NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK (2020-2030)

Part IV- Volume IV

National Policy on Technical and Vocational Education and Training



National Education Commission

July 2021

**Nurturing a**

**Productive and Caring Citizen**

**National Education Policy**

**Framework (2020-2030)**

Part IV- Volume IV

**National Policy on Technical and Vocational Education and Training**



National Education Commission  
**Sri Lanka  
July 2021**

**National Policy on Technical and Vocational Education and Training**

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**Preface**

The National Education Commission (NEC), established by the National Education Act No. 19 of 1991, functions as the apex policy formulation body to make recommendations to the President on education policy and on a wide spectrum of matters connected with education reforms and development.

The NEC in performing its mandate has commenced the formulation of NEPF- 2020-2030 in October 2020 and the task was completed by the of July 2021. The composite version of NEPF- 2020-2030 covers 8 sub-sectors of education, namely early childhood care and education (Volume I), general education (Volume II), higher education (Volume III), technical and vocational education (Volume IV), pirivena education (Volume V), special education (Volume VI), nonformal education (Volume VII), and international schools (Volume VIII).

Volume IV of NEPF (2020-2030) presents the National Policy on Technical and Vocation Education and Training which shall lay the foundation to realize the long-term vision of education – “A Society of Productive and Caring Citizens”. Having considered the issues highlighted in the Status Review of the TVET sector given in Section 1, the policy planning team has identified 8 core areas to frame policy proposals and recommended activities. These core areas include, i) Access and Enrollment, ii) Qualification Framework, National Competency Standards and Curricula, iii) Training Facilities, Learners and Learning Environment, iv) Quality Assurance, v) Human Resources Development and Management, vi) Financing, vii) Regulation and Governance and viii) Labour Market Information, Management Information System and Research

The National Education Commission hopes these policy proposals and recommended strategies will facilitate the Ministry of Education, State Ministry of State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research & Innovations, and the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission together with Department of Technical Education, Vocation Training Authority and National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority, and the affiliated training institution to develop and implement reforms and development plans to improve the quality and standards of Technical and Vocation Education and Training.

Prof. Harischandra Abeygunawardena

Chairman

National Education Commission

July 31st 2021

**Abbreviation**

ADB : Asian Development Bank

CBT : Competency Based Training

CGCS : Career Guidance and Counseling Center

Ceylon : German Technical Training Institute (CGTTI)

CSR : Corporate Social Responsibility

DCSS : Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka

DTET : Department of Technical Education and Training

ED : Entrepreneurship Development

ETF : Employees Trust Fund

EPF : Employee Provident Fund

FLM : Flexible Learning Mode

HR : Human Resources

ICT : Information and Communication Technology

ILO : International Labour Organization

ISSC : Industry Sector Skills Council

LMI : Labour Market Information

MIS : Management Information System

NAITA : National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority

NITAC : National Industrial Training advisory committees

NCS : National Competency Standards

NDES : National Diploma in Engineering Science

NEC : National Education Commission

NEET : Not in Education, Employment and Training

NGO : Non-Governmental Organization

NVQF : National Vocational Qualification Framework

NVTI : National Vocational Training Institute

OUSL : Ocean University of Sri Lanka

OJT : On the Job Training

PWD : Persons with Disabilities

QIS : Quality Improvement System

QMS : Quality Management System

QA : Quality Assurance

ROI : Return on Investment

RPL : Recognition of Prior Learning

SOR : Scheme of Recruitment

SSDP : Skills Sector Development Programme

TVEC : Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission

TVET : Technical and vocational education and training

TITP : Training Institute of Technology Professionals

SEPI : Self Employment Promotional Initiative

SME : Small and Medium Enterprise

UoVT : University of Vocational Technology

VET : Vocational Education and Training

VTA : Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka

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# Status Review

## 1.1 Introduction

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) has become a priority in global development agenda as it prepares the youth with job specific skills for industrial, manufacturing and service sectors, and helps to improve productivity of the workforce and provide marketable skills for the youth.

Formal TVET, as we know of it today, had its beginnings in Sri Lanka in 1893 when the first Technical College was established at Maradana to train skilled workers needed for the development of physical infrastructure such as laying of railway lines and construction of roads.

The period after independence (1948) saw a renewed interest in the development of skills required for achieving the development objectives of a newly emergent nation. Accordingly, actions had been taken to establish many training institutions with mandates for training of youth and industry employees and apprentices. However, this expansion did not focus on improving quality and relevance of training provisions. Recognizing the importance of quality and relevance of TVET training provisions, from 1990 onwards attempts have been made to co-ordinate different training institutions to deliver a quality and market relevant training programmes in accordance with a nationally agreed plan. One notable outcome of this plan was the establishment of the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC), the regulatory body in TVET sector in 1990 and establishment of a separate Ministry for the TVET in 1994. These progressive developments have led to the formulation and adoption of the National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF) which provide guidelines and standards on many TVET activities including curriculum development, competency-based training, assessment and quality assurance. The NVQF facilitates the TVET trainees to move up progressively from certificate levels training to earn market recognized qualifications such as vocational diplomas and degrees. This upward mobility was further made possible by establishing of nine Colleges of Technology and six University Colleges to conduct NVQ Level 5 & 6 National Diploma courses, and then establishing the University of Vocational Technology (UoVT) to offer NVQ Level 7-degree programmes. In parallel, the TVEC and TVET institutions have introduced many programmes for upgrading the skills of workers already employed in the industry.

Despite these quantitative and qualitative improvements in the TVET sector, the industrial, manufacturing and service sectors of the national economy are still suffering from dearth of skilled workers. On the other hand, there has been a rising youth unemployment, and yet many industries to overcome the shortages of skilled labour have resorted to import workers from India, Bangladesh and China[[1]](#footnote-1). Therefore, TVET sector is in dire need of reforms backed by well formulated policies and strategies in order to address the sector-specific issues including bridging the demand for and supply of craft and middle level technical and vocational skills.

## 1.2 Current Organizational Structure of TVET

At present, the State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Training, Research and Innovation (here after referred as the is mainly responsible for the regulation and development of TVET system in Sri Lanka. The institutions operating under the State Ministry are listed below.

1. **Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC)**

Regulatory, standards setting, quality assurance and qualification awarding body of TVET

1. **Public Sector Training Providers with primary responsibility in TVET**
   * **Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET)** with a network of 30 technical colleges conducting NVQ Level 1-4 courses and 9 Colleges of Technology to conduct NVQ Level 5 & 6 courses including NVQ Level 1 – 4 Courses
   * **National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA)** with island wide network of inspectorates to conduct apprenticeship programmes with 25 district offices and 4 National Level Training Institutions and about 70 apprenticeship training centers
   * **Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka (VTA)** with a network of 295 training centers with annual enrollment of about 20,000 students.
   * **Ceylon – German Technical Training Institute (CGTTI)** Leading Automobile Training Institute of the country
   * **University of Vocational Technology**

Provider graduate level programmes for middle level vocational qualification holders

* + **Ocean University of Sri Lanka**

University with a vocational training institute conducting programmes in marine engineering and aquatic resource technology

* + **Sri Lanka Institute of Printing**

Leading printing training institute of the country

1. **Public Sector Industry lead bodies that have established and operate sectorial training centers.**

* National Youth Services Council (NYSC) with an island wide network of TVET centers in parallel to youth development programmes.
* Construction Equipment Training Center (CETRAC) of Construction Industry Development Authority
* Sri Lanka Institute of Textile and Apparel
  + Gem and Jewelry Research and Development Authority
  + Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management
  + Schools of Agriculture of the Department of Agriculture
  + Training centers of the Department of Animal Production and Health
  + Mahapola Training Center of the Sri Lanka Port Authority
  + Sri Lanka – German Railway Training Institute
  + National Youth Corp

**d. Private and NGO Sector Training Providers**

There is a large number of private TVET institutions operated on fee levying basis. However, majority of them are in the ICT sector. In addition, there is a widespread network of NGO sector operated TVET institutions.

