

The COTVET Quarterly Newsletter

SKILLS

ADVOCATE

Second Quarter Edition



Dr. Jeanette Burmester of GIZ and Mr. Sampson Damptey Tetey of COTVET, signing the agreement.

COTVET & GIZ TO PILOT MODERNIZED APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM

Together with GIZ, COTVET is implementing the Ghana Skills Development Initiative with the aim to improve skills development in the informal sector. By the end of the year, a modernized apprenticeship system will be piloted in the garment, construction, electronics, cosmetology and automotive sectors in 3 pilot regions. The structure of this pilot apprenticeship system has been agreed upon in a Memorandum of Understanding between COTVET and GSDI:

The approach foresees that apprentices in the informal sector will attend structured courses at a selected TVET school in addition to the skills training they receive by their Masters/Madams. The content of the training is based on national Competency-based Training (CBT)- Standards to assure quality and comparability.

In the last months, the standards have been adapted to informal sector needs, and unit specifications and teaching materials are being developed. About 20 % of the 3 years apprenticeship will be delivered by the schools, 80 % remain within the workplace.

The trade associations (TAs) representing the informal sector businesses, as well as the TVET schools are key partners for the implementation of this pilot approach. Agreements with 17 pilot schools and 10 trade associations have also been signed. COTVET and GSDI have started implementing comprehensive capacity building measures to prepare both trade associations and schools to fulfill their new roles and responsibilities in apprenticeship training.

NEWS IN BRIEF

BOARD APPROVES MANUALS

The COTVET Board under the Chairmanship of Dr. Dominic Pealoleon the 18th and 19th of April, 2013 gave approval for the adoption and implementation of ten CBT manuals and documents to support the operationalization of the Council's Legislative Instrument (L.I.2195).

As part of the approval process, the manuals were presented and discussed with stakeholders at validation workshops organized by the Council on 13th February and 10th April respectively.

The stakeholders who participated in the validation workshop were representatives from some Universities, Polytechnics, Technical and Vocational Institutes (public and private), Trade Associations, professional bodies and industry. Others also came from policy making bodies and regulatory bodies in education, training and employment.

Inputs from the stakeholders' workshops were used to revise the manuals. The revised manuals and documents were presented to and discussed with the Board standing committees and some key staff of COTVET Secretariat at a two day workshop held on the 3rd and 4th of April, 2013. Recommendations from the standing committees were also factored into finalizing the documents before they were forwarded to the Board for approval.

The approved manuals are;

- Manual for the registration and accreditation of awarding bodies
- Manual for the registration and accreditation of training providers
- Manual for the development of CBT curriculum
- Blueprint for the National TVET Qualifications Framework
- Approval of occupational standards and qualifications
- Registration of occupational standards on the NTVETQF
- Manual for the registration and accreditation of facilitators
- Manual for the registration and accreditation of assessors
- Manual for the registration and accreditation of verifiers
- Centre approval to offer CBT programmes

CONFERENCE ON QUALITY EDUCATION

The Council participated in a conference on quality education, on the 11th and 12th of June, in Ho, organized by the Freidrich Erbert Stifung Foundation, and supported by the German Chamber of Commerce and the GSDI.

Participants were from the Ministry for Education, Ministry for Employment and Labour Relations, Ministry for Trade and Industry, Ministry for Private Sector Development. There were also representatives from TVET training institutions, trade associations, and the Ghana Employers Association. Mr. Seth Asamoah of COTVET, delivered a presentation on "Challenges and Status Quo of Tertiary education in Ghana", while George Ferguson Laing, delivered a presentation on "Enhancing the Image of Vocational Training in Ghana".



Hon. Rashid Pelpou, Minister of State for Private Sector Development, addressing participants.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SCHEME

The Publicity and Policy departments have put together a programme to strengthen Guidance and Counseling in basic schools in the country. This is part of efforts to implement the recommendations of the COTVET/City and Guilds commissioned report about general perceptions of TVET in Ghana. The objective of the scheme is to improve perceptions of TVET among students, teachers, parents and guardians. Additionally, it is expected that the programme will expose the target audiences to the opportunities available in the TVET sector, thereby encouraging more youth to choose a career in TVET.

The initial stage of the scheme includes presentations to Guidance and Counseling coordinators and heads of primary and JHS schools.

NON-FORMAL APPRENTICESHIPS FOR RURAL YOUTH – QUESTIONS THAT NEED TO BE ASKED

Across developing countries, skills development and technical training are identified as means to increase youth's future employability in decent work and eliminate the worst forms of child labour amongst those below 18 years. In West Africa, the entry requirements and costs of attending technical college exclude children of poor families from pursuing formal training. This does not mean, however, that young people and their parents are oblivious to the potential of developing technical skills as a means to break the cycle of poverty; the desire to enter non-formal apprenticeships has risen dramatically in the past decade, as has the opportunity to join one of the numerous workshops in the cottage industries.

The dynamics of non-formal apprenticeships vary significantly. In the coastal countries of West Africa, for example, it is common for apprentices to pay fees ranging from US\$ 55-312, whereas in the Sahelian countries apprenticeships are mostly mediated through social networks. Payment or not, the apprenticeships are similar in their informal arrangement and resemblance of a socialisation process or an initiation rather than professional training. Policies addressing youth's skills development and technical training seek to improve and standardise these non-formal apprenticeships to ensure that the transfer of skills is adequate and happens within an appropriate time frame. The focus is thus on the provision of technical training, but very little is known about why and how youth enter certain trades or about differences in training opportunities that may exist between rural and urban youth. Based on multi-sited ethnography of young people's migration from rural Burkina Faso to the capital and neighbouring countries, this piece examines the decision-making surrounding rural youths' entry into non-formal apprenticeships. For them, relocation is a precondition for learning other skills than farming, trade or being a blacksmith, cobbler, etc.

Amongst policy-makers, it is believed that skills development and technical training for children of the rural poor should aim at increasing their employability in rural areas but does this idea correspond with the aspirations of the rural population? In rural Burkina Faso, both adults and young people consider non-formal apprenticeships as a path to social mobility and a remedy for broken dreams when children have to drop out of school against their will but, similar to school education, apprenticeships raise aspirations of off-farm work that offers better prospects for the future than straddling various livelihood activities in remote villages. Additionally, for parents, apprenticeships are a way to deter youth in their teens from becoming labour migrants and thus serve as a protective mechanism.

"The father of an 18-year old tailoring apprentice explained how he had arranged an apprenticeship for his son in the capital, Ouagadougou, three years earlier when he saw that the boy would not accept to just farm and was likely to suddenly leave for Côte d'Ivoire like so many other boys. "He was too young to do hard physical work and would either suffer because of the work or because he didn't earn enough to eat well."

Not all youth appreciate this protection however. Becoming an apprentice implies working for three to four years without earning an income, after which a measly income can be reaped from work under the patron. As labour migrants, youth can earn an income - albeit small - from the day

they find employment or engage in informal services such as shoe-shining, transporting goods, itinerant trade, etc. Moreover, an apprenticeship entails acquiescing to a subordinate position just at a time when many youths seek a degree of autonomy through migration. Hence, youth are not always interested in non-formal skills development and training

How youth become apprentices is another question about which little is known. It is assumed that young people convey to adults what they would like to do, whereupon they will start an apprenticeship in that trade but, in fact, this does not fit well with the way in which social relations and labour usually work in the informal economy of West Africa. Here people are put to work due to their position in the network of kin rather than to their skills and interests. It is thus important to raise questions about who has a say in choosing the trade and the degree to which young people can pursue their own interests. The story recounted by the tailoring apprentice is illustrative:

'My grandfather decided I should learn mechanics and my father that I should learn tailoring. I liked my grandfather's idea but it is difficult to find an apprenticeship as a mechanic here in Ouagadougou. Some require fees to be paid making it more difficult. When I first came, I asked relatives to help me find a garage but when they didn't have the time to search on my behalf and I had no luck within the first month, I resigned myself to tailoring. I learned tailoring from a relative; so no fees were required.'

Young people usually rely on relatives or friends to take them on as apprentices or to mediate an apprenticeship and guarantee their interest in learning the trade. Here rural youth are disadvantaged compared to urban youth because they rely on links between their relatives in the village and possible patrons or on the help of urban-based relatives who may be approached by youth from different branches of the family. Another issue is that within the extended family, several people may seek to assert their views on what is best for a child, and while this may create more opportunities and thus give a young person an individual choice, it may also create conflicts. As a result, relatives sometimes shy away from assisting a young person in order to avoid accusations of disrespecting a senior family member who had another vision for the youth. Finally, the number of small one-person workshops has mushroomed in urban areas, implying that it has become easier to find a relative or a patron willing to expand the business with apprentices. However, not all patrons have adequate technical skills to impart or an established circle of clients to provide work through which apprentices can learn.

Young people's access to non-formal apprenticeships thus depends on their family's economic and/or social endowment. Whether their future employability really is improved or their prospects for starting their own workshop successfully depends on the quality of their technical training and the interest they muster in learning the trade, especially if they would rather have done something different.

 Thorsen, D., (2011) 'Non-Formal Apprenticeships for Rural Youth – Questions that Need to be Asked', in NORRAG NEWS, Towards a New Global World of Skills Development? TVET's turn to make its Mark, No.46, September 2011, pp. 71-73, available: <http://www.norrag.org>

ENTREPRENEURS DIALOGUE

The Council participated in a Europe/Africa entrepreneur's Dialogue for the youth, on the 26th of June 2013, organized by the KFW and the University of Ghana. The conference was addressed by former German Chancellor, Horst Koehler.



Apprentices in a group picture with COTVET and GSDI officials



Egyptian rep, flanked by two youth reps



Dr. Burmester, GSDI



Former German Chancellor and fellow speaker



GSDI experts facilitate a group session



High Table



Kenyan delegate



Participants in a chat.

FIRST BATCH OF BENEFICIARIES OF THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND (SDF)

No.	NAME OF GRANTEE	GRANT AMOUNT	PURPOSE
1	Precious Minerals Marketing Company (PMMC)	GHC 584, 263.00	To train staff in diamond polishing and cutting to serve the high demand in West Africa
2	Kwabre Pig Farmers Association	GHC 68,150.00	To train 30 members on the preparation of cheap feed package/diet using locally available agro industrial by-product to increase the yield of pigs.
3	Ainoo – Ansah Farms	GHC 145,516.35	To acquire innovative technology to expand its production capacity by installing and operating a Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) for the hatchery of tilapia and other fresh water fish, train technical and management personnel in operation and management of the new technology
4	CSIR – Animal Research Institute (ARI)	GHC 1, 606,969.42	To address challenges facing the pig industry: inability to provide or the unavailability of cheap but quality feed for pig production; unavailability of high productive breeds; limited farmer know-how in breeding and good management practices, feed formulation and feeding regime; lack of linkages between producers and markets.
5	Apam Canoe Cooperative Fishermen Society	GHC 112,329.00	To fund the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills training for 210 members
6	Cotton Farmers Division (CFD) of GAWU of Ghana TUC	GHC 51,030.00	To train 40 members in efficient agronomic practices, including proper fertilizer application and post-harvest handling of cotton
7	Ghana National Association of Garages – Nkoranza	GHC 30,816.00	To train 50 master technicians in automobile engine and electrical servicing, electronic computer system and customer care.
8	Ghana National Association of Garages – Weija, Accra	GHC 90,653.85	To train 150 members in Automobile Engine and Electrical Servicing, Electronic Computer System and Auto Diagnostics
9	KNUST Jewellery Design and Technology Centre	GHC 1,542,300.00	To set up a centre for developing and training practitioners in the jewellery industry in Computer Aided Jewellery designing technology in jewellery production and train an initial 600..
10	Afigya Kwabere Pig Farmers Association	GHC 46,060.20	To train 42 members in improved swine management practices and disease prevention and control
11	Our Lady of Mercy Community Services	GHC52, 875.00	To provide employable skills training to 60 school dropouts and reformed commercial sex workers and 90 artisans.
12	Mushroom Growers and Exporters Association of Ghana	GHC96,862.50	To upgrade the skills of 40 members in mushroom spawn production and cultivation, post-harvest handling, packaging and marketing.
13	Regional Maritime University	GHC 950,000.00	To develop and deliver short oil and gas courses in Engine Room Operations, Subsea Engineering and Pneumatics.
14	Ejisu Juaben Poultry Farmers Association	GHC 47, 185.20	To train 40 members on how to apply RE3-DFM technology in poultry production to enhance their productivity by improving growth rate and efficiency of egg production and feed utilisation.
15	Ghana National Association of Garages – Ketu South	GHC 84,168.00	To provide structured training in entrepreneurship, creativity and marketing, records keeping and financial management for 180 members.
16	Cedi Beads Industry	GHC 42,705.00	To undertake training in packaging, labelling, system design, quality control, occupational health and safety and entrepreneurship.
17	National Association of Beauticians and Hairdressers, Dormaa Ahenkro	GHC66, 894.00	To train 50 members in the use of hot curler, micro hair strands extension techniques, hair fusion, facial treatment, entrepreneurship and customer care.
18	Progressive Electronic Technicians Association	GHC 90,000.00	To build the capacity and upgrade the skills of 60 master electronic technicians in computer hardware, software, networking and related skills.

FIRST BATCH OF BENEFICIARIES OF THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND (SDF) CONT'D.

No.	NAME OF GRANTEE	GRANT AMOUNT	PURPOSE
19	Cluster of Cape Coast Soap Makers Association	GHC 42,351.00	To train 25 members in soap making, fragrance application techniques, entrepreneurship and small business management.
20	Ghana Telecom University College	GHC 396,000.00	To support GTUC to develop an innovative training concept and improve the existing forensics laboratory to train professionals of the security services, financial institutions, etc in cyber crime and computer forensics.
21	Sleek Garments Export	GHC 592,515.00	To train 400 staff in quality control, coaching and mentoring, packaging and finishing, production planning, facility and equipment layout, logistics and shipping, and merchandise marketing.
22	Wood Cluster Initiative	GHC 119,466.00	To undertake training in AutoCad, IT, MS Office, Email and Internet and also develop and launch a web portal for the company.
23	Agric Commercial Servicing Limited	GHC 272,855.00	To train staff and out-grower farmers to adopt modified greenhouse technology for the cultivation of fresh tomatoes, cucumber, pepper and cabbage. Also train farmers to adopt 'bio char' produced from agricultural waste to reduce soil acidity.
24	Biotechnology and Nuclear Agriculture Research Centre, Ghana Atomic Energy Commission	GHC 311, 107.41	To set up a technology centre to transfer protein hydroxylates bait, a technology used in controlling fruit fly menace on farms, for use by mango farmers and other fruit/vegetable farmers in reducing fly insect invasion.
25	Brong Ahafo Moringa Farmers Association	GHC 90,801	To train 429 members in processing Moringa leaves and seeds into soap, powder, body lotion making and oil extraction), Start-Up Business workshops
26	Ejisu-Juaben Pig Farmers & Processors Association	GHC 67,500	To train 200 members on technology to improve performance of pigs on their farms, using 4 on-farm demonstrations. Also to develop sound and ethical business and management practices among its members.
27	Volta Region Association of Beekeepers	GHC 144,360	To improve technical beekeeping skills, build the business management skills of 1,313 of its members
28	International Network for Bamboo and Rattan	GHC 227,520	To provide training for technology and skills improvement in bamboo and rattan production.
	Osudoku Agricultural Cooperative Society Ltd	GHC 57,600.00	To train 250 members on improved agronomic practices, safe use of agrochemicals, efficient post harvest management technology, appropriate ways of selecting mills and product packaging
29	National Association of Garages, Wenchi	GHC 30, 816.00	To upgrade the skills of 50 members in automobile engine and electrical servicing, electronic computer systems in auto repairs and engine repairs
30	Persol Systems Limited	GHC 327,758.10	To enhance the skills and expertise of staff in Agile Development Methodologies and best practices as well as Mobile and Hosted application development and deployment

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LAST WORD



Tonyi Senayah receiving the GPA young entrepreneur awards in 2011

Tonyi Senayah is CEO of Horseman Shoes, a Ghanaian based footwear manufacturing company which recently benefited from funding from the Skills Development Fund. He speaks to the Skills Advocate about doing business in Ghana as a young entrepreneur.

Skills Advocate (SA): Please give us a brief description of your business.

Tonyi Senayah (TS): Horseman shoes is a Ghanaian footwear manufacturing company that produces men's dress and casual shoes, footwear for women and also school sandals and safety shoes. Our customers have to pre-order for us to produce.

SA: What are some of the challenges you face as a young person, running a business in Ghana?

TS: There are many challenges including the acquisition of office space, which comes at a very high price. This acts as an entry barrier for many would be business people. Also, many young business people need capacity building, in terms of business advisory services, and how to prepare business plans and proposals. I entered business fueled only by my passion, I have had to learn most of what I know now, from hard experience.

SA: Before you applied to the Skills Development Fund (SDF), what had been your main sources of finance?

TS: Mostly informal loans from family and friends.

SA: How did you hear about the fund?

TS: From a radio advertisement, and also from a friend who encouraged me to apply.

SA: What challenges in your business is the Fund going to address?

TS: We are looking at our finishing, to improve it even further. For this, we are bringing in an international expert to help. Also we will be investing part of the fund into marketing and customer care, to make us internationally competitive.

SA: How are you competing with international products?

TS: The quality of our shoes, and the competitive way it has been priced makes it easy for our customers to pick us. There is a marked difference between quality hand-made shoes, and cheap imports. The Ghanaian consumer is proud to patronize Ghana made goods, as long as the quality is good.

SA: What advice do you have for other indigenous business people?

TS: Never compromise on quality.