institutional and country level commitment by national stakeholders to put in place (formal) mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of recommendations contained within.
- **Limited guidance for implementation (next steps) and follow-up support can be an obstacle to lasting change:** Some interventions are one-off and not strategically placed within a longer-term perspective (what are next steps?). Capacities of national stakeholders may be built, but it is not always clear for what purposes. For example, in Malawi, several manuals and handbooks (for instance Manual on entrepreneurship education and TVET college governance, supported by the CapEFA programme) were developed with UNESCO's support without key stakeholders even being aware of their existence. In Lebanon, a number of training programmes have taken place in entrepreneurship of Lebanese and Syrian youth and community leaders. However, there is no guidance or follow-up with these stakeholders to ensure that the skills gained are put to use over the medium and longer term. In Benin, the support to developing and reinforcing TVET statistical information systems and management information systems has been found to be a very important achievement,<sup>59</sup> and a notable example of close collaboration with UIS on both fine-tuning of the methodology (to better customize) and technical support in a particular field of UNESCO expertise. The CapEFA activities clearly helped to install up-to-date TVET statistics software, and to train the operators at the national level, but, without additional technical support, necessary capacities for regular maintenance and additional resources and equipment to rolling the system out at provincial level (i.e. so far unresolved challenges), the likelihood for the sustainability of these results is very limited. Furthermore, the Lao PDR Policy Review did not receive any follow-up to encourage the implementation of recommendations contained within. In a number of countries, UNESCO has been seeking for opportunities to continue or complement its intervention by linking its interventions with other complementary extrabudgetary programmes (such as BEAR and CapEFA). For example, in Malawi the Policy Review

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<sup>59</sup> Similar activities are implemented in other CapEFA countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Afghanistan, and soon Liberia),

was conducted in 2010 and some of its recommendations have been implemented through these extrabudgetary projects, resulting in the development of a national TVET policy and in further reforms (see Box 4 above). In St. Kitts and Nevis, the Policy Review was followed by technical assistance for policy development, which resulted in the drafting and adoption of a national TVET policy. In Benin, the CapEFA programme was designed to bring key stakeholders together by establishing the steering committees in key sectors of the economy, as a forum for policy discussion to take place. Still, the follow-up interventions were a result of subsequent additional requests rather than part of a longer term strategically planned country-approach transcending an individual intervention and indicating longer term objectives

Overall, the evaluation concludes that the better the design and implementation of interventions are based on sound reflection and in-depth analysis on what works and what doesn't, under what circumstances (in the country or elsewhere) and built on lessons learned from previous experiences, the more likely an intervention can contribute to lasting change and longer term development of the TVET systems. Regular exchange on lessons learned, results achieved and good practice within the TVET community, and between the different CapEFA and BEAR country-level interventions is a vital precondition for such reflection and learning. An example of good practice identified during the evaluation is the approach applied for the Policy review in Saint Lucia which demonstrates the lasting effects of a longer term perspective, national ownership and continued support in the follow-up to the policy review. The TVET Policy Review process was primarily country-led and drafting of the document owned by the national team, with relevant technical advice and comments provided from the UNESCO experts. Following the policy review the country was awarded Participation Programme funding<sup>60</sup> for TVET Policy Development and UNESCO provided additional technical expertise for the development of the National TVET policy.

## 2.4 Efficiency of UNESCO's work

*This section assesses UNESCO's resources for the implementation of the Strategy for TVET; as well as the levels of the interventions. (see Chapter 1, Tables 1 and 2 on financial resources overview)*

### **1) Despite limited human resources, UNESCO's work is generally well-known and appreciated**

The amount of work done by the TVET community (HQ, UNESCO-UNEVOC and field offices) is huge and includes conducting conceptual clarification work, developing normative instruments, holding key note presentations, informing the global debate and stimulating country agenda attending conferences, conducting missions, providing policy advice, running extrabudgetary projects and capacity-building programmes, and managing UNEVOC activities, including the coordination of a global network of TVET institutions.

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<sup>60</sup> The [Participation Programme](#) functions as a vital complement to UNESCO's regular activities by analysing, evaluating and facilitating the implementation of national, sub-regional, inter-regional and regional projects submitted by Member States and NGOs directly related to the activities of the Organization.

Given all that UNESCO accomplishes, its TVET community<sup>61</sup> is perceived by external partners to be a much bigger and better resourced organizational structure than it actually is. Human resources for TVET-related activities have varied over the six-year period of the Strategy. At the time of the present evaluation, the TVET community formally had ten staff members on fixed-term posts (including a secondment and two project appointments supported by extrabudgetary funds in the YLS section at Headquarters).<sup>62</sup> However, it is important to mention that with the recent restructuring in the ED sector and the field reform in Africa, the staff members who were previously working exclusively in TVET are now also in charge of additional education portfolios and TVET represents only a fraction of their time.

With its limited resources, UNESCO's TVET community is however able to attract significant attention to its work in TVET. Respondents to the Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners indicate that more than 75% are aware of UNESCO Global Conferences such as the Third International Congress on TVET in Shanghai (May 2012); almost 74% are aware of the normative instruments on TVET (such as the 2001 Revised Recommendation); and, 63% of the respondents are aware of UNESCO publications and research on trends and issues in TVET. As for UNEVOC Centres, 77% are aware of the normative instruments, 57% of the Shanghai Congress and 28% of studies and reports.<sup>63</sup>

The surveys and interviews point to the fact that stakeholders acknowledge that despite the limited resources, the UNESCO TVET community is able to provide a variety of high quality services to stakeholders. Many stakeholders also agree that UNESCO's global mandate and increasing expectations from Member States in the field of TVET may be disproportionate to the technical and financial resources allocated at the HQ, UNEVOC and field offices. Concerns are expressed both by UNESCO staff members as well as external global level stakeholders that UNESCO may be doing too much with too limited resources, thus diluting the effectiveness and hampering the sustainability of its interventions. This applies in particular to the country level interventions, more so than the regional and global level activities. Of the external stakeholders responding to the survey<sup>64</sup>, 69% agree with the fact that UNESCO has the resources and human capacities to ensure an impact at the global level; 63% agree that the resources are sufficient to have an impact at regional level and less than half (48%) agree with that UNESCO's resources are sufficient for achieving an impact at the national level.

## **2) Activities are not always taking place at the most appropriate level (national, regional, global), and consequently, UNESCO may be missing out on opportunities, in particular at the regional level.**

UNESCO's work on TVET tends to focus on the global level (normative work, conferences, reports etc.), with a global scope; or at the national level (Policy Reviews, extrabudgetary projects such as CapEFA, BEAR, etc.), with a national scope. Despite the efforts and relevant examples of work at the regional level (such as within the Interagency Task team on TVET in the ECOWAS sub-region, the collaboration with the SADC secretariat, or the cooperation with the Regional Centre for Vocational and Technical Training (SEAMEO-VOCTEC) and the Regional Cooperation Platform (RCP) in Asia), the evaluation found that the potential for UNESCO's involvement at the regional level is still to explore.

Stakeholders indicate, however, that countries' interest in knowledge exchange lies first and foremost at the regional level. Comparing TVET systems with neighbouring countries sharing similar backgrounds (history of TVET systems), developments (such as regional qualifications frameworks, mobility of workers) is key to many stakeholders interviewed at the national level.

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<sup>61</sup> As a reminder, with TVET community the following organizational units are referred to: UNESCO HQ: Section for Youth, Literacy and Skills Development; UNESCO HQ: Extrabudgetary project teams (BEAR, CapEFA and NET-MED Youth); UNESCO-UNEVOC in Bonn; UNESCO institutes (UIL, UIS, IIEP, and IBE); regional and national field offices.

<sup>62</sup> One P4 post in YLS was under recruitment at the time of the present evaluation.

<sup>63</sup> Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners (Q: Please select the aspects of UNESCO's work in TVET that you are aware of); Survey of UNEVOC Centres (Q: Aspects of UNESCO's work in TVET that you are aware of / Awareness of normative instruments).

<sup>64</sup> Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners (Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements on UNESCO resources).

The Survey of UNEVOC Centres also clearly shows that the Centres' interests are foremost regionally oriented regarding their knowledge exchange and cooperation. This demonstrates there is a need for capacity development and exchange at regional level for the UNEVOC Centres, regional offices and national stakeholders in policy learning (and even policy borrowing). Furthermore, stakeholders confirmed that the expected involvement of regional offices (and multi-sectoral regional offices in the African region) is not well defined for the members of the TVET community, given that the current TVET strategy is not translated or declined on a regional level. For example in South East Asia there was a lack of clarity about the level and type of UNESCO's involvement in the development of the ASEAN qualifications reference framework, and about the role and added value the Bangkok regional bureau should contribute with. In addition, the evaluation found that when a project is monitored and backstopped by a regional office that has the adequate capacity instead of by UNESCO HQ (such as BEAR) the reduced distance between implementation in the field and the supervising entity is stimulating learning and exchange at (sub) regional level.

However, low staffing levels staffing and further dilution of existing resources at the regional office level risks further weakening UNESCO's position in TVET at the regional level. There are existing TVET specialists taking on larger education portfolios and retiring staff is not envisaged of being replaced. There is a risk to miss out on opportunities arising from countries interest in the regional level TVET developments driven by the needs for harmonised TVET systems among economic communities, be it SADC, ECOWAS, CARICOM, ASEAN. Education specialists working on larger education portfolios are not sufficiently tasked in mainstreaming TVET e.g. in basic, secondary education, or through work on transversal skills. The instructions from HQ on priorities are not always clear to programme staff in the field, and the role of regional offices in the implementation of the Strategy for TVET, or in the revamping and mobilisation of the UNEVOC Network is also not explicitly spelled out.

The recently developed TVET Strategy of the African Union<sup>65</sup> identifies a clear role of Regional Economic Communities among other in identifying, documenting, disseminating best practices, providing technical assistance to countries and also asks for developing national TVET policies with the help of clearly empowered Strategy implementation bodies. UNESCO could view this as an opportunity to provide support and build capacities at the sub-regional level, considering that many stakeholders observed that current capacities at the level of regional economic communities are very thin.

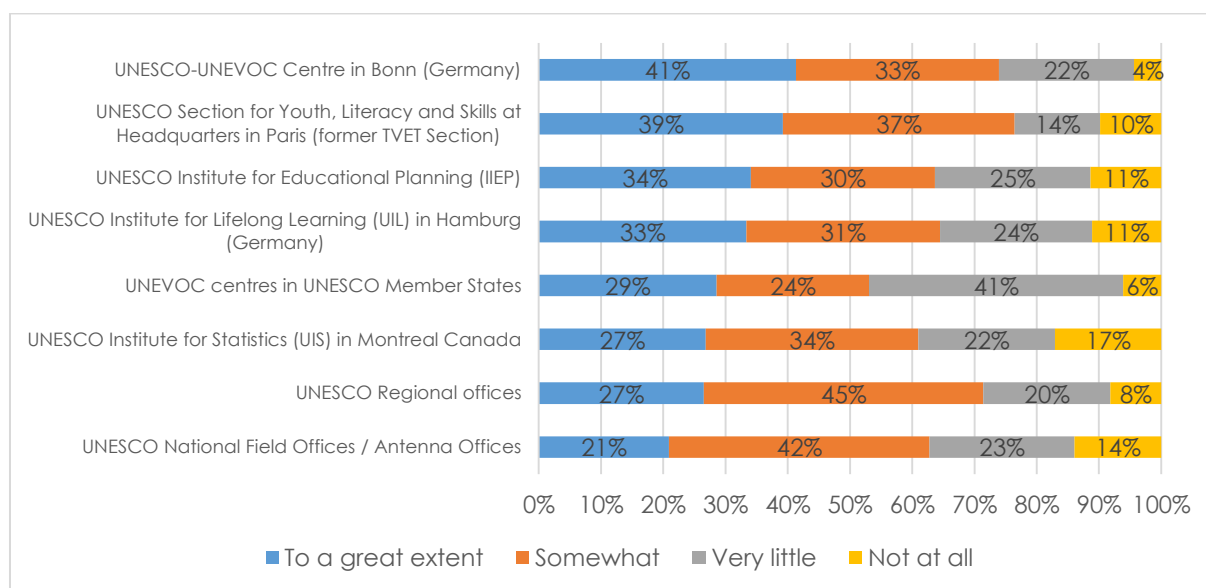
The perception of a prevailing engagement and visibility of HQ and UNESCO-UNEVOC among the entities of the TVET community is also reflected in the outcomes of the Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners, which shows that, among the individual UNESCO entities, the regional and national field offices are least associated with UNESCO's work in TVET (see figure below).

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<sup>65</sup> African Union (2014), Continental strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to foster youth employment



**Figure 7 When thinking about UNESCO's engagement in the area of TVET, to what extent do you associate the following UNESCO entities with work on TVET?**



Source: Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners.

From a strategic and practical viewpoint, the focus could therefore shift more towards regional level interventions in addition to the efforts at HQ/UNESCO-UNEVOC level to strengthen regional capacities and cooperation, exchange of information and to reducing the distance between implementation in the field and the monitoring and backstopping entities, while freeing resources at HQ for global analytical level work and global oversight. However, as mentioned earlier, the human resources at regional and national level are currently not adequate to fully capitalise on upcoming opportunities. The challenge lies on the one hand in finding the right balance between the central and decentralised functions, and on the other hand in better ensuring that regional bureaus and field offices are adequately empowered to deliver on the TVET strategy.<sup>66</sup>

## 2.5 Sustainability of UNESCO's work

*This section assesses whether UNESCO's work is sustainable both at global and national levels; and what efforts are made to make interventions more sustainable.*

### 1) While at the global level the efforts to better position TVET are found sustainable, at country level, sustainability of interventions is less ensured

Both the position of UNESCO as an authority in TVET and the position of TVET in the education and employment policy debate have firmly been established in the recent years, as demonstrated earlier in this report in view of UNESCO's influence on the global debate and the effects of the Shanghai Consensus and process. The work of UNESCO in TVET is appreciated by many stakeholders at all levels and governments and international organizations show an increased interest in TVET policy development. On the other hand, related to the discussion on effectiveness of country level interventions, the sustainability of achievements is not as much considered and integrated into their design. Reasons for this include:

- A **general lack of a strategic partnership approach at country level** (with other organizations and actors): at country level, information is shared with other (international) organizations, but cooperation is limited to specific interventions and

<sup>66</sup> While the assessment focused on the thematic area of TVET the same applies for other thematic areas, where limited capacities in the field restricts the depth of specialisation on a specific theme.

there is little effort on both sides to establish a more continuous collaboration or participation in common projects. The policy review in Benin was conducted in close partnership with ILO (see the policy review report, but this did not lead to a formal cooperation agreement on the longer term).

- A **limited dissemination of results**: outcomes and products of UNESCO interventions have been found to be often little known and not widely distributed especially to stakeholders beyond those directly involved the intervention, so that national stakeholders and other organizations could effectively make use of them. Examples from the country case studies include the different UNESCO-supported publications in Malawi and St. Kitts and Nevis that have not been reaching the target audience.
- **Limited follow-up of interventions**: In cases where interventions are designed and implemented as one-off activities and not positioned in a longer term vision or pathway towards a specified objective, or as part of the longer term policy cycle, sustainability is rather unlikely. This is illustrated earlier (under effectiveness) by the limited follow up and use of the Policy Reviews in for instance in Benin and Lao PDR. However, the evaluation acknowledges that in recognition of the need for a stronger and more systematic monitoring and follow up, the CapEFA programme has in some countries subsequently been designed to address some of the Policy review's recommendations. The policy review in Benin was followed by UNESCO Cap-EFA project, to foster inter-ministerial coordination, and is supporting the establishment of a directory regarding donors support and is facilitating the establishment of coordination mechanism between the Government and technical and financial partners.
- An **insufficient capitalization on skills and competences gained**. The evaluation found several cases where capacities built through UNESCO's interventions are not able to be applied in reality; people are trained in new skills, but the institutional circumstances are not favourable to using the skills that are gained at an individual level. This is for instance the case in the BEAR project in Malawi, where the participants of a workshop could not implement what they learned on curriculum development and labour market analysis nor relate it directly to their current work. Also, the knowledge and good practice gained during study visits organized in the framework of the Laos CapEFA programme remained restricted to the few senior officials who participated but was not further disseminated or possible to be applied in the respective institutions. This demonstrates that capacity building interventions if not combined with an integrated multiplier and dissemination approach are less likely to lead to an effect over time.

## **2) Reliance on the specialization and strategic position of a few individuals, which leads to efficient implementation, but threatens continuity**

As indicated in the section above, UNESCO's work proves to be efficient, but relies heavily on a few individuals. The strong and constructive relationship between HQ and UNESCO-UNEVOC, which evolved in the last few years (it was different in the past), is a result of the close cooperation of the individuals working in those entities rather than of a solid institutional setup. Cooperation and exchange among the different members of the TVET community is also a result of shared level of commitment and work culture rather than based on an institutional mechanism. This threatens the sustainability of UNESCO's work as there is no guarantee that the relationships remain stable in case of changes in the staffing structure or responsibilities. Furthermore, within the current situation, the transfer of knowledge is not organized for when people leave, terminate their contract or retire. At the regional and national levels, the TVET expertise and coordination of activities is also in the hands of very few individuals, while with the constantly increasing requests and rising expectations from Member States towards UNESCO strengthening of these capacities should be sought (to ensure that the voiced risk of 'not being able to live up to the expectations' will not become a reality (see section on Comparative advantage of UNESCO's work in TVET)).

## 2.6 Collaboration within UNESCO and other partners

*This section assesses collaboration with partners in the implementation of UNESCO's work in TVET: the cooperation within the TVET community, the cooperation with other organizations at different levels (global, regional and national), the use of the UNEVOC Network, and the involvement of the private sector (e.g. employers).*

### **1) Despite the mobilization of staff working in TVET within UNESCO as a theme based community (TVET community), its potential is not yet fully explored**

In the period 2010-2015 UNESCO has been able to position itself more strongly as an authority in the field of TVET. The setup of a TVET community, a mechanism for coordination, aggregating interests of different internal entities, and for maintaining the momentum for action, has proven very beneficial and as a whole has contributed to this achievement. Despite this positive development<sup>67</sup>, the full potential of the community is yet to be explored. The role of the regional offices and the involvement of Category I institutes (IIEP/Pôle de Dakar, IBE, UIL) in the implementation of the TVET strategy has so far been rather marginal. Furthermore, there are other entities that have not been represented so far (such as IIEP /Pôle de Dakar) but could potentially be part of it. Distribution of tasks and responsibilities, as well as reporting towards the Strategy for TVET have so far been scattered and within the restrictions of the reporting and accountability framework of the current organisational architecture

With regard to the regional offices, the evaluation found that for example in Bangkok there is a need and potential role for the Regional Office to help revamp the UNEVOC Network, to improve quality and frequency of communication with regional and national stakeholders, and to take ownership and responsibility for follow-up for national level interventions. The regional office could also play a bigger role in bringing UNESCO at the table as regional developments are concerned (such as the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework process). To this end it would only be beneficial if it had stronger links with nationally operating institutions (such as the UNEVOC Centres). However, given the current limited staffing arrangements dedicated to TVET in the Office, these challenges are recognised but cannot realistically be met.

Concerning Category I institutes, stakeholders indicate that while there is collaboration between UNESCO HQ and UNESCO-UNEVOC with UIL in Hamburg (for instance in reflecting on each other's normative instruments) as well as with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) (such as on the development of global indicators for measuring TVET systems, and the development and strengthening of TVET statistical and management information systems), the structural cooperation and strategic joint planning with IIEP (in terms of providing follow-up to TVET related education planning) and IBE (in terms of TVET related curriculum development) has so far been limited, but new opportunities are arising such as the recent focus of IIEP/Pôle de Dakar's work on supporting African countries in implementing their TVET reform<sup>68</sup>.

UNESCO-UNEVOC actively seeks cooperation with other UN system entities residing in Bonn, such as with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) and with the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN Spider).

Furthermore, in view of the broader context of TVET there is also potential for closer coordination and complementarity within the UNESCO Education sector (e.g. TVET and citizenship, TVET and teachers) as well as other programmes sectors (e.g. Skills for promoting

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<sup>67</sup> The process for setting up the TVET community was incremental, starting with a core team (HQ, UNEVOC and Regional Offices) and then gradually expanded to a larger circle of UNESCO staff dealing with TVET.

<sup>68</sup> The extrabudgetary project for establishing a professional platform of expertise in the field of TVET (Plateforme d'Expertise en Formation Professionnelle (PEFOP) is managed and implemented by the Pôle de Dakar. It was initiated in June 2015 and was therefore not included in the initial scope of the evaluation.

cultural industries, skills for media). The implementation of the NETMED Youth project by three sectors of UNESCO: Science and Human Sciences (SHS, lead for the project), Communication and Information (CI) and Education (YLS) highlights also the effort to provide coordinated intersectoral support to Member States, focussing on equipping youth people with appropriate skills to increase their role in national youth policies, skills development and employment policy dialogue, and media coverage on youth news.

## **2) Work with other organizations at the global level has been successful, but in some instances less so at the regional and national levels.**

The Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners shows that UNESCO is considered a reliable cooperation partner in the field of TVET (84% of the respondents (strongly) agrees with this statement).<sup>69</sup>

The evaluation also found that at the global level UNESCO has been rather successful in bringing together international organizations active in TVET to cooperate on key issues (such as the IAG-TVET) and to produce joint publications. At the regional and national level, bringing together international organizations active in TVET has been less common. In fact, regional and national stakeholders are not always aware of how active UNESCO is in their region/country. For instance, in Lao PDR neither GIZ nor one of the main TVET schools in Lao PDR were aware of UNESCO's active involvement in TVET reform issues, or of the fact that the Vocational Education Development Institute (VEDI), the main TVET stakeholder in the country, was a designated UNEVOC Centre. This is confirmed by the absence of any mention of UNESCO in several TVET project documents of other donor organizations that were screened during this evaluation.<sup>70</sup> In Benin several bilateral organizations visited were also little aware of recent UNESCO initiatives in the field of TVET. On the other hand, in countries such as Benin or Lao PDR where UNESCO has a very limited field presence (antenna office or project officer) the Organization is also less aware of upcoming funding or cooperation opportunities with other donor or implementing organizations. For instance in Benin, the Swiss cooperation is providing funding for TVET through national decision making and financing bodies that could potentially be channelled towards follow up of prior UNESCO interventions. However, it has to be acknowledged that this is very context-specific and depending on the quality and level of donor coordination and the cooperation among the private technical and financial cooperation partners in a country.<sup>71</sup>

## **3) UNEVOC Network members are yet to demonstrate their role as “contributors” rather than mere “beneficiaries” through the revitalized Network management**

The full potential of the UNEVOC Network is still to be activated through increasing activity rates of many centres (as indicated earlier). Currently also active Centres mainly cooperate with a limited number of others, mostly within their country/region. Most UNEVOC Network members are focused on what they can receive from the Network rather than on how they can contribute to it. In order for the network to become increasingly beneficial for its members, the right balance needs to be found.

The evaluation acknowledges that the UNEVOC Network is going through a transition and reform phase that aims at strengthening the quality aspects of its outreach rather than simply expanding its membership, as well as at engaging Network members from more advanced TVET systems in contributing and sharing the responsibility to capacity building for TVET transformations. As membership is concerned, new criteria have been developed for becoming a UNEVOC Centre and applicant institutions are required to demonstrate their capacity to fulfil the role expected of them. Among the various tasks that UNEVOC Centres

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<sup>69</sup> Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners (Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements: UNESCO is a reliable cooperation partner in the field of TVET).

<sup>70</sup> See for instance BEQUAL (2014), Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR (BEQUAL) Investment Design Document.

<sup>71</sup> For example in Liberia there is strong UN and donor coordination and a forthcoming financing conference on TVET.

are expected to take on are participating in knowledge and resource development, online services and the clearinghouse function of the International Centre in Bonn; organizing at least one TVET-related activity per year; reporting and sharing relevant experiences regarding TVET to and within the UNEVOC Network; and facilitating as well as participating in capacity building activities within the Network. Furthermore, a sunset clause has been introduced for UNEVOC Network members; therefore, when UNEVOC Centres do not accomplish a minimum of such activities within their responsibility, their membership within the Network may not be renewed after the initial four-year period.<sup>72</sup> As active contributions and Network engagements is concerned, more and more UNEVOC Centres are encouraged to take lead on cluster-based projects such as collaborative researches and capacity development. These measures are estimated to guiding the Network in the right direction, but challenges still exist with regards to maintaining an inclusive global network with varying capacities, while managing the increasing expectations of members.

**4) Partnerships beyond governments, including with the private sector and civil society organizations are limited.**

UNESCO has established excellent working relations in developing countries with Ministries of Education and in a few cases with Ministries of Labour, depending on where authorities responsible for TVET are located, and on the level of TVET stakeholder coordination in a country.

Partnerships with employers in the private sector or with civil society exist in some cases (such as in Botswana for the BEAR Project, or within the NET-MED Youth project which targets youth organizations as major beneficiaries.), but have so far been limited. To some extent this hampers the relevance and implementation of UNESCO's work. Furthermore, the working relationships with Ministries of Education and Ministries of Labour in developed countries are less so established while these could serve as a reference point for TVET policy development in more advanced TVET systems.

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<sup>72</sup> See the [UNEVOC Network Manual of Operating Procedures](#) UNESCO 2014.

## 2.7 Suggestions to strengthen UNESCO's work in TVET

This section discusses suggestions for possible improvements, which are intended to provide input for UNESCO's work in TVET, aiming at maintaining the intellectual leadership and normative role of the Organization for the post-2015 period, in light of the Incheon Declaration, the Education 2030 agenda and the proposed Sustainable Development Goals. They are grouped under two interrelated dimensions:

- Increasing the impact of UNESCO interventions; and,
- Strengthening operational linkages between organizational entities within the TVET community and with organizations outside the TVET community.

### 2.7.1 Increasing the impact of UNESCO interventions, especially at the country level

In the previous sections, the effectiveness and sustainability of achievements of UNESCO's interventions in TVET at country level were indicated as causes for concern. Given the challenges highlighted above, the following summary of suggestions for improvement is provided; Chapter 4 (on recommendations) provides more details:

- **Apply a 'pathway approach' in the design, planning, implementation and follow-up of interventions:** Interventions are often one-off and limited in time. In order for them to be sustainable, they should be programmed in a sequence, whereby one intervention builds further on the results of another and where intermediate and final objectives are made clear.
- **Increase national stakeholders' participation and commitment to UNESCO interventions:** Although UNESCO always works at the request of its Member States, at the country level the relationship between the Organizations and the country receiving assistance often takes the form of a supplier – client relationship. If national stakeholders participate more in the implementation of interventions, they become more committed to the process and also develop greater ownership of the results.
- **Plan interventions from a regional perspective to increase the potential for transnational comparison and benchmarking with neighbouring countries:** The evaluation found that most national stakeholders look to learn from others in their region where TVET systems and difficulties encountered are most comparable.
- **Increase the impact of the Policy Reviews at country level:** The Policy Reviews are considered as a useful instrument both to stimulate debate on TVET policy development at the country level and to provide insights on ways in which TVET systems are evolving. The latter is also a prerequisite to inform UNESCO's normative work. There is however room for improving the Policy Review process, especially when it concerns the follow-up and implementation of recommendations to achieve better impact at the country level, the channelling of future available resources into follow up of recommendations, and to enter into structured partnerships with other development partners working in the field of TVET in a country to secure continuity of the designed pathway.
- **Provide tools and practical guidelines for national level stakeholders on how to reform TVET systems:** Practical guidelines need to be developed on how to translate the implementation of the normative work and UNESCO's interventions into practice. Its messages and potential uses need to be communicated to different audiences, be they regional or national and can be tailored to help countries use these guidelines to put in place systems that are inspired by the normative work. The lessons learned from UNESCO's experience in working on reforming different TVET systems should be collected and analysed in order to publish a practical guide on the reform of TVET systems.

## 2.7.2 Strengthening operational linkages between organizational entities within the TVET community and with organizations outside the TVET community

Increasing the impact of UNESCO's interventions relies to a large part on the ability to optimally distribute resources and organize the work between the entities within the TVET community but also to coordinate cooperation with different other types of stakeholders. The following should be considered.

- **Strengthen the dynamic and initiative of the TVET community:** The TVET community was instituted during the period 2010-2015 and has evolved as an initially informal group around the thematic area into a dynamic and committed group of UNESCO staff working in the field of TVET. It sets an innovative example of cooperation around a thematic area within UNESCO with a potential to lift barriers for intra/ and inter-sectoral work. However its potential has not been fully explored and is – to some extent – hampered by the current organizational architecture of established reporting lines and accountability frameworks. Due to a lack of direct hierarchical lines within the Community (the different members have different reporting lines), it relies more on the individual commitment of its members, than on the institutional setting. The evaluation found that all members of the TVET community contribute from their own organizational position and regional background to the implementation of the TVET strategy and the further development of UNESCO's work in TVET. The regular exchange and flow of information, intended to strengthen institutional learning and joint work towards a common goal, i.e. the implementation for the Strategy for TVET. However, the contributions from the different entities would require better coordination, and increased interaction for synergies to be leveraged.
- **Link up with other organizations active in TVET at the (sub) regional level and further activate UNEVOC Centres:** The IAG-TVET is considered to be a relevant knowledge exchange platform among international organizations working in TVET at the global level. At regional level however, cooperation structures and mechanisms are sometimes lacking, even though the evaluation found a strong need for them. UNESCO should make efforts in filling this gap, especially through its regional offices and a more active UNEVOC Network. While major steps have already been taken during 2010-2015 to revamp the Network, an increased regional focus, involvement of regional TVET institutions, and support from the regional offices could further strengthen its impact.
- **Strengthen employer involvement at all levels in UNESCO's work in TVET:** Employers are important stakeholders in TVET, involving them in UNESCO's work is important for its relevance at national, regional and global levels. This can be further facilitated by pursuing joint planning with ILO, establishing an advisory/sounding board in which employers take part, encouraging UNEVOC centres to develop strategies and develop capacities to effectively liaise with employers.



# Chapter 3 UNESCO's Strategy for TVET: Assessment of the document and suggestions for a future strategy (post-2015)

This chapter focuses on the value of having a Strategy document for TVET. It provides reflections on the current Strategy itself and the use of the document (Section 3.1); it also aims to present the new evolving context (emerging issues and trends in TVET) as well as the international development agenda (Section 3.2); and, finally presents suggested key elements of a new strategy (Section 3.3).

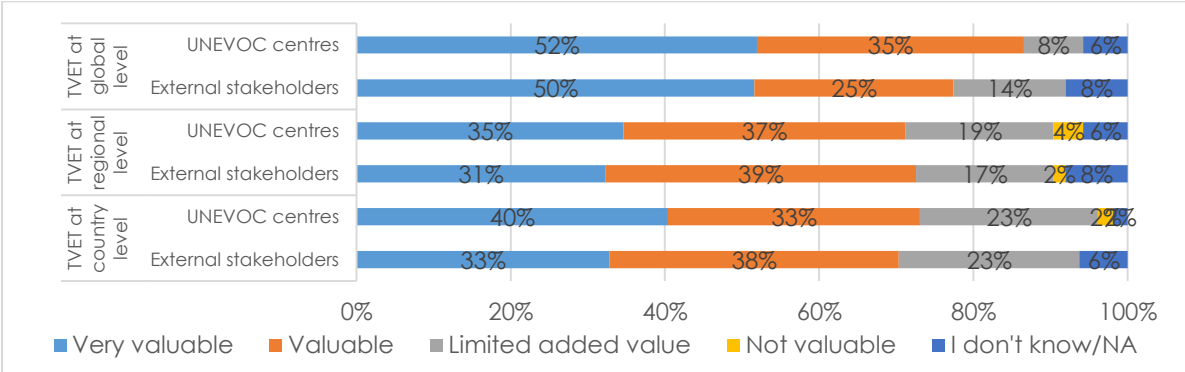
## 3.1 Reflections on the Strategy for TVET document

This section provides an analysis and key conclusions on UNESCO's Strategy for TVET document. It focuses on the context in which the Strategy was developed and implemented, the specific objectives that were envisaged, as well its structure and functions. It concludes with a section on limitations.

### 1. Through its Strategy for TVET for 2010-2015 UNESCO was able to better position its work in TVET at the global and national levels

The Strategy for TVET is considered to be valuable from both an internal UNESCO and an external perspective as the evaluation clearly confirms that it has re-emphasised and strengthened the priority status of TVET within UNESCO. In addition, UNESCO's Member States and partners including the UNEVOC Centres indicate that having a UNESCO Strategy for TVET provides valuable guidance at all levels to stimulate TVET policy development. This finding is confirmed by the evaluation interviews with national and global level partners.

**Figure 8 How do you assess the added value of having a UNESCO Strategy for TVET (2010-2015) at national, regional and global level?**



Source: Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners and Survey of UNEVOC Centres.

### 2. The Strategy for TVET refers to the key organizational and development priorities (e.g. C/4; EFA goal 3), but does not provide clarity on how it is to contribute to these priorities

Although, the timelines of the Strategy for TVET and UNESCO's other key strategic documents are not fully aligned<sup>73</sup>, The Strategy's main relationship with UNESCO's main strategic documents is as follows:

- **C/4 Medium-Term Strategy:** The Strategy for TVET indicates that it will strengthen assistance to Member States within the 34 C/4 overarching objective "attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning", thereby aligning itself with UNESCO's

<sup>73</sup> Both the C/4 Medium term Strategy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) ran until 2013, whereas the Strategy for TVET continues until the end of 2015. UNESCO's more recent strategic documents, such as the new C/4, the UNESCO Education Strategy, the Operational Strategy on Youth, the Operational Strategy for Priority Africa and GEAP II all cover the period 2014-2021, which largely extends beyond the Strategy for TVET.

main education goal. The Strategy for TVET incorporates all of UNESCO's five functions<sup>74</sup> into its three core areas. It specifically targets least developed countries (LDCs) in its core area 1, but does not mention small island developing states (SIDS) or countries in transition, which are both declared as priorities in the C/4. In terms of partnerships the Strategy for TVET encourages cooperation with UN organizations (just like the C/4), but does not set any specific objectives or targets for partnership-building with specific UN agencies or other stakeholders.

- **Global Priority Gender Equality:** The Strategy for TVET aims to promote long-term solutions based on an inclusive and rights-based approach and in line with the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) for 2008-2013. However, it does not explain how it is going to integrate the two-pronged approach (gender-specific programming and gender mainstreaming) contained in the GEAP. Each of the Strategy's core areas specifically mentions targeting women and girls, but it is not clear how the work of the Strategy is to contribute to gender equality. No specific gender-equality indicators or objectives are defined.
- **Global Priority Africa:** The current Strategy for TVET does not make reference to the Global Priority Africa, but under Core Area 1 mentions that assistance is likely to be provided to 20 "target countries", twelve of which are in Africa according to the 35 C/5. On the other hand, Flagship 2 of the new [Operational Strategy for Priority Africa 2014-21](#)<sup>75</sup> contains a specific Expected Results on TVET aiming at strengthening Capacities of Member States to design and implement policies aiming at transforming TVET in Africa, with performance indicators that potentially contribute to TVET Strategy.
- **Operational Strategy on Youth:** The overarching objective of the Strategy for TVET is also to ensure that "the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes"; therefore, its focus is largely on youth. The three core areas of the Strategy for TVET broadly cover two of the three axes of the recent Operational Strategy on Youth, namely Policy Review and formulation and capacity development and civil engagement.
- **UNESCO Education Strategy:** The current Strategy for TVET was developed six years prior to that of the recently published Education Strategy; therefore, it is not surprising that there is little alignment between the two documents in terms of the evolving context of the international education agenda. However, the provision of upstream policy advice and capacity-building, the development of statistics frameworks, as well as the strengthening of partnerships such as the UNEVOC Network are common elements to both.

The Strategy for TVET refers to UNESCO's key priorities situates its work in TVET within the framework of most key documents (34 C/4 Medium-Term Strategy, Education for All goal 3, Gender Equality Action Plan for 2008-2013). However, it does not always explicitly make operational links between the objectives of the reference documents and its three core areas. Most importantly, the Strategy for TVET does not explain how the Organization's work in TVET will contribute to the strategic documents' objectives.

### **3. The Strategy for TVET structures the work to some extent, but insufficiently describes roles and responsibilities of those involved in its implementation**

The value of having the Strategy for TVET lies first and foremost in communicating its prioritising TVET as a thematic area compared to other subsectors of the broader Education Sector.

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<sup>74</sup> According to the 34C/4, in fulfilling its mission, UNESCO will carry out for the international community its five established functions: (i) laboratory of ideas; (ii) standard-setter; (iii) clearing house; (iv) capacity-builder in Member States in UNESCO's fields of competence; (v) catalyst for international cooperation.

<sup>75</sup> See: [Operational Strategy for Priority Africa 2014-21](#): Expected Results N°6: "Capacities of Member States strengthened to design and implement policies aiming at transforming TVET in Africa") with 2 performance indicators that contribute to 37C5, then potentially to TVET Strategy: i) Number of countries whose systems have transformed towards supporting youth transitions and building skills for work and life ii) Number of UNEVOC Centres participating in programmes and contributing to the production of knowledge products.

However, the Strategy does not provide UNESCO's policy direction for stakeholders outside of UNESCO nor does it seem to intend to do so.

The evaluation found that the current Strategy for TVET has a primarily internal organizational function rather than an external advocacy function. During the past six years it was an important tool for UNESCO's internal use, i.e. to emphasise the priority status of TVET in the Education Sector, to create leadership on the subject, to have a stronger position for fundraising and to establish a team of specialists at HQ and the field to work together in a TVET community and in a harmonized way. The Strategy is less of a reference document to external stakeholder than for instance the Shanghai consensus. The outreach of its messages beyond the UNESCO Secretariat and its Governing Bodies might also be limited by the format (as an Executive Board document).

As a document with an internal function within the TVET community, the Strategy for TVET provided broad guidance on priorities, but left ample room for interpretation based on the opportunities that emerged. It did not provide an indication or strategic direction on key thematic areas, what types of activities and at what level UNESCO should be doing in line with the key priorities. The Strategy therefore allowed much flexibility to design and implement activities that were not foreseen or predictable at the time of its development.

This flexibility of the Strategy is considered an advantage to the extent that emerging extrabudgetary programmes and funding opportunities could be justified to fit under it. On the other hand, it is considered as a disadvantage as the Strategy falls short of describing clear roles and responsibilities of members of the TVET community at Headquarters, in regional and national field offices, at UNESCO-UNEVOC, Category I Institutes as well as other networks and partners. In addition, it did not describe the expected contributions of the members of the TVET community to the envisaged results. The operational links, in terms reporting lines and accountabilities, or other ways of establishing common working methods between members of the TVET community were also not described. The evaluation found a gap in that it also did not indicate how it should contribute in strengthening the TVET community, for instance at the regional level.

#### **4. The need for a renewed UNESCO Strategy for TVET is clearly confirmed**

Based on the summative part of this report, the evaluation points to a clear need for a new Strategy for TVET, this both for UNESCO internal reasons, namely positioning the Organization's work in TVET as a priority in the post-2015 period; and for external reasons, namely to communicate UNESCO's vision and objectives to the outside and as a tool to engage with partners and provide an incentive for Member States and other partners to continue investing in the work on TVET together with UNESCO.

A new strategy needs to be different from the current one as it needs to be an external reference document. The previous Strategy facilitated the positioning of TVET as a priority within the Organization as well as positioning UNESCO as a major contributor to the global debate in the field of TVET after a period of relatively low levels of international attention to TVET. However, a similar strategy and approach would not work in the currently evolving context: now that UNESCO is considered to be an important international actor working in TVET, more is expected in terms of the new strategy for TVET being a guiding instrument with a vision of TVET's contribution to the sustainable development agenda, and in particular SDG4 that explains how UNESCO plans on positioning itself to work towards this vision. In this, the new Strategy for TVET can shift from being an internal document, for use by the TVET community (as is the case of the current Strategy), towards a guiding document on UNESCO's role and potential impact in the field of TVET, oriented also towards external stakeholders and inviting others to join in building transformative TVET systems in all UNESCO Member States.

## 3.2 Emerging issues and trends in TVET to which a future UNESCO Strategy for TVET should respond

Many trends can be identified that can shape future TVET development. The UNESCO report “Unleashing the Potential: Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training” provides a thorough analysis of contextual drivers for TVET:

- (i) A shift in the development paradigm: a shift towards a more humanistic, holistic, and sustainable development context to which TVET systems need to adjust. This calls for the involvement of more, and other stakeholders as well as multi-sectoral policies.
- (ii) Demographic trends: In many less and least developed countries, large groups of young people need to be prepared for the labour market; developed countries on the other hand see also rising numbers of older workers. Both situations impact the organization and focus of TVET systems.
- (iii) Global education policies: EFA goals have influenced the enrolment of students in TVET systems in many countries. Both through the success of higher enrolments in primary education, enabling more young people to conduct further studies, also in TVET; and its shortcomings, high numbers of early school leavers can become clients of TVET systems.
- (iv) Migration: Migration in its many forms (temporary, permanent, legal and illegal) challenges TVET systems in many ways. Qualifications offered increasingly have to be able to travel across borders, maintaining their value; also, recognition of competences and skills acquired elsewhere call for changes in the TVET system.
- (v) Labour market trends and demands: TVET systems are, and should be sensitive to changing demands in the labour market, also, TVET systems need to focus on increasing the employability of their graduates. In response to raising unemployment rates and skills mismatches in many countries TVET can have both a preventive and a curative function; better equipping young people for the labour market and re-skilling older workers that become unemployed.
- (vi) Technological advancements and innovation: Due to new technologies, the nature of work is changing, causing skills become obsolete and new skills emerge. This challenges TVET systems to prepare their graduates to be employable in future jobs that did not even exist when they graduated. In addition, the application of ICTs becomes more and more prominent, also in unexpected professions. This calls for TVET systems to provide skills and competences to operate ICTs in a working environment.
- (vii) Changing modes of work: Globalisation and consequent reorganization of the workplace require a work force that is adaptable; challenging TVET systems to provide the demanded skills in a globalised context.
- (viii) Shifts in the political landscape: Policy development in TVET is dependent on the stability of the country and the political will to prioritise TVET.

In addition, the report argues that TVET should be analysed with three interlocking lenses: the economic, social equity and sustainability of development lenses in order to understand TVET's interest and impact. Based on these contextual drivers, the analytical framework of the three interlocking lenses and the interviews with stakeholders, the evaluation found following four directions of how TVET systems could respond to the challenges that are provided:

### **There is a need to put TVET in a lifelong learning approach**

Labour market trends, demographic evolution, technological developments, and changing modes of work all call for an adaptable work force. TVET needs to be able to skill and re-skill workers throughout their working lives. For this, TVET systems need to reflect the role TVET plays in the working lives of people: specifically at what stage do people require what type, form and mode of TVET. This calls for lifelong learning, more effective recognition of systems for lifelong learning, permeability of education sectors, recognition of prior learning and career guidance mechanisms. Systems also need to be flexible to adjust to the changing demands

of the labour market, wider society and sustainable development. However, this needs to be done without compromising quality and trust in qualifications.

### **TVET should provide a perspective for life and work**

In times of changing economies and societies, TVET should be able to provide not only skills, but a perspective for life and work. It should do this by building resourceful people rather than human resources. TVET systems need to integrate foundation, transversal, life, and working competences (technical and vocational competences). A narrow economic perspective on TVET (as a supplier of directly needed skills), bypasses the social equity and sustainable development aspects of TVET that are strongly associated with UNESCO's mandate. Given many of the contextual drivers, people need to be equipped with foundation and transversal competences by which they can further develop themselves and play a role in the communities in which they live. These concern for instance civic competences (global citizens with the humanistic skills, values and attitudes), and entrepreneurial competences (sense of initiative).

### **TVET should respond to changing modes of delivery and provision**

The third direction refers to technological development, TVET's role in lifelong learning and changing modes of delivery and provision. This concerns the re-valorisation of the workplace and non-formal and informal learning contexts, also when it comes to transversal competences such as work ethics. Secondly, remote learning contexts play an increasing role in TVET, providing opportunities for people to obtain skills and competences and become certified. Both issues require TVET systems to deal with skills and competences not necessarily obtained in the formal system.

### **TVET in the Education Sustainable Development Goal**

UNESCO's future work in TVET should take into account a number of overarching guiding documents providing key principles and references to guide its work. The first and most important guiding document is the Incheon Declaration<sup>76</sup> and the related SDG-4 goal: "Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all." These focus on access, equity and inclusion, quality and learning outcomes, within a lifelong learning approach. In addition, it relates to increased access to quality TVET, provision of flexible learning pathways, recognition, validation and accreditation of knowledge, skills and competencies including those acquired through non-formal and informal education.

## **3.3 Key elements of a new strategy**

Based on the evaluation findings (Chapter 2), reflections on the current Strategy for TVET as well as emerging trends in the field (Section 3.1 and 3.2), the new Strategy for TVET should take into consideration a number of key components. This section provides suggestions on how the new Strategy should be structured and on what elements it should contain. Prior to this, a number of key framework conditions are discussed:

- **UNESCO governance and Member States commitment:** Any policy field within UNESCO is dependent on the direction in which its constituencies want UNESCO to go. For the Organization's Member States, TVET is clearly declared as a priority. The informal group of Member States that have come together as the 'Friends of TVET', underlines UNESCO's clear mandate on policy dialogue, monitoring, advocacy, mobilisation of funding and capacity building within the field of TVET' and emphasizes the importance of UNESCO's normative role.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, recent discussions in the

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<sup>76</sup> Incheon Declaration: Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all (2015): <https://en.unesco.org/world-education-forum-2015/incheon-declaration>

<sup>77</sup> To manifest the priority given to TVET by UNESCO, and at the initiative of the Swedish Delegation of UNESCO in January 2015, 14 Member States from around the globe created an informal network, 'Friends of TVET', with the aim to contribute to UNESCO's work on TVET issues in general and in particular to the revision of the Revised Recommendation and to the elaboration of a new UNESCO Strategy for TVET, in view of the lessons learned and of

Executive Board regarding the improvements for UNESCO's results measurement and reporting express a desire to ensure a more direct and measurable impact, both at the global and at country level.

- **Institutional capacity and organization:** UNESCO recently underwent a field reform that was piloted in the African region by creating five regional multi-sectoral regional offices with the aims, among other, to ensure better impact of UNESCO's work as a result of a 'new' multi-sectoral approach in line with UNESCO's mandate. In the field of Education these are expected to take on the role of the former regional bureau for Education in Africa, located in Dakar. Among the challenges the reform foresees to create a critical mass of programme specialists in these offices, rather than to have fewer specialists scattered throughout several national offices. While it is too early to conclude on the longer term effects of the reform<sup>78</sup>, the evaluation found that some offices' capacities in education (such as Harare) were enhanced and therefore present new opportunities for the implementation of regional projects in TVET. However, there remains the risk that TVET specialists may not be represented in all offices, nor in the regional bureaus for Education in the other regions, and those few currently existing TVET specialised resources in the field are further diluted through taking up multiple education portfolios. The Education Sector therefore has to strategically plan the allocation of its resources and specialists in line with its priority areas, to make sure that TVET needs can be serviced equally in all (sub) regions.
- **Mobilisation of funding:** UNESCO's portfolio of activities is largely dependent on extrabudgetary funding especially for its country level work, with few exceptions of country level activities that can continue to be covered with Regular Programme resources. The donors that provide this funding bring with them specific requests and priority areas, often more related to national level work and at times down-stream implementation. It is less likely that donors provide extrabudgetary funding for the areas in which UNESCO adds most value (conceptual clarification, knowledge development and sharing, and normative work) given its unique mandate (in terms of approach to TVET and outreach). This will need to be taken into consideration for the funding framework of a future strategy.

### 3.3.1 A UNESCO vision for TVET

The Strategy for TVET should clearly state UNESCO's vision for TVET for next 5-6 years and its contribution to the SDG 4 and UNESCO's strategic documents:

- The **Education Strategy 2014-2021** sees education in a broad lifelong learning perspective to fulfil personal expectations for a decent and healthy life and work with a focus on basic knowledge, attitudes and cognitive, social and emotional skills, problem-solving and creative thinking.
- The **Gender Equality Action Plan II for 2014-2021** indicates that a two-pronged approach needs to be adopted in UNESCO programming (both providing gender-specific programming and mainstreaming gender equality into all programmes).
- The **Operational Strategy for Priority Africa 2014-2021** focuses on quality, equity and relevance of education, TVET teachers/ trainers, building institutional capacities for sustainable development, and youth in Africa.
- The **Operational Strategy on Youth 2014-2021** mentions improved educational and learning environment for youth to acquire skills and competencies for the transition to adulthood and focuses on developing Member States' capacities in TVET on a number of issues, including in entrepreneurial skills and training, and support of education for sustainable development including in non-formal and lifelong learning.

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the global discussion on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and to the revision of the UNESCO recommendation for Technical and Vocational Education (2001).

<sup>78</sup> In early 2015, IOS undertook a review of the reform in the Africa region for the purpose of drawing early lessons and providing the Director-General and Governing Bodies with information to undertake any necessary adjustments. [See 197 EX/5 Part III.](#)



- The **UNESCO C/4 document** describes UNESCO's objectives and five core functions, and levels of operation. It also focuses on vulnerable groups and indicates that cooperation should be strengthened with UN and other partners.

Referring to strategic documents is one thing; positioning oneself in contributing to achieving their objectives is another. The Strategy should have a vision on TVET and a vision on UNESCO's role in TVET globally. The vision has to have both elements of (i) acknowledging trends in TVET; and (ii) how UNESCO sees TVET evolving. It is also important that the vision emanates from Member States (via a consultative process) and this should be made explicit to ensure firm commitment from UNESCO's constituencies. Unlike specific objectives of the Strategy, its vision can be more aspirational, indicating a direction for the future. In order to be truly global, the future Strategy for TVET should advocate for relevance of TVET for all UNESCO Member States and evoke a more global platform for North-South, South-North, South-South and North-North exchange and cooperation.

The view on TVET should be based on and reflect UNESCO's principles and mandate and, should combine economic and labour market objectives with humanistic principles (such as lasting peace, social justice, equity, sustainable development) as well as address different target groups: disadvantaged groups (women, youth, disabled, rural, poor, migrants), in line with the before mentioned strategic documents of the Organization. Through this, the Strategy for TVET shall be clearly identified by outsiders as a UNESCO strategy, breathing its humanistic orientation.

In addition, the vision should position TVET in a transversal manner, cutting across all stages of the education pathway, linking to other areas of education and the world of work, as well as in a lifelong learning perspective. Throughout the strategy, TVET should be seen both as a sector in its own right, and as an orientation in other educational sectors and policy fields. Furthermore, in line with the SDG4, the focus should be on quality TVET, through quality assurance processes. Quality is considered as a transversal theme as it underlies all thematic focus areas: these needs to contribute to quality TVET, relevance to labour markets, lifelong learning and society needs in an effective, efficient, sustainably organized and accessible manner.

### 3.3.2 Operational objectives and an intervention logic

Based on this vision, and in addressing the priorities of the key reference documents, operational objectives need to be formulated for the period of the new strategy. Unlike the vision, which can be aspirational, the objectives need to be realistic and measurable. For instance, where the vision could state "TVET is conceptualised in a broad way, covering formal, non-formal and informal learning environments"; the operational objectives could be: "Within the strategy, UNESCO aims to widen the stakeholder base in TVET to cover places in which TVET takes place outside the formal system". Another example: the vision of "TVET policy development should be based on reliable data" could be operationalised into "UNESCO will develop and test indicators for TVET monitoring and will stimulate Member States and stakeholders to make use of the knowledge sharing and exchange platforms offered." Measurable targets should be associated with the operational objectives. The strategy should include process, output, result and impact indicators that can be used to monitor its implementation in line with the operational objectives.

After having indicated the operational objectives, the underlying intervention logic (pathway, causal linkages) should be developed and explained in the strategy. It should describe in what ways and through which steps UNESCO will work towards outcomes and thus through which type of interventions, implemented at what level, it aims to achieve the operational objectives. This requires identifying the conditions (context), assumptions,



opportunities and risks under which UNESCO's work is expected to lead to the envisaged results, and the mechanisms by which UNESCO foresees to reach results.<sup>79</sup>

### 3.3.3 Indication of types and level of interventions and the role of UNESCO

After this description of what UNESCO wants to achieve and by which mechanisms it intends to do so, the pallet of interventions and processes can be described. This could take the form of the core areas as included in the previous Strategy, and in line with the key strategic documents, but it could also be structured differently, in order to more explicitly disclose the interdependency and potential cross fertilisation among the different strands of interventions at the different levels.

Interventions can take place at global, regional and national levels. The impact of these interventions can be at the same but also at different levels. For instance a global level intervention (the normative work, the updated Recommendation) should provide a global framework, but should also inspire stakeholders at the regional and national levels to take action. The strategy should therefore clarify how the different levels link up and support each other in obtaining results.

The same is true for the interlinkages and feedback loops between the types of interventions. Policy work at the national level will be both inspired by UNESCO's conceptual work and supported by its research and knowledge exchange, while the experience, results and lesson learned from national level policy work will feed back into the conceptual and normative work to make these relevant and credible.

Stakeholders have different views of what UNESCO's primary future roles should be. The surveys, interviews and document review point to knowledge development (conceptualizing, advocating, researching, evaluating and monitoring TVET), policy dialogue, advice and support (pointing to particular policy solutions or building capacities to respond to particular issues), platform for networking (connecting organizations in the field of TVET), and agenda setting (e.g. for the post-2015 agenda)<sup>80</sup> as core roles.

When comparing UNESCO with other organizations, UNESCO has a clear comparative advantage in its normative work, conceptualization, and clearing house functions. In these roles, UNESCO has a unique position that is uncontested by others. UNESCO needs to build on this when working at the national level in order to differentiate between what is its added value at this level compared to other (donor) organizations, such as helping countries translate UNESCO's global normative instruments into national policy options.

It is essential for the Organization to be equally active at the regional and national levels. In line with what the 'Unleashing The Potential' calls enablers of TVET transformation<sup>81</sup>, the work to support TVET reform at one level needs to feed into the others. Without the work at the national level, the credibility of the normative work may be compromised; on the other hand, without the global work, UNESCO's contribution at national level would be no different from

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<sup>79</sup> Inspired by the ideas on realistic evaluation. The Realistic Evaluation framework was developed by Pawson and Tilley (1997) and Instead of asking 'does this work' or 'what works', as traditional evaluations do, realistic evaluators ask 'what works for whom, and in what circumstances?' This enables the evaluator to better capture the impact of the different contexts on the interventions made and to see them in conjunction with contextual factors. A mechanism is understood as that what makes a certain intervention, or group of interventions, lead to the envisaged results (causal linkages). Mechanisms can for instance involve stakeholders nationally so that they start debate on reforms (to generate momentum for change), or distribute information (actively) to national policy makers and stakeholders so that they create awareness of the need for reform/possible direction of reform (to embed reforms structurally). In different contexts, various mechanisms could be used to select different types of interventions.

<sup>80</sup> These are the four most important roles of UNESCO according to external stakeholders. (Survey of UNESCO Member States representatives and partners Q: What do you see as the most and least important roles of UNESCO in the field of TVET in the future? Please select up to three for each. The Survey of UNEVOC Centres slightly differs and puts networking in second place and has the role of knowledge broker as an important role instead of agenda setter (Survey of UNEVOC Centres (Q: What do you see as the two most and least important roles of UNESCO-UNEVOC in the field of TVET in the future?).

<sup>81</sup> i) partnerships and networks, ii) knowledge and the information base, iii) a culture of learning, and iv) incentives and accountability

other organizations. The work at regional level could facilitate a smooth transition between the global and national level by identifying what lessons can be learned from the different country level interventions and extracting the global/regional level messages relevant for national/ regional stakeholders.

### 3.3.4 Roles and responsibilities of the TVET community and cooperation partners

The Strategy for TVET will be developed primarily for UNESCO's TVET community and its Member States, but potentially serves also as an orientation for other partners and organizations working in the field of TVET. For this reason, the Strategy should clarify the operational aspects of work in the field between the various entities, as well as the expectations towards its partners and external stakeholders.

In light of UNESCO's current organizational set-up, the TVET Community is not embedded in a hierarchical structure and its various entities have different reporting lines; therefore, the way how each entity is to contribute to the future strategy is a particular challenge that needs to be addressed. However, this cannot be done for the TVET Strategy alone, but needs to be considered for the implementation modalities of all UNESCO strategies be they in education or cross-sectoral (e.g. Youth). By including the different entities in the future Strategy document with a clear attribution of ownership and accountability towards the Strategy within the TVET community, the strategy would encourage a sense of responsibility among members. Roles and responsibilities should also clearly articulate the work division between UNESCO Headquarters, UNESCO-UNEVOC, regional and field offices, institutes, the UNEVOC Network, other UN organizations and other partners. Thought could be given to different degrees of involvement by the various entities: through which entity do countries enter into cooperation with UNESCO; which entities can provide what types of support; which entities can deal with follow-up or continuous monitoring. In addition, further thought should be given to the relationship between the UNESCO HQ, YLS section and UNESCO-UNEVOC, both in terms of the work they do and how UNESCO-UNEVOC is positioned as part of UNESCO, but maintains its own identity. Currently, the work of both the YLS section and UNESCO-UNEVOC is closely interrelated, as both are involved in conceptual work, capacity development, clearinghouse, and knowledge management to varying degrees. Survey responses and interviews point to a lack of clarity regarding the most appropriate entry and reference points for specific issues between the two entities. The evaluation found that further clarification regarding the roles and allocation of resources for both entities in contributing to the implementation of the future Strategy is needed.

In addition to strengthening the TVET community with the aim to better leveraging all organizational entities working in TVET, the feasibility of different options regarding the optimal organizational setting could be considered. It is beyond the scope of the current evaluation to examine the various options and provide recommendations for a way forward on this aspect. Further examination of feasibility, consultation with Member States and advice on this issue is therefore recommended. Possible options can range from establishing only one organizational entity responsible for TVET at UNESCO HQ (i.e. concentrating resources) to keeping different organizational entities (and clearly allocating coordination, oversight and operational responsibilities). Both options will require reflection on the optimal status, governance and funding structure of UNESCO-UNEVOC.

The functioning of the TVET community can also be enhanced with increased regular exchange of experience and information and support to each other in identifying good practices and solving issues. Cooperation modalities and linkages between the different entities in the TVET community should be clarified and more clearly described.

In addition, the Strategy should provide entry points for other organizations and stakeholders to voice their perspectives on TVET. It should have an open character and should underline the role of UNESCO partners, networks and Member States in working towards the stated vision. The vision will probably be more ambitious than UNESCO can achieve all by itself and the Strategy should invite other organizations and Member States to contribute to the

realisation of the vision. This entails building on the work of the IAG-TVET, possibly expanding it to other organizations working in areas where TVET has more a transversal dimension. This would enable donor organizations, universities, NGOs to participate in UNESCO's work and find mutually strengthening cooperation. Thought could also be given to establishing a sounding board of experts, employers, and civil society organizations among others to enhance the involvement of different stakeholder groups.

### 3.3.5 Potential future focus areas and flagship initiatives

As quality of TVET, inclusiveness and equitable access are already mentioned as core framework conditions; these are not further elaborated on here. The potential focus areas that are suggested below are based on key reference documents, survey results, and interviews with UNESCO staff members and external stakeholders, including Member States. Suggestions from key stakeholders also point to the option of providing a global umbrella of priorities with flexibility for more specific regional focus areas as not all topics might be equally relevant in all regions. The strategy should therefore preserve sufficient flexibility to ensure relevance of the Strategy, its actions and results, with the respective national and regional contexts, as well with the before mentioned emerging issues and trends and the evolving (political and strategic) developments in the (sub-)regions.

In addition, in order to build on and to be clearly recognised for its comparative advantages UNESCO should be adopting one or two focus areas that can be identified as flagship initiatives to obtain high visibility of UNESCO's work in TVET at the global, regional and national levels. One possible option would be to focus where most immediate impact is reached in achieving TVET quality, in line with another of UNESCO's key priority thematic areas in Education, such as, the quality of teachers and trainers; other possible flagships could be TVET for Sustainable development; TVET Governance; TVET and transparency tools for lifelong learning; ICTs and remote delivery and certification; and Monitoring TVET in post-2015. These potential flagships are further described below.

#### 1. TVET Teachers and trainers

Teachers are the most important in-school factor influencing the quality of student learning<sup>82</sup>. In the case of TVET this extends to all settings including school, workplace learning, training and mentoring. Education pathways for TVET lecturers, teachers and trainers are generally underdeveloped and continuous professional development is not sufficiently in place to allow them to update their qualifications in line with new and innovative modes of delivery. Teachers' working and social conditions as well as opportunities for building up the right competences (both practical/theoretical, technical/transversal) including modern pedagogical approaches and IT tools, are among the most neglected areas in many TVET policies. All field case studies in the framework of this evaluation clearly identified this as a key obstacle for quality TVET provision.

The quality of teaching and training in TVET is not just determined by the quality – and quantity - of teachers and trainers themselves, but relies on the institutional environment and policy framework in which they work. UNESCO is well positioned to make the professionalization of TVET teachers as a flagship initiative. Firstly, within the TVET community and especially in UNESCO-UNEVOC the topic has received ample attention in recent years; secondly, teachers is, together with TVET, one of the four key priorities for UNESCO Education Sector; therefore, there is a huge potential to capitalise on UNESCO's experience and networks, and on intra-sectoral cooperation in this field.<sup>83</sup> Thirdly, teacher quality is also among the key themes of the CapEFA programme. Within this context, UNESCO could focus on:

- Mapping and monitoring TVET teacher education policies and systems;

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<sup>82</sup> Up to three quarters of school effects on pupil outcomes can be explained by teachers. See: Rivkin, Steven G., Hanushek, Eric A., Kain, John F, (2005), Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement, in: *Econometrica*, Vol. 73, No. 2. (Mar., 2005), pp. 417-458.

<sup>83</sup> See UNESCO (2012), UNESCO strategy on teachers (2012-2015).

- Providing tools for policy advice to improve TVET teacher and lecturer education systems throughout the continuum of teacher education; and
- Developing guidelines for developing ICT-based training modules for TVET teachers focusing on technical, pedagogical, and analytical skills (e.g. conducting labour market analyses).

## 2. TVET for Sustainable Development

TVET should integrate skills for life (including peace and green skills) and skills for work, including transversal skills and through this, provide perspectives for life and work. In rapidly changing labour markets and societies, transversal skills play an important role in keeping people employable. In line with UNESCO's mandate, sustainable development and green skills should continue to be emphasized and mainstreamed throughout a new Strategy. Positioning this field as a flagship would mean identifying complementarities with UNESCO's section for Education for Sustainable Development that works towards every human being acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future, and advocating for how UNESCO's work towards improving TVET policies can contribute to i) key sustainable development issues being integrated into TVET teaching and learning; ii) empowering learners/ trainees to change their behaviour and take action for sustainable development; and, iii) promoting a methodological and systemic approach to changing jobs and skill demands.

Given the high relevance of this topic, it was selected by Members of the UNEVOC Network as a priority theme in 2012, and has since been cutting across much of UNESCO-UNEVOC's work. UNESCO could set a strong message in bridging Education for Sustainable Development with the evolving needs in society and the labour market by helping TVET institutions develop their capacity to transfer skills for work and life that match evolving sustainable development requirements.

Within this context, UNESCO could focus on:

- Collecting, analysing and disseminating innovative practices;
- Capacity building and enabling UNEVOC Centres to play a more important role at country level to strengthen TVET for Sustainable Development; and,
- Developing practical guidelines and tools for Member States to integrate sustainable development principles into TVET reform and policies.

## 3. TVET Governance

TVET finds itself at a crossroads between the world of education and that of work. For this reason, different governance models may apply, involving different groups of stakeholders. In general, policy makers in TVET tend to have difficulties liaising with the world of work when it comes to designing and implementing effective TVET policies. Building stakeholder involvement into the governance of TVET remains a key issue that UNESCO could more explicitly declare as core area. Within this context, UNESCO could focus on:

- Mapping modalities of stakeholder (including employer and youth) involvement in TVET governance;
- Providing guidelines for national TVET stakeholders to strengthen the stakeholder/employer involvement
- Enable UNEVOC Centres to play a more important role at country level to strengthen stakeholder/employer involvement in TVET governance

## 4. TVET for lifelong learning

The place of TVET in the landscape of education areas is increasingly important. This concerns strengthening TVET components and enabling horizontal (TVET and HE) and vertical (formal vs non-formal) transitions, as well as permeability and further learning possibilities throughout life. In addition, qualifications and certifications and transnational qualification frameworks that are related to the mobility of learners, workers, especially at the regional level are becoming increasingly relevant. Within this context, and in view of UNESCO's future role in leading and

coordinating the implementation of SDG4, and the education elements of other SDGs especially those relating to UNESCO's mandate,, UNESCO could focus on:

- Further advancing the concept of world reference levels;
- Stimulating the discussion on regional qualifications frameworks;
- Jointly with UIL push the recognition, validation and accreditation of the Outcomes of Non-formal and Informal Learning agenda

### **5. ICTs in TVET (remote delivery and certification)**

The emergence of new technologies in the world of work, but also in educational practices, calls for increased emphasis on the opportunities for TVET delivery. The use of ICT and remote/blended learning brings with it threats and opportunities. It can exclude those that do not have access to ICT learning facilities; those that do not possess the competences to participate; but it creates opportunities to broaden the offer of TVET courses and programmes in remote areas. Within this context, UNESCO could focus on:

- Stimulating the use and exchange of Open Education Resources in TVET;
- Pushing for ICT competences as key transversal competence in TVET programmes.

### **6. Monitoring TVET in post-2015**

UNESCO is expected to play a leading role in coordinating the post-2015 Education agenda as well as in the monitoring its progress. A number of indicators have already been developed<sup>84</sup> to measure progress towards the achievement of the SDG4, and are expected to be finalized with the adoption of the final SDGs in fall 2015. UNESCO's TVET community and partners (including the UNEVOC Network) can play an important role in helping Member States assess and monitor their TVET systems (through the development of tools and capacity-building). Resulting information will be key not only for the monitoring of progress towards the international education agenda, but especially for the development of further reforms at the national level. Within this context, UNESCO could focus on:

- Further developing systems to capture indicators for monitoring developments in TVET
- Providing benchmarks to stimulate discussion between countries and exchange of good practices in TVET.

#### **3.3.6 Funding and partnership framework for the Strategy**

In order to be placed within a realistic setting, the Strategy should be budgeted and be accompanied by a fundraising partnership strategy, in order to show what UNESCO can do with its own available resources and what can be achieved when additional resources and partners are mobilised. An active fundraising and partnership campaign for TVET would at the same time draw increased attention to TVET. The TVET Strategy should clearly indicate what can be achieved with what means and also provide scenarios to demonstrate to Member States the need for additional resources. Thoughts could be given to positioning the UNESCO TVET community towards donors as an entity, highly capable of making an impact on TVET at global, (sub) regional and national levels together with its partners and networks.

#### **3.3.7 Presenting the new Strategy for TVET: communication and dissemination**

Stakeholders consulted during the evaluation largely agree that a new Strategy with different purposes and serving different audiences needs to be presented and disseminated differently. The new Strategy for TVET is expected to be formulated using language and illustrations that are more understandable and appealing to non UNESCO stakeholders (given that the current strategy is considered to be very technical and bureaucratic type of paper whose main clients were the Organization's Governing Bodies) to facilitate better marketing and advocacy (like EFA, ESD brands). Different formats tailored to the different types of audiences and uses could further strengthen its outreach and visibility.

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<sup>84</sup> See the [Technical Advisory Group Proposal: Thematic Indicators to Monitor the Post-2015 Education Agenda](#).

The document could be assembled in different parts. First, a strategy paper that targets both internal and external stakeholders should state what UNESCO, its constituencies, networks and partners will aim to achieve in the coming years through its work in TVET, and how will they will go about. This should be accompanied by an operational work plan, to define how UNESCO's organizational entities work together to achieve the objectives of the Strategy, and who will be accountable to whom. In addition, thoughts could be given to differentiating elements of the strategy in regional contexts in terms of objectives, themes, types of interventions, roles and responsibilities of TVET community members and external partners.



## Chapter 4 Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation results in a number of key findings and conclusions on UNESCO's work in TVET during the period of its Strategy for TVET (2010-2015). This final chapter provides suggestions for the way forward and recommendations on how to further improve UNESCO's strategy and work in TVET in the future.

### 4.1 Overall Conclusions

UNESCO's work in TVET is highly relevant given the Organization's mandate, global economic and social developments, and national needs. By having a humanistic and sustainable development mission, UNESCO clearly adds value compared to other organizations working in the area of TVET. The Organization also has a unique position: an authoritative normative role and a global mandate and outreach. Although UNESCO manages to do a lot with very limited resources, the evaluation found that the Organization should seek to optimise the employment of the limited (human) capacities within the TVET community and complement these with the potential of the Organization's networks and partnerships. The effectiveness and sustainability of UNESCO's interventions require consolidation and would benefit from clearer distribution of roles and responsibilities and more fruitful collaboration within the TVET community and with other stakeholders. The UNESCO Strategy for TVET (2010-2015) has supported the Organization in structuring its work internally, but it has so far been less useful in positioning its work and TVET at the global, regional and national levels.

The following is a summary of the key achievements that result from the present evaluation.

- UNESCO's work in TVET is highly relevant given the Organization's mandate, global economic and social developments, and national needs. In the period 2010-2015 UNESCO established itself as an authority in the field of TVET, notably through the Third International Congress on TVET and the resulting Shanghai Consensus. The setup of a UNESCO TVET community (informal network of education specialists with portfolios in TVET at Headquarters, at the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre and in the field) has proved to be very beneficial and as a whole has contributed to the strong positioning of UNESCO in this field.
- UNESCO's integrated approach to TVET extends beyond the economic goal of providing people with skills for work. It has shown global leadership in broadening concepts of TVET by bringing issues which are close to UNESCO's mandate, such as equity, social justice, lifelong learning and sustainable development, into countries' TVET reforms. This humanistic dimension clearly distinguishes UNESCO from other international actors working in TVET.
- UNESCO not only has a global mandate in TVET and authoritative normative role that extends to all stages of education, but it also manages and animates a unique global network: the UNEVOC Network of member institutions specialised in TVET, comprised of ministries, national TVET bodies, and research and training institutions at the national level, that is connecting practitioners, policy makers and experts working in TVET, and which is coordinated by the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre.
- Stakeholders at different levels (global, regional and national), acknowledge UNESCO's convening power. The evaluation found that UNESCO has been successful in bringing together international organizations that are active in TVET, in particular at the global level (such as through the Inter-Agency Group on TVET (IAG-TVET) and respective sub working groups on priority thematic areas) to cooperate on key issues and to produce joint publications.
- UNESCO's work in all three core areas of its TVET Strategy, as well as its approach to TVET are widely appreciated:
  - UNESCO's provision of policy advice was found to be relevant to most national contexts and its expertise was greatly appreciated at the national level. Capacity-building work, policy advice and policy reviews are in most cases feeding into current policy debates and/or developments.



- UNESCO's conceptual and normative work is seen as very valuable in helping Member States in setting up and improving their TVET systems. Key publications, conceptual clarification and normative instruments are among the areas where UNESCO has a clear added value.
- UNESCO's clearing-house function, mainly ensured through UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre, is highly appreciated by different stakeholder groups, among which are the UNEVOC Centres. In addition, the 2012 Third International Congress on TVET and the resulting Shanghai Consensus are well known among TVET policy-makers, and serve as a reference point for renewed policy awareness in the field.

A number of challenges were also identified in association with the key achievements above:

- UNESCO does a lot with limited resources, but relies on too few people, instead of achieving results increasingly in cooperation with its extended networks and partners, especially in light of current and future resource constraints. This may hamper the Organization's effectiveness and sustainability, especially at the country and regional levels.
- The potential of the UNESCO TVET community is yet to be fully explored as roles and responsibilities are not consistently understood by all individuals and entities. Furthermore, the role of the regional offices and the involvement of category 1 education institutes as well as that of UNESCO staff working in related thematic areas in the implementation of the Strategy have so far not been optimized.
- Managing a unique global UNEVOC Network is a key added value to extend UNESCO's outreach in Member States. Despite advances in revamping the Network since 2010, its potential is yet to be fully realized and sustained in practice. Challenges still include the mobilisation and increase of the activity level of a number of Centres and strengthening the limited organizational capacity to manage and mobilise the Centres by UNESCO entities working in TVET, especially at the regional level.
- The effectiveness and sustainability of UNESCO's activities at the country level are at times compromised by the lack of longer-term perspectives, planning and follow-through that envision the consolidation of results on a medium/longer-term, and the still limited institutional commitment and involvement of a wider array of actors and partners.
- Despite the increasing outreach and cooperation with organizations at all levels, at the regional and national levels, UNESCO should further strengthen its efforts to work together with other organizations active in TVET in following up on interventions and bringing UNESCO's agenda forward. In fact, these organizations are not always fully aware of UNESCO's type and level of activity in the same regions/countries.
- The UNESCO Strategy for TVET (2010-2015) has supported UNESCO in structuring and better organizing its work internally, but as a document it has so far been less useful as a way of communicating and advocating for the Organization's messages on TVET at the global, regional and national levels.

## 4.2 Recommendations

The evaluation clearly confirms that UNESCO should continue to play a major role in TVET in the future and this is to be shaped by the following dimensions:

- Firstly, the current global, regional and national trends and future socio-economic and environmental challenges (e.g. demography, migration, labour markets, technology, political landscape and climate change) and the challenges these create for TVET systems world-wide; and,
- Secondly, the attention given to TVET in the future global Education agenda (as confirmed in documents such as the Incheon declaration and the related SDG agenda) as a field to deal with these challenges, and the responsibility of UNESCO in contributing to the new Education agenda.

In order to play this key role effectively and to find an optimal way of using limited resources, by building on the achievements highlighted in this evaluation report and pursuing the recent ongoing reform processes towards improvements the evaluation recommends that UNESCO continue its work by aiming at the following results, taking into consideration the following suggestions for possible actions.

1) An organizational capacity (including adequate financial and human resources) further aligned with the needs for effectively implementing UNESCO's mandate in TVET in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. This includes a consolidated UNESCO TVET community with clear responsibilities and accountabilities for its individual entities towards the implementation of UNESCO's future Strategy for TVET.

- Clearly define roles and responsibilities of the members of the TVET community. While respecting institutional arrangements and existing reporting lines within UNESCO, consider improving accountability of members of the TVET community towards the future Strategy for TVET in contributing to joint work.
- Formally brand the TVET community and reach out to UNESCO Institutes and networks (UNEVOC, Chairs, Pôle de Dakar, etc.) to expand cooperation among them in various regions and subject areas.
- Organize regular (virtual meetings) and once a year a face-to-face meeting between TVET community members. These meetings can be used for information exchange, but especially to discuss strategic issues.
- Develop a shared knowledge management system to capture all UNESCO knowledge on TVET.
- Conduct a competence map of the TVET community and share it widely within the community as well as with partners and Member States so that specific requests can be handled by the most appropriate members.
- Allocate adequate financial and human resources in line with the declared level of priority for TVET.

2) A dynamic network of active UNEVOC Centres that further contribute to enhanced international cooperation, capacity-building and policy development in the Member States and in full cooperation with relevant UNESCO entities especially at the (sub)regional level by seeking greater outreach and increased opportunities for knowledge exchange, capacity development, and policy advice.

- Encourage membership in the UNEVOC Network of Centres that are able to actively engage and contribute to knowledge exchange and, possibly, the implementation of policy advice to national stakeholders. This requires not only clearer membership guidelines (as already established), but also active partner search and capacity building within the Network on how to implement TVET policies, support reform programmes and link with donor organizations. Capacity building can best be organized at the regional level, for instance through the regional UNEVOC cluster coordinators and the relevant UNESCO regional offices, as well as by involving other regional TVET organizations.
- Diversify the working languages within the UNEVOC Network in line with regional/sub regional needs.
- Strengthen the link between UNESCO's regional offices and the UNEVOC Centres in the (sub) regions and stimulate joint planning of interventions at the regional level. The regional offices could function as a knowledge hub for the UNEVOC Centres while the Centres could inform the regional offices of national developments, supported by knowledge management systems at the regional level and regular short newflashes on events/activities. This would require strengthening the human resources in TVET at regional level, both in the UNESCO field offices.

- Mobilise UNESCO Chairs working in TVET in linking up regional offices and UNEVOC Centres to more actively inform them about their research and ongoing work.
- Facilitate cooperation between UNEVOC Centres and the regional offices on (sub) regional issues (e.g. transnational qualifications frameworks, transversal skills).
- Seek alignment of region-specific themes and topics with the priorities of other (sub) regional bodies (e.g. ASEAN and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa).

3) Continued development of country- and increasingly regional-level interventions that are planned, designed, implemented and followed up in full alignment with the policy development stage in a country/region and embedded in the larger TVET policy debate to further strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of UNESCO's work.

- Develop a 'pathway approach' in the design, planning, implementation and follow-up of interventions. UNESCO should map and define the different stages of development of a country's TVET system and, at each stage, set different objectives that determine the required type and level of intervention.
- Potential synergies with other UNESCO interventions as well as those of other organizations should be sought, in order to optimise the efficiency and effectiveness of an intervention.
- Create linkages between UNESCO normative instruments and the pathway approach and its related interventions. This would contribute to increased consistency of interventions across countries, to the increased application of normative instruments at the country level, and to ensuring that interventions are recognised as "UNESCO interventions".
- Foster the impact of Policy Reviews at the country level, by considering the following:
  - Better integrating the Policy Review in a pathway approach that flows from conception to implementation of reforms: policy discussions, policy development, implementation (including building partnerships), pilot schemes, scaling-up of best practices that all lead to the reform of a TVET system.
  - Maximising participation and ownership of national stakeholders in the Policy Review process so that they commit to the resulting messages. This would also contribute to better tailoring the Policy Review process and its results to a country context.
  - Complementing the (so far primarily analytical) Policy Review with a more operational tool that shows the sequence of steps to take and different (current or potential future) roles of stakeholders to be involved in TVET reform. Stakeholder self-assessments can be a tool to establish a basis for discussion and accountability at the national level.
  - Developing a partnership approach with other donors and organizations. When the Policy Review is seen as a national initiative (supported by UNESCO), it is more likely that other donors would identify elements and recommendations they can contribute to. The involvement of partners and donors from the start would be beneficial to create commitment for implementation of the recommendations.
  - Establishing a follow-up process as an integral part of the Policy Review intervention, including through interviews and/or visits in regular intervals, in order to keep the dialogue and process that has been initiated alive, as well as to gather feedback on the progress and challenges in the implementation of recommendations.

4) Inspiring, well recognized and effective normative instruments that – with the help of UNESCO and other development partners – and following the ongoing revision are translated into regional and national TVET reform processes.

In order to increase impact, UNESCO needs to further develop its normative work beyond the conception phase:

- Focus on helping Member States in implementing the normative instruments. Following the adoption of the revised Recommendation on TVET that is foreseen in autumn 2015, UNESCO's normative work, its messages and potential uses need to be clearly explained and communicated to different audiences, be they regional or national. The normative instruments' provisions need to be made understandable and operational in order to "speak" to everyone concerned. UNESCO should establish a clear brand name for the revised Recommendation and take advantage of the momentum created by the 'Shanghai process'. Clear communication will be key to avoid misunderstanding and duplication between the revised Recommendation and the Shanghai Consensus and its follow-up.
- Develop tools and practical guidelines for the implementation to support countries in defining what the normative instruments mean at the regional and country levels. The lessons learned from UNESCO's experience in working on reforming different TVET systems should feed into a practical guide on the reform of TVET systems and be clearly linked to the normative instruments. Such a guide could include:
  - references to/ indicators of different stages of development of countries TVET systems;
  - challenges that national TVET systems face;
  - possible pathways for improvement;
  - different stages of implementation (policy discussions, policy development, implementation (including building partnerships), pilot schemes, scaling-up of best practices; and finally, effectively TVET system reforms);
  - preconditions for effective implementation;
  - enabling factors, preconditions and challenges experienced in implementing policies;
  - suggestions for realistic planning of reforms;
  - links to good practice compendia; and,
  - an indication of potential donor organizations and networks.
- Involve UNEVOC Centres in developing and using the practical guide to support national authorities in reforming TVET systems.
- Establish extrabudgetary funding mechanisms dedicated to implementing the normative instruments at country-level and regional level.

5) In addition to the partnerships already built at global, regional and national levels, partners and networks that closely committed to UNESCO's mandate and are willing and available to work with UNESCO by taking mutual ownership of countries' TVET reforms in a comprehensive and sustainable way.

- Adopt a networking and partnership approach towards the transformation of TVET.
- Continue cooperation with other international organizations in the context of the IAG-TVET and jointly develop and communicate strong messages on TVET related issues.
- Develop partnerships at regional and sub-regional levels between key actors in TVET. UNESCO is uniquely positioned to stimulate the emergence of (sub) regional networks and convene stakeholders at this level. Link up with existing regional networks (ASEAN, RECs, etc.).
- Seek cooperation agreements with (other UN and donor) organizations that conduct projects on TVET in the regions and countries where UNESCO is present in order to

participate in ongoing and future projects and to increase the potential for cross-fertilisation.

- Increase national stakeholders' commitment and ownership of UNESCO interventions for example by:
  - Involving national stakeholders interventions from the start: engaging in joint planning will ensure that intermediate results are sustainable and embedded in follow-up actions;
  - Engaging national stakeholders in the implementation of interventions, and developing mechanisms for follow-up and accountability; and,
  - Drawing upon UNESCO's key role of bringing different stakeholders together at the national level.
- Establish an external advisory/sounding board of key experts in which employers, civic organizations, and other stakeholders in TVET to reflect on current issues and UNESCO TVET initiatives from their perspectives, highlighting good practices, and providing guidance. Its members could also reach out to broader networks.
- Pursue and formalize a common or aligned work programme with the ILO on TVET. The TVET advisory/ sounding board could be jointly governed by UNESCO and the ILO to emphasise the aligned work programme between the two. Synergies with WHO, FAO and IFAD and other UN system entities could also be explored.
- Encourage UNEVOC Centres to liaise more with employers and employer organizations by making this a key condition for being a UNEVOC Centre.
- Support national TVET authorities in including employer organizations in their governance mechanisms.

6) As already planned, a well communicated new Strategy for TVET that consolidates UNESCO's visibility and role in the field of TVET by highlighting the Organization's unique vision for TVET, in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, and specifying how UNESCO, together with its networks and partners, will operationalize and fund it.

- Develop a renewed UNESCO Strategy for TVET to provide a framework for the above-mentioned suggestions. The Strategy shall be a tool to better position TVET both within UNESCO and the global education agenda.
- Use the Strategy to communicate the Organization's vision for the contribution of TVET to the proposed SDG4 as well as other proposed SDGs, and as an opportunity to differentiate UNESCO from other actors working in TVET. Outline a roadmap for the achievement of this vision, jointly with partners and networks. It is important that the vision explicitly emanates from UNESCO's Member States (i.e. is based on a consultative process). The approach for TVET should reflect UNESCO's humanistic principles and address different target groups.
- Formulate operational objectives that are realistic and measurable, unlike the vision, which can be aspirational. Develop an intervention logic (pathway) to describe in what ways UNESCO will work towards outcomes and thus how and by which means it aims to achieve the operational objectives.
- Define actions and interventions at the global, regional and national levels, considering their impact at the various levels. The work at the regional level could facilitate a smooth transition between the global and national levels by identifying what lessons can be learned from the different country level interventions and extracting global level messages relevant for national stakeholders.
- Encourage ownership of the Strategy by all relevant entities and partners (i.e. all members of the TVET community, as well as UNESCO's key networks, such as the UNEVOC Network and UNESCO Chairs), in order to maximise its outreach. If the UNEVOC Network is empowered to function as a main player implementing UNESCO's Strategy for TVET, its members would be more inclined to actively engage in the Network and participate in joint activities with the TVET community. In addition, the Strategy should provide entry points for other organizations and stakeholders to contribute to objectives.

- Identify and communicate one or two focus areas as UNESCO's flagship initiatives that can obtain high visibility and brand the work in TVET at the global, regional and national levels. One possible option would be to focus on quality of TVET teachers and trainers, an area with a high potential for impact in TVET quality.
- Develop a budgetary framework including a fundraising strategy, in order to show what UNESCO can achieve with available resources and what can be achieved if additional resources and partners are mobilised. The UNESCO TVET community should be presented as one entity to donors.
- Establish a well-articulated monitoring and evaluation framework that allows for the measuring and demonstrating of results.
- Put in place quality monitoring tools to measure progress towards the indicated objectives so that the Organization can communicate on results achieved.
- Formulate, package and disseminate the Strategy document according to its different purposes and audiences, by using language that is more appealing to non UNESCO stakeholders to facilitate better marketing and advocacy.