## 1.3 Salient Features of TVET Sector

* According to the dashboard of TVEC website, [www.tvec.gov.lk](http://www.tvec.gov.lk) (as at 02.04.2021), Sri Lanka has 2,946 training centers registered with TVEC, of which 1,146 centers of valid registration and 1,800 centers with expired registration.
* There are 1,097 public sector TVET centers with 74 NAITA centers, 295 VTA centers, 39 colleges of DTET and 54 centers of NYSC.
* According to the TVEC Labour Market Bulletin[[2]](#footnote-2), 250,690 trainees have been enrolled to TVET courses in 2019 with 142,906 males and 107,784 females. In the same year 170,080 have completed the courses with 97,757 males and 78,323 females. The completed number includes the enrollments in previous years in courses with more than 1 year duration. This number include both training of school leavers as well as skill upgrading training of already employed persons.
* Number of school leavers enrolled and completion in public sector vocational training institutes in 2019 was about 161,000 and 111,000 respectively. This may include part-time short-term training programme too.
* For courses of the construction sector, enrolment of males and female students in 2019 was 29,004 and 5,500 respectively. That of completion was 19,943 and 2,776 respectively.
* For courses of the Whole and retail sale, repair of motor vehicle and motor cycle, enrollment and completion of male and female students was 13,737 and 1,294 respectively. That of completion was 7,649 and 881 respectively.
* NVQ framework with 7 levels of qualifications was established in 2004 and Sri Lanka was the first South Asian country to establish a qualification framework for TVET sector.
* In 2019, total number of 78,007 NVQ certificates have been issued including 5,210 NVQ Certificates to industry employees through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) approach. Here the number of NVQ certification is much lesser than the number completed because all TVET courses have not been converted to NVQ Framework yet.
* TVEC in cooperation with NAITA and UoVT has developed 278 NVQ Level 1 to 4 NCS and CBT Curricula and 68 NVQ level 5 & 6 NCS and CBT curricula.

# Current Status, Issues and Gaps

The TVET sector as explained above is a widely distributed across the country, consisting of State and Private Sector training providers and regulated by the apex regulatory body, the TVEC. As implied, the sector is very diverse in terms of size, resources and quality of TVET training operations, focus of training, target populations or learners, and the standards and relevance of training or qualifications offered. Therefore, a rational approach is made to describe the sector and issues and gaps in 8 core areas, i) Access and Enrollment, ii) Qualification Framework, National Competency Standards and Curricula, iii) Training Facilities, Learners and Learning Environment, iv) Quality Assurance, v) Human Resources Development and Management, vi) Financing, vii) Regulation and Governance and viii) Information Management and Research.

## Access and Enrollment

Despite having well widespread network of TVET training institutions operated by the State and private Sectors, most of the courses offered, particularly in State run TVET institutions are operated below the training capacity due to inadequate enrollments and high dropout rate. This phenomenon appears to emanate from many limitations and reasons. Though, many interventions, as described below have been put in place to address this issue, more concerted efforts appear to be required to harness the TVET resource base, and training of school leavers to match the emerging skilled human resource needs of the country.

It has been estimated that due to various reasons, learning difficulties, examination-oriented education, poverty, inadequate guidance and counseling, as shown in Figure. 1, well over 245,000 children drop out annually from general education system at different points. From one perspective, this particular group is valuable human resource pool in informal system to meet the labour demand of informal system of the economy. However, this group also needs skills to engage in more productive employments. Out of this group, approximately about 72% may join with public and private training system while around 28% may get accumulated into ‘not in education, employment or in training’ (NEET) group. They are considered as an additional potential candidate annually available to absorb into TVET sector to train to cater for the rising labour market demands.

**Figure 1: School leavers at different stages at School (Based on 2004 entry age cohort)**



*Source adapted from Public Investment Programme[[3]](#footnote-3) ,2017-2020*

#### **2.1.1 Career Guidance and Counseling Service**

One of the interventions initiated to address the under-enrollment into TVET programmes and high drop-out rates was the establishment of network of Career Guidance and Counseling Centers (CGCCs), covering both the TVET sector and general education. These centers are expected to provide a range of services including career guidance, career counseling, job placement and provision of information materials. The Ministry-in-charge of the TVET (here after referred as the Ministry), in 2004 had issued a Guideline for Institutionalization of Career Guidance and Counseling Services in the TVET Sector.

Accordingly, 52 career guidance and counseling centers (CGCSs) have been established in 23 districts covering all provinces in the TVET sector, to provide a range of services including career guidance, career counseling, job placement, referral system for further training, conduct of programmes, access to facilities, and provision of information material. Parallel to this development, most of the schools also have established similar career guidance and counselling services. Nevertheless, the capacity of the career guidance units/centers is limited as they do not have access up-to-date labour market information system, and also the available employment opportunities, skills requirements, trends, etc. A Career Interest Test was introduced which was meant for youth to identify their career interest on the basis of individual’s inherent and traits. The general education system of Sri Lanka is also expected to provide career counseling and career guidance at schools and for which there is a policy guideline to deploy a dedicated teacher for all schools which have more than 300 students for career guidance activities[[4]](#footnote-4).

All stakeholders have now realized that career guidance is an important aspect especially for school children for the purpose of educating them to become aware of diverse career opportunities available to pursue after leaving the schools. A Study on Career Guidance in General Education in Sri Lanka (*NEC* Research Series (2014) – No. 08) has recommended to establish a national level database and mechanism to facilitate career guidance services offered to prospective students and trainees on TVET opportunities. Towards this effort, the TVEC has developed and launched a career guidance and job placement website [www.youthjobs.lk/](http://www.youthjobs.lk/). Further, recently, the TVEC has established a National Committee on Career Guidance[[5]](#footnote-5), and also it has planned to established national level career guidance and counseling service.

#### **Social Marketing**

In parallel to the above efforts, the foreign assisted projects of the Ministry and other donor funded projects from time to time, have launched many social marketing programmes using print and television media to promote TVET and to inculcate positive thinking towards TVET programme among youth. But such propagations did not achieve the objective as they functioned only for a short period and inputs were retained only in the short-term memory of people. Therefore, a National TVET promotional programme should be a regular activity in TVET development, if at all to have an impact in this regard.

Further, from time to time, the Ministry in cooperation with leading TVET institutions organizes national level TVET exhibitions, and many outreached programmes. Though they are not regular programmes, all these programmes have made some positive impact on increase of annual enrolment in TVET courses. But, TVET sector experiences very high dropout rate[[6]](#footnote-6), thus making case for further strengthening of career guidance, counselling and social marketing activities.

#### **Trainees’ Support System**

The majority of TVET students belong to the lower middle class or poor strata of society[[7]](#footnote-7) and they need financial support to meet their routine expenses including transport cost while following courses. Such support for TVET students is further justified by the existence of bursaries and Mahapola payments given to students in higher education.

Up to late 80s, DTET and NAITA had been the two leading TVET institutions in the country. Those early days, DTET did not have a system to pay allowances to trainees but NAITA from the inception in1971 had paid allowances to all trainees. In 1970s, monthly allowance of Rs 180/= had been paid to each apprentice and in 1980s, it has been increased up to Rs 450/=. Compared to then salary structures, then apprenticeship allowance was a significant payment. In late 90s, NAITA increased the apprenticeship allowance to Rs 1000/= which was continued up to 2013 with very high unpaid arrears. It appears that following reasons may have influenced the NAITA to discontinue the payment of apprenticeship allowance in 2013.

* NAITA did not get sufficient funds to pay allowance timely and they were burdened with continuous accumulation of unpaid arrears.
* Funds received were used to pay the arrears and sometime trainees received the payment after completing their courses. Late payment did not give expected benefits to the trainees during the training period.
* By 2013, LKR 1000.00 per month was not an attractive allowance.

While discontinuing apprenticeship allowance, then Chairman NAITA made it compulsory to arrange an allowance to apprentices from their training employers.

DTET started payment of attendance allowance to trainees in 1990s and still continues. The VTA has a course specific allowance scheme to attract students to courses with high industry demand sans social demand. However, these financial support schemes are not uniformly applied across all institutions.

The Budget-2020 had proposed to pay a monthly allowance (stipend) for students following technical and vocational education, it has now been implemented for trainees following NVQ Level 1 to 4 courses with LKR 3000.00 per month.

During on-the-job training, many employers make some daily allowance to trainees but some employers do not make any payment to trainees. When NAITA stopped the apprenticeship allowance to trainees, then the Chairman of NAITA who was a reputed industrialist said “ *that all trainees in OJT must be paid an allowance by employers and if any employer does not have capacity to pay an allowance to trainees, that employer does not have sufficient work and capacity to provide training too”.*

When international literatures are reviewed, it says that trainees in work contribute for production thus for the revenue. At the same time, trainees are cost to employers as they make damages to the equipment and material causing high rejection rate of production. Therefore, many countries have a culture as well as legislation to make some payment to trainees which is usually lessor than the payment to unskilled workers. Therefore, it is better to have legislation to make OJT and an allowance compulsory for industries with certain capacities. Some industries argue that training is cost to them, but they must realize that non-training also cost to the industry in the long run.

#### **Inclusive TVET Programmes for Persons with Disabilities**

The classification of types of disability adopted by the Ministry of Social Welfare for program development encompasses people who have visual, speech, hearing, mobility, intellectual, and psychiatric disability and disability arising as a result of epilepsy and other causes[[8]](#footnote-8). As per the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ratified by the Government of Sri Lanka in 2016, disability of a person is a combination of impairments of the person, and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. In order to minimize disabling effect on persons with disabilities, barriers should be either minimized or removed by making reasonable adjustments to physical and/or environmental requirements without giving undue advantage to persons with disabilities. When society is sensitized on disability-related barriers, social and attitudinal barriers could be removed or reduced.

Going along in this approach, the TVEC and TVET institutions have carried out a number of activities to promote training for persons with disabilities (PWDs).

* TVEC in cooperation with ILO developed a National Strategy on TVET provision for vulnerable People in Sri Lanka in 2009 (www.tvec.gov.lk).
* Need of providing training for persons with disabilities was included in TVET policies developed in 2009 and 2018.
* TVEC has implemented a grant scheme to courses for persons with disabilities to improve those courses.
* TVEC addressed the disability issue by introducing Reasonable Adjustments in NVQ Assessment for Candidates with Disabilities and issued the NVQ Circular 01/2021.
* NAITA enrolls PWDs for enterprise-based apprenticeship and NVTI Narahenpita enroll PWDs for some courses. However, TVET institutions have no trainers with training on handling PWDs.

However, in the absence of a proper system to compile information on training provided to persons with disabilities, data and information in this regard is scanty and incomplete.

#### **Female Participation in TVET**

According to the TVET information given in the LMI Bulletin[[9]](#footnote-9) -2019, enrolment and completion of females in TVET courses in 2019 was 43.0 percent and 43.6 percent, respectively. Here 43.0 percent participation of females is not critically low though it is lower than the female percentage of youth population which is above 50%. Following facts must be considered in addressing low participation of females in courses in some industry sectors.[[10]](#footnote-10).

* Female participation in Construction courses is 16 percent
* Female participation in courses in wholesale, retail trade, repair of motor vehicle and motorcycle work is 7.7 percent.
* Female participation in transport and storage courses is 5.7 percent
* Female participation in hotel sector courses is 23.2 percent

Other side of this story is that females are concentrated in lower number of courses and they seek employment in lower number of occupations. End result is the lower employability of females and lower female participation in the labour force.

One barrier to increase female labour force participation is that females are not employed or not willing to be employed in some occupations. The issues here may be cultural, attitudinal, biological and organizational. When cultural and attitudinal issues are concerned, our society does not expect females to work by creeping under the vehicles and climbing the scaffoldings of high-rise buildings. In order to solve female’s employment issue, females also should be ready to work under difficult conditions but this is a 180-degree transformation from current practices. It will not happen in a short time.

As explained above, number of female dominated occupations is lower than the male dominated occupations and that is a reason for lower female employability. Therefore, this issue could be overcome only by expanding female attractive or female dominated occupations[[11]](#footnote-11) .

There are semi-technical occupations in the interface between technical and non-technical occupations which could be developed to attract females. For example, Technical Sale Assistant jobs in spare parts shops and hardware shops at present are handled by males. They could be developed as female friendly occupations. In the first stage, females should be employed in semi-technical occupations and that trend may grow to employ females in technical occupations.

The Skills Sector Development Programme (SSDP) of the Ministry has prepared a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Framework.[[12]](#footnote-12) Expansion of female friendly occupations is an activity in that framework too.

Recently validated VET Plan for Electrical and Electronics Industry Sector has identified about 10,000 production line operators in Electrical and Electronics industries mostly in Export Processing Zones. Large number of these production line operators are females as employers prefer females for this manual work due to their high hand dexterity and higher precision in repetitive jobs. However, their job span is about 3 to 7 years and thereafter, they leave jobs and get unemployed. But these girls have skills to identify electrical and electronics components. The VET Plan has proposed to train these girls for Technical Sale Assistant (NVQ Level 4) qualification to enable them to find jobs in their home town. Similarly, VET Plan for Automobile Repair and Maintenance Industry sector has proposed to train females for Techno - Commercial Sale Assistants and Colour Mixers occupations for Automobile Industry. TVEC and NAITA have already developed NVQ Standards and curricula for these two occupations. SSDP has already commenced the training of females for Techno - Commercial Sale Assistants occupations under the Training purchase model.

#### **Students’ Transition from Schools to TVET**

According to the age cohort analyses conducted in 2017 in National Policy of TVET (Figure 1), about 19 percent get higher education opportunities. The traditional pathways of balance 81 percent of an age cohort after leaving schools could be explained as listed below.

* Many of them seek direct employments in the Labour Market. Many of them are low skills and short term and some of them end up in NEET group. According to the Labour Force Survey – 2019, NEET group has 22 percent of youth.
* Few of them may fortunate to find formal jobs in state and private Sector.
* Many of them seek and are selected to TVET programmes. Some of them give up the courses due to mismatch with their interest and end up in informal jobs.
* Some of them seek TVET opportunities but not selected due to poor performance at school examinations. As NVQ level 3 & 4 courses get sufficient applications from school leavers with good grades, applicants with poor school grades do not get opportunities for courses of their interest (TVEC – 2021 VET Plan). Most TVET institutions do not have NVQ level 2 in popular occupations to facilitate entry for school leavers with poor grades.

Almost all countries both developed and developing countries face similar situation. Therefore, many countries have introduced pre-vocational qualifications to qualify school leavers with poor school grades for TVET courses. According to a Google search, pre-vocational qualifications are designed to improve the trade-related basic skills of persons with low levels of education seeking entry into the formal TVET system. Many countries including Mauritius, Bangladesh and England have a system to award pre-vocational qualifications.

Sri Lanka school system has implemented many programmes to provide vocational skills to school children. Though technical and vocational subjects have been taught in schools at GCE (O/L) classes at the commencement of free educations in 40s to 60s, that has not been continued. Since 2007 practical and technical subjects (PTS) have been introduced from Grade 6 to 9 classes but they do not get a vocational recognition.

In 2017, thirteen-year compulsory education was introduced to give 2-year vocational preparation courses for students with poor performance at GCE (O/L). Now a number of batches have completed the 2-year programmes in schools and are either following or have already completed NVQ level 4 programmes in TVET institutions. This Programme has noted following gaps and issues.

* All students with poor GCE(O/L) performance are not joining with 13-year compulsory education programmes.
* All enrolled in 13-year compulsory programmes are not reporting for training in TVET institutions.

A study on 13-year compulsory programme, conducted by GIZ (Report not published yet), has revealed following findings.

* Students coming from different schools do not have uniform learning. As there is no assessment in schools, uniformity in learning is not maintained.
* Dropout rate of trainees coming from 13-year compulsory programme to TVET institutions was higher than direct enrolled trainees. TVET Instructors’ explanation was that direct trainees come to TVET institutions after exploring other opportunities in the labour market. Trainees from 13-year compulsory programme leave the training to explore other opportunities in the labour market.
* Academic grades are not considered when enrolling students from 13-year compulsory programme. But poor literacy rate is an issue with students of 13-year compulsory programme
* TVET Institutions have faced difficulties to arrange OJT for students in some subjects as industry expects good academic performance of students specially in ICT occupations.
* Introduce an assessment scheme to school vocational training of 13-year compulsory programme to minimize some of above limitations.

Now 2-year school vocational training of 13-year compulsory programme has been amended with some major reforms. Still findings of above study are valid and applicable. Therefore, it is recommended to introduce Foundational Vocational (in lieu of pre-vocational) qualifications to recognize vocational skills provided in schools in 6 to 9 grades and 13-year compulsory education programmes.

#### **Attraction to and Image of Craft Occupations and TVET**

Development of TVET policies has become very crucial as almost all industry sectors in the country are experiencing severe skills shortage. This section discusses the accessibility to TVET as it effects on number of skilled persons trained by TVET system to bridge the skill gaps. Similarly, there is an issue on attraction of occupations and TVET courses by youth which is reflected by 20% youth unemployment rate and 22% in NEET group inspite of severe labour shortage.

Numerous socio – economic factors influence on the creation of skills shortage and these factors are interrelated and their analyses are very complicated. This analyses have been simplified by a concept called ‘Skill Equilibrium’[[13]](#footnote-13) which has low and high sides and their dimensions are listed below.

**Table 1: Dimension of Skills equilibrium**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Dimension of Low Skills Equilibrium** | **Dimension of High Skills Equilibrium** |
| Low demand for Skills  Poor Working Conditions  Poor welfare measures  Low wages  Low supply of skills | High demand for skills  Good Working Conditions  Good Welfare measures  Higher wages  Higher supply of Skills |

When these dimensions of equilibrium are not maintained, skills shortages and surpluses will be created as shown in the diagram below.

**Figure 2: Skills equilibrium diagram**

High

Demand

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Skills Gaps and Shortages | High Skills Equilibrium |
| Low Skills Equilibrium | Skills Surpluses |

Low High

Supply

In the 1970s and 80s, there was no reports on any significant skills shortages in any industry sector in the country. During that period, it was a case of low skills equilibrium. For example, in those days, there were no demand for high workmanship from craftsmen. It was a case of low skills, low working condition etc. It was a period of low wages too.

Today quality expectation of public and industry is comparatively high and they demand high workmanship and training level from craftsmen. But, working condition become very unsafe (some time), poor working conditions, poor welfare and comparatively lower salaries. Skill demand has moved to high side, but skills equilibrium is broken as wages and other dimensions have not been increased. In fact, skills equilibrium is broken and skills shortage is created.

There is a similar article published with the title ‘There's no such things as a skills gap’ in a web site[[14]](#footnote-14) and it has the following sentence.

***"When employers say there’s no skilled workers, what they’re often really saying is that they can’t find workers willing to work for the pay they’re willing to pay”***

These concepts are applicable to individual companies as well. Even though, industries in general experience skills shortages, some companies do not face that problem because they maintain all dimensions of skills equilibrium.

This scenario has divided the labour market to two segments; monthly wages market and daily wages market. Therefore, daily wages of craftsmen are very high and monthly wages are still low. Therefore, new craftsmen work only few years in waged employment and then start a daily wages job. Therefore, formal industries experience high turnover of skilled craftsmen and severe skills shortage.

In 2017, the H.E. President has requested two Secretaries of the Ministry of Skilled Development and Vocational Training and Ministry of Construction to submit a paper with proposals to address skills shortage in the construction industry. That paper was prepared by a team of professional from two ministries and they made following recommendations.

* Increase minimum wages of craftsmen for 9 hour working days.
* Introduce mechanization and digitalization to occupations.
* Introduce attractive occupations names (For example; no tailoring and dress making courses in South Korea. Instead they conduct Fashion designer Courses)
* Payment of EPF and ETF to be ensured even in informal sector.
* Improve image of industry by ensuring workplace health and safety and welfare.

Further, it is proposed to explore the possibility of formulating a pension scheme for craft persons in informal sector though the Sri Lanka Social Security Board.

## Qualification Framework, National Competency Standards and Curricula

#### **NVQ Framework**

Most remarkable achievement in the history of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is the development NVQ Framework in 2004. It is a unified qualification system with 7 levels of certificates, diplomas and degree qualification. Sri Lanka is the first South Asian Country to establish a vocational qualification framework and many south Asian countries followed the NVQ system in Sri Lanka to establish similar systems in their countries.

NVQ Framework has earned public acceptance and has reached non-reversible level within a short time after launching in 2004. Expectations of the NVQ Framework and its achievements and gaps are listed below.

* NVQ is an industry-based qualification developed based on National Competency Standards which specify skills needs to practice in respective occupations in the industry. Therefore, it was expected to award NVQ through all TVET courses in the country. But still there are many institutions and courses both in public and private sectors awarding non-NVQ qualifications. Before NVQ system was introduced, TVET sector had institutions-based qualifications. Therefore, TVET sector issued too many qualifications. But, even after introducing NVQ framework, many previously existed Non-NVQ qualifications are still awarded.
* At the development of NVQ Framework, there was no issue on awarding NVQs through education in general education. However, the school’s system has started a Technology Stream and 13-year compulsory education and there is now a need to recognize the vocational skills provided in schools.
* When an employer advertises a job vacancy seeking GCE(O/L) and GCE(A/L), he / she do not specify the schools from where applicants should have studied to get the qualifications. But, when a vacancy seeking vocational qualification holders is advertised, many employers specify the names of institutions as well. It is because images of some TVET institutions are higher than the image of the NVQ.
  + In order to facilitate skills upgrading of diploma and degree holders, modular certificates at NVQ 5, 6 and 7 should be introduced and also in order to facilitate career navigation of diploma and degree holders, diploma certificates, graduate certificate and graduate diplomas could be introduced. This concept is used in Australian qualification framework where bachelor degree is level 7 and graduate certificates and graduate certificates are given at level 8. (https://www.aqf.edu.au/aqf-levels)

According to the above analyses, NVQ has a long march ahead. It has operated for 16 years clearing many hurdles or overcoming challenges and it marched forward with periodic amendments done by the NVQ Steering Committee and Board of Management of the TVEC. Any system needs fine tuning after a few years of operation and therefore, this is the high time for NVQ to have a system overhaul supported by a revised legislation.

#### **National Competency Standards (NCS) and Curriculum**

National Competency Standards (NCS) are developed occupation wise and each NCS specifies the skills, knowledge and attitude required to practice respective occupation in the industry. It specifies the NVQ by packaging competencies relevant to jobs in the industry. Competency Based Training (CBT) curricula are prepared to facilitate teaching and learning of competencies specified in NCS. NVQ assessments are done based on performance standards (Performance Criteria) specified in NCS. Therefore, NCSs are the core of the NVQ Framework.

According to the TVEC website, TVEC, NAITA, UoVT in cooperation with other TVET institutions and Industry have developed 346 NCS and CBT curricula. Further, the NVQ Framework introduced a standardized process to develop the NCS and curricula which facilitates all institutions to have uniform curricula and thereby consistent course delivery. This was a great achievement compared to the pre-NVQ era before 2005 when institutions used their own curricula developed based on their own methods. However, following gaps and issues are identified in the area of NCS and curricula development.

* National Competency Standards specify the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to perform respective jobs. Accordingly, it should be widely used in industry but it is still not a popular document in the industry. Industry uses many products and procedural standards developed by the SLSI, British and European Union. Therefore, this issue needs to be addressed and it may need a research to identify to find out NVQ and NCS related issues in the industry.

VET Plan for Electrical and Electronics Sector – 2021 of TVEC has identified a few electronics manufacturing companies using competency matrix for performance management of staff. This VET Plan has proposed to explore the use of NCS to develop competency matrix; a performance management tool.

* Two hundred and seventy-eight NVQ Level 1 – 4 NCS and Curricula and 68 NVQ Level 5 & 6 NCS and Curricula have been already developed. But, NVQ certificates have been issued only from 116 NVQ Level 1-4 NCS and 25 NVQ Level 5 & 6 NCS only (TVEC website and Assessment Information of TVEC)
* Too many organizations are linked in development of NCS and Curricula and development process takes unreasonably longer time.
* At present, NCS and curricula are prepared only for pre-employment or initial training. To have a competent workforce, skills upgrading of industry employees should also be facilitated but it also needs curricula. One reasons for not conducting skills upgrading courses by training centers is the non-availability of curricula. (VET Plan for EE Sector – 2021)
* NVQ Framework of Sri Lanka has no levels for pre-vocational qualifications. Bangladesh Vocational Qualification Framework which was developed after learning Sri Lanka NVQ Framework has two pre-Vocational levels to facilitate school children with poor grades to get enrolled in TVET courses [[15]](#footnote-15).

Therefore, policy intervention is required to address these gaps and issues in NCS and curricula development.

#### **Industry foresight for Progressive Development of TVET Sector**

Ever since Vocational Training commenced ‘off the job’ training centers after industrial revolution in 18th century, there have been continuous dialogues and debates over bridging the gaps between Skills Supply from Vocational Training centers and Skills demanded by the industry. In order to bridge this gap, training centers worldwide have sought industry cooperation to develop curricula and to provide on the job training. Training centers in Sri Lanka also have followed same development but without uniform practices.

Under NVQ Framework, in order to bridge the skills gaps, it was made compulsory to take industry cooperation to conduct following TVET activities.

* Develop National Competency Standards (NCS)and curricula with industry participation in development committees.
* Validate of NCS and curricula by National Industrial Training advisory committees (NITAC) which is comprised with experts of respective industry sectors.
* All trainees in NVQ Level 4 courses should have 6 months ‘On the Job Training’ in the industry

Industry representatives of NITAC are appointed by the National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA). TVEC and NAITA decide the matters that need NITAC consultations. In fact, it is a government led model and sometimes wider industry do not agree with the inputs provided by NITAC.

Having same experience with advisory committees, many countries such as England, Australia, South Africa and India have formed an industry led and industry owned model for industry collaboration with TVET. That is the Industry Sector Skills Councils (ISSC). In India, there are 34 ISSCs for 34 industry sectors. ISSCs are expected to be pro-active and provide industry foresight for development of TVET institutions.

Going along in that direction of development, the Skills Sector Development Programmes of the Ministry has already established four ISSCs in Sri Lanka. ISSCs for Construction, ICT, Manufacturing and Engineering Services and tourism have already commenced their operations.

It is hoped that ISSCs will work as the TVET’s gateway to industries to organize OJT, curriculum development, NVQ assessment and labour market analyses to identify skills trends. There are NITAC for 23 industry sectors. ISSCs are established only for 4 industry sectors. Still ISSCs are in piloting stage and TVEC and TVET institutions are shouldering the challenge of making ISSCs as sustainable model to have industry foresight to develop TVET.

## **Training Institutions and Facilities, Learners and Learning Environment**

#### **Establishing new Training centers and improving facilities of existing centers**

According to the dash board of TVEC website [www.tvec.gov.lk](http://www.tvec.gov.lk), there are 1155 training centers with active registration as at April 25, 2021. Among these training centers, there are too many small-scale training centers. About 40 percent of all training centers has only one course[[16]](#footnote-16). Because of too many small centers, TVET sector does not reflect a good image to attract youth and industry employees for training. Accessibility is not well ensured as there is no uniform course mix among districts. Many courses available in Colombo are not available in outstation districts. For example, district wise distribution of Electrical and Electronics courses are given in the VET Plan for Electrical and Electronics sector which are reproduced in the Annexure 1 of this report. Accordingly many districts do not have some Electrical and Electronics courses. Most of the technical courses follow the same distribution pattern. Therefore, TVET courses need to be further expanded to enable youth in outstation districts to realize their employment aspirations.

Another deficiency in this regard is the inadequate emphasis for sports and extra-curricular activities for trainees as technical training alone is not sufficient for holistic development of youth. Most of the TVET institutions have no facilities for sports and extra-curricular activities.

#### **Use of TVET Facilities to Provide Part-time Training for Prospective Trainees**

Most of the TVET training centers are primarily engaged in providing pre-employment training and these programmes are usually conducted from 8-to-5-time tables on week days. And almost all these centers are free in the evenings and weekends. Therefore, these free times could be used to conduct skills-upgrading courses for industry employees, and also for livelihood training for the community around centers. Further, the NEET group is a problem in the labour market. School leavers from poor families directly go to low skills short term jobs in the service sector. These jobs employ only young people and many of them get unemployed when they become adults and eventually end up in the NEET group. According to the Labour Force Survey – 2019, 21.2 percent of youth are in the NEET group. Therefore, training centers should facilitate half day (Morning) courses for youth from poor families to enable them to do a jobs in the afternoon and evening. This will provide them opportunities to acquire skills for a job while engaging in short term jobs to make earnings for the family.

#### **Developing Flagship TVET Centers for a Cluster of Small Feeder TVET Centers**

As stated elsewhere, TVET sector is very heterogeneous in terms of size and resource base, and in this heterogeneous system, there are very reputed, well resourceful training centers and as well as centers without much resource base and hence with less reputation. Centers without reputation has not been able to attract students effectively to follow TVET courses. Therefore, it may be desirable to form networks by establishing flagship centers and feeder centers; in this arrangement, students in feeder centers could move to flagship centers to complete more advanced module. In order to make these developments, TVET centers needs continuous investment. TVEC already implements a grant scheme for private and NGO sector training centers and that needs to be further strengthened.

#### **Apprenticeship**

Apprenticeship is a strong training methodology as it could develop training up to unconscious[[17]](#footnote-17) competency level in crafts skills. Apprenticeship is an age-old tradition of skills development all over the world including in developed countries. Many developed countries use apprenticeship training as their main skills development strategy with many innovations.

In Sri Lanka, the National Apprenticeship and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA) is designated national institute with the mandate for apprenticeship training programmes, and it has added many new features such as special apprenticeship[[18]](#footnote-18) and situational apprenticeship[[19]](#footnote-19) to the national apprenticeship scheme in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively which are not seen or practiced in other countries.

In new millennium, many countries have modernized apprenticeship to get the benefits of advancing technologies and digitalization. NAITA has an important role to play in strengthening apprenticeship in line with the national trend set by the NVQ Framework and global development of apprenticeship programmes.

According to the Labour Market Bulletin (2019), the NAITA has enrolled 21,604 apprentices for craft level training in enterprises and from them 17,941 are in NVQ courses. Apprenticeship has no course limitations, and it could be applied to all occupations in the labour market. Therefore, in Sri Lanka’s full potentials of apprenticeship is yet to be realized. Many large-scale industries are cooperating with NAITA in apprenticeship training. But, many large-scale industries are yet to join in apprenticeship programme..

Enterprise-based situational apprenticeship has 1,171 enrolments in 2019. The situational apprenticeship focuses on emerging occupations and only NAITA is working in this area without any competition from other TVET institutions. Therefore, NAITA could expand this area to all emerging occupations.

#### **Public-Private Partnerships**

In TVET landscape, there are public, private and industry training centers. In addition, there are some public-private partnerships as examples listed below[[20]](#footnote-20).

* NAITA and Puththalam Cement in partnership developed and manage a training center in Puththalam
* NVTI, Narahenpita of VTA conducted a Beauty / Hairdresser course in partnership with a reputed Beautician Training center of the Private sector
* DTET has a partnership with a construction company for training of construction craftsmen
* A few training centers in rural areas have been supported by private enterprises under their CSR projects.
* Some private training centers had partnership with public training institutions to get government funds for apprenticeship allowance and instructors’ salaries. They may be useful to expand training capacities in the country.

These partnerships have been created on positive response of public sector institutions for project initiatives made by private sector institutions. Many industries may not have come forward due to unawareness. Therefore, there should be policy guidelines and drive to promote such public – private partnerships. Further, the Public, Private and industry Training institutions have their own strengths and weaknesses. When these institutions joined together, one’s weaknesses could be suppressed from other’s strengths and thus get a synergetic effect.

#### **Further Training and Re-training of Industry Employees**

In the Sri Lankan context, employees need further training while in service in their occupation. According to an expert presentation done based on Special analyses of labour force survey in 1997, about 84% workforce have not received any vocational training. They have acquired skills through work experience. Then a majority of them have skill gaps, especially in the cognitive domain. Therefore, the up-skilling of employees will bridge the skills gaps thus improving their productivity. In the global context, skilled staff give a competitive edge in businesses with changing technologies. Further training or up-skilling boost employees’ motivation with inspiration for lifelong learning.

Under the present trend of technological development, obsolescence of some job categories and the creation of new job categories is a phenomenon of current labour market dynamism. In the liberal market economies, some businesses go bankrupt and new businesses are created. Under both these phenomena, employees who lose jobs need re- skilling to get competent for different occupations.

As a result of the negative impact of Covid pandemic, many enterprises may have to close down, but many opportunities may prop up for new business lines. Then the affected enterprises could absorb a part of existing staff to new business lines but those staff need training to make them competent for new operations. In fact, those staff need re-training or re-skilling for new jobs.

**Current Status of Up-skilling and Re-skilling Industry Employees in Sri Lanka**: The Sections 80 and 81 of the Tertiary and Vocational Education Act No 20 of 1990 (under Part II) specify the functions of Further Training (up-skilling) and Re-training (Re-skilling) of industry employees in addition to apprenticeship training. Though legislation on re-training for different jobs is still silent, TVEC and TVET Institutions are implementing and facilitating many skills upgrading programmes for employees in the industry.

The Skill Development Report 2017/2018 published by the TVEC has a chapter on Skilling Industry employees and those skills upgrading programmes are listed below.

1. NVQ Level 3 & 4 Qualifications through Recognition of Prior Learning
2. Part time and Flexible Delivery of Modular programmes
3. Part time delivery of NVQ 5 Diploma Programmes by College of Technology of DTET
4. Part Time Delivery of Degree Programmes by UNIVOTEC
5. Mature Candidate Route for Industry Employees to get NVQ 5 Equivalent Certificates

Current status, gaps and issues of above programmes are explained below.

1. According to the Labour Force Survey, the country has 1,307,767 Craft and Related Trade workers and 1,375,540 Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery workers of whom only about 20% has skills certification. But so far from 2004 to 2019, only 87,000 NVQ certificates through RPL has been issued. Therefore, RPL has a long way to go.
2. In order to promote skills upgrading of industry employees, Skills Sector Development Programmes (SSDP) of the Ministry and TVEC have introduced modular training with 50 per cent subsidy with the name tag ‘**Flexible Learning Mode (FLM)’**. It was expected to facilitate the flexible hours for industry employees to follow the courses. These programmes are delivered as Modules or Competency Units and participants who are successful at the assessment are awarded Modular Certificates of NVQ which are called “Records of Achievement”. TVEC has issued a circular on implementing FLM and it is hoped that it will pick up in due course.
3. Colleges of Technology of DTET have commenced delivery of many of their NVQ 5 programmes on part time basis. Further, many NCT courses of DTET which have been conducted for industry employees on part time basis for over 5 decades have been upgraded to NVQ Level 5.
4. University of Vocational Technology (UoVT, Ratmalana) has 13 degree programmes with enrollment of both full time and part time students. Almost all of these part time students are employed persons and therefore, this part time delivery of training aims for further skilling industry employees.
5. There are many experienced people at supervisory levels whose promotional prospects are stagnated due to lack of qualifications. Further, Public Administration Circular 2/2009 has specified qualification levels for salary levels. In order to facilitate these mature employees to get certificates for their competency levels, the TVEC has introduced a Mature Candidate Route for Industry Employees to get NVQ 5 Equivalent Certificates.

According to above programmes, system is in place for skills upgrading of industry employees. But numbers are not high enough to make any significant impact on the industry through up-skilling of industry employees. The up-skilling programmes could certainly be expanded as most vocational training centers are inactive in the evenings and in weekends, and therefore, the training capacity is not an issue. But it needs funding, coordination, and commitment.

But no programmes are available in TVET for re-skilling of industry employees. This is the time to commence re-skilling as many employed persons may have lost the jobs due to Covid situation. That is evident from the rise of unemployment in all categories as given the Labour Market/Force Bulletin (2020) published by the DCSSL.

**Funding for Up-skilling and Re-skilling:** In some countries, the employment insurance schemes facilitate funding for up-skilling of its members. As employment insurance has a liability to look after its members (customers) in case of retrenchment from employment, it funds them for up-skilling to make sure their continuity in employment. In Sri Lanka, Employment Trust Fund (ETF) plays the role of employment insurance for its contributors. It facilitates reimbursement of medical bills for critical illnesses and education scholarships for children of its contributors. But the most vital scheme should be the funding for the up-skilling and re-skilling of its members. Then they will have prospective careers and increase their potential to make a higher contribution to ETF. Therefore, this is the right time for ETF to commence a scheme to fund its contributors for up-skilling and re-skilling to make them well fit for reviving industries and businesses.

### Livelihood Occupations and Gig Jobs

**Livelihood occupations**: Youth unemployment cannot be solved only through TVET. Large numbers of people are employed in livelihood occupations. According to the Google search, a livelihood is a job or other source of income that gives the money to buy the things for living.   
Youth as well as adults cannot explore such openings because there are no training opportunities. Productivity, safety and hygienic aspects of these jobs could be increased if training on technology and innovations are provided. Therefore, training institutes must operate livelihood training divisions to undertake such training programs for communities in the locality of training centers. If in-house trainers are not available, services of external resource persons could be sought for delivery of such short duration skills. Upgrading and technology orientation courses may be provided preferably in evenings and weekends.

Gig Jobs: Other labour market trends is the creation of gig jobs. According to the Google search, the gig jobs are flexible, temporary, or freelance jobs, often involving or connecting with clients or customers through an online platform. Therefore, gig economy can benefit workers, businesses, and consumers by making work more adaptable to the needs of the moment and demand for flexible lifestyles.

The National Skills Development Report- 2018/19 published by TVEC has a section on Gig Work in Labour Market in Sri Lanka. The Indian Skill Report – 2016 has indicated the need of paying attention to expanding gig works in India. Therefore, it is necessary to identify skills needs and other constraints in livelihood occupations and gig jobs, and support them to develop their works as there is a vulnerability in these jobs to end them in NEET group.

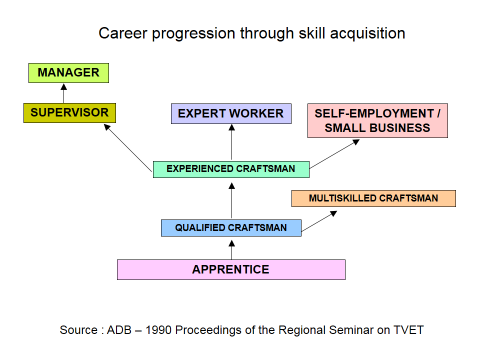
### Entrepreneurship Development (ED) in Vocational Training

In the journey of skill development, some people end up as entrepreneurs or owners of businesses as depicted in the diagram below (Figure 2). According to a tracer study conducted in 2017, among vocational training passed outs, seven percent of males and 11 percent of females are in self-employment[[21]](#footnote-21).

Almost all youth have some interest to start their own businesses. But, they need a push, encouragement and support to make a first initiatives. It is said that baby eagles need a push to make first fly though eagles are the flying champions among birds. Persons with trade skills have lower risk to start a business in his/her trained trades and therefore, many VT passed outs make own initiatives to start their own businesses.

According to a trace study conducted by NAITA in 1998, about 6% of VT passed out had started their own businesses. At that time, there was no entrepreneurship development (ED) programmes in TVET institutions.

**Figure 3: Career Progression through Skills Acquisition**



The ADB assisted Skills Development Project (SDP) from 1998 to 2006 had ED as a project component. SDP developed an ED sensitization Training Manual (5 day Training Module) and an ED Training Manual (14 day Training Manual) and trained a large number of TVET staff as ED trainers on this aspect - starting a business. In parallel, SDP established a revolving fund to provide startup investment loan at a subsidized interest rate to TVET certificate / diploma holders after completing 2 weeks ED training. This two week training programmes has been revised and now it is delivered within 7 to 10 days. Initially, a loan of LKR 250,000 was provided and this has now been increased up to LKR 500,000. At present, the VTA, NAITA, DTET and NYSC implement the ED programmes for their trainees.

#### **Skilling for Foreign Employment**

Foreign Employment is an important structural feature of employment in Sri Lanka. Estimates show that Sri Lanka’s workforce in the foreign employment is around 1.2 million, *i.e.,* almost 14 percent of our total number in the labour force is in foreign employment according to the 2019 foreign employment sent to TVEC by the Sri Lanka Bureau of foreign employment.

The remittances from the migrant workers in 2019 is LKR 1,200,766 million / USD 6.7 Billion which is 12.3 per cent growth from 2011. This figure was 56.3 per cent of the country’s total export earnings[[22]](#footnote-22).

Major issue in foreign employment is that departures for foreign employment is much less than vacancies received for most of the occupations. There may be many reasons for low departures but one of the reasons may be that there is no sufficient number of qualified and competent people in respective occupations in the country.

**Table 2: No of Foreign Job Orders Received & No of Departures for foreign employment in Years 2017, 2018 & 2019**

| **Job Category** | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No. of Vacancies** | **No. of Departures** | **No. of Vacancies** | **No. of Departures** | **No. of Vacancies** | **No. of Departures** |
| **Total in all Occupations/Sectors** | **328,641** | **68,319** | **377,075** | **66,924** | **495,405** | **69,379** |
|  |  | **20.8%** |  | **17.7%** |  | **14.0%** |

*Source: VEC-2020, IS Division- Data received from SLBFE* \*provisional

(From VET Plan for Electrical and Electronics Sector – unpublished)

VET Plan for Electrical and Electronics Sector – 2020 has analyzed the foreign employment in Electrical and Electronics occupations and found that 80 percent of vacancies and 80 percent of departures are in 20 percent of occupations. It means that the Pareto Principle is applicable to this analysis. At present only 20 percent of vacancies are filled by Sri Lankan workers. If 20 percent occupations are identified and develop to meet skills needs of foreign employment, 80 percent of foreign employment vacancies could be filled.

In order to meet skills needs of these 20 percent of occupations, following actions need to be implemented.

* Revise NCS and curricula to include the skills needs in countries where Sri Lankan are employed.
* Link with qualification authorities of those countries and map Sri Lanka NVQ with vocational qualifications of those countries.
* Though NCS and curricula are revised, it is not practicable to develop higher order skills during pre-vocational training. Therefore, modules on skills for foreign employment should be given to experience crafts persons.

## Quality Assurance in Technical and Vocational Education and Training

#### **Quality Assurance System in TVET**

As any other education sector, quality assurance plays a very important role in improving quality and relevance of TVET programmes. Recognizing its importance, the TVEC has implemented a Quality Assurance mechanism for TVET sector. In this QA mechanism, the quality is expected to be achieved through implementing three regulatory tools; i) registration of training institutions, ii) accreditation of courses and iii) installation of quality management system in TVET institutions.

Both the public and private TVET institutions are required to comply with the above requirements. These regulatory processes should be clearly formulated, unambiguous and efficiently executed for training institutes to comply with the requirements without undue excessive efforts and time.

#### **Issues related to Quality Assurance in TVET**

Though the quality assurance system is well placed and piloted, it has following gaps and issues.

1. According to the dashboard in the TVEC website, [www.tvec.gov.lk](http://www.tvec.gov.lk) on 02.04.2021, TVEC has 1146 training centers with active or valid registration and registration of 1800 training centers have been expired.
2. These registered centers have 5,674 courses but only 3,357 courses are accredited as at 02.04.2021.
3. QMS has been installed only in 250 training centers.
4. Skill Competitions were held but not regularly though it is listed under the objects of the NAITA as per TVE Act no 20 of 1990.

The above-mentioned phenomenon appears to have arisen from several reasons:

1. Inadequate guidelines (Codes of Practice) for registration, accreditation and QMS.
2. QMS is a considered as a burden to the training providers/instructors due to complexity of the process.
3. Inadequate public awareness on registered institutions and accredited courses.

Therefore, the above-mentioned issues of the QA process make a case of revisiting the existing QA process and guidelines to make it simpler to implement and easy for prospective TVET providers to follow, and to implement in fair manner throughout the Island.

#### **Innovations for Quality Improvements**

As the public expects excellent performance beyond standards level of quality, the TVEC has explored further innovation in quality improvements with the following quality programmes.

* Developed and Introduced Quality Management System (QMS)
* Introduced a training programmes to promote quality culture in TVET sector.
* Introduced a Quality Improvement System (QIS) with step-by-step star certifications
* Skill Competition among Qualification holders for expertise and Competition among training centers for excellence awards

#### **Quality Management System and Quality Improvement System**

With the development of NVQ Framework, TVEC with assistance of foreign funded projects, introduced a Quality Management System (QMS) with internal and externally quality audit to training centers. This QMS has focused on nine processes listed below.

1. Ensue Availability of relevant training equipment, materials and consumables.
2. Maintain Safe and Conducive Learning Environment and Infrastructure.
3. Ensure availability of relevant National Competency Standards, Curricula and Learning Materials Available for all Courses.
4. Ensure appropriate and proper academic staff requirements fulfilled.
5. Students Affairs well managed and student enrolment criteria available.
6. Training Delivered as per Plan and training records maintained.
7. Timely Conduct of Continuous and Final Assessments, and issue certificates.
8. Evaluate customer satisfaction by taking feedbacks from Students, Parents and Industry.
9. Ensure the Financial concerns and stability.

QMS has been installed in about 250 training centers but it demanded further innovations with simplification. Therefore, TVEC with the assistance of projects and foreign consultants developed different quality concepts and introduced a quality culture training programme for the staff which has been delivered at the University of Vocational Technology. Further, as Training centers considered QMS as difficult and hard work, Quality Improvement System (QIS) with star certification was introduced and launched with the label **‘Quality is Fun’**. QIS has 15 steps and it starts with kick off meeting which is done with lot of fun. It has steps such as quality attitude, happy committee and critical friend which get high level of social attraction. It gives 3 star certification before QMS and that motivate the staff to work for QMS and beyond. Eventually, training centers could get 4 star and 5-star certifications as well.

#### Competition for Expertise and Excellence

Registration, Accreditation, QMS and QIS explained above push the training centers to achieve quality. In parallel, the Ministry and TVEC introduced competitions to pull the training centers to achieve the quality. These programmes are well geared to meet public aspirations as public expect expert performance from NVQ holders and excellence performance from Training centers.

#### Skills Competition

Vocational Training programmes are developed and conducted to provide competencies required for employments. Here, competency means ability to meet the requirements of relevant standards.

But, when public want technical services, they search for experts in the trade. For example, public always go to expert vehicle mechanics or expert hair dressers. This applies to other technical areas too. Therefore, competent people should be lead to develop expertise fast.

In 2012 and 2013, the Ministry with the TVEC had nationwide skill competition for 16 occupations in 2013 and 24 occupations in 2014. Competent people in respective occupation competed at the Skills Competition and best among competents won. Best among competent persons means experts. If skills competitions are held annually with national, provincial and district competitions, a culture of competitions will emerge and many skills person will endeavor to reach proficiency.

#### Competition for Excellence

Many quality measures have been introduced to training centers to achieve quality. These quality measures should be ordinary or habitual work in a training center and they become excellence when they perform those ordinary work extraordinarily well. In 2019, in line with International Youth Skill Day celebration, the Ministry and TVEC introduced a competition to identify training centers with excellence and it was continued in 2021 too.

## Human Resources Development and Management

#### **2.5.1 Deficiencies in the current human resource management practices**

TVET Institutions are expected to develop the skills of youth and adults to enable them to find productive employment in the industry. Therefore, staff of TVET Institutions should have higher level of competencies than those of employees in the industry. But prevailing situation is completely the opposite. Following deficiencies and gaps in human resources have been observed:

* As TVET staff has comparatively lower salary scales than of those in the industry, it is difficult to recruit and retain competent staff and induce sufficient motivation level.
* Though TVEC has some capacity in Research and Management Information System (MIS), TVET Institutions do not have sufficient research and MIS capacity.
* Further, trained and skilled trainers have attraction from the industry. Therefore, retaining them and keeping them motivated is a challenge for TVET institutions. In fact all TVET institutions experience high turnover among trainers and all leading TVET institution have vacancy ratio; ration between vacancies and approved carder above 25 percent.

Therefore, technical staff and trainers should be given opportunities for skills upgrading and opportunities for higher qualifications with incentive payment to bridge the salary difference in some extend. In order to offset the low salary issue, the Ministry with the ADB and World Bank assisted Skills Sector Development Programme (SSDP) has introduced a performance-based incentive scheme for trainers and academic staff of the TVET Institutions. Accordingly, at present, academic staff of leading institutions are paid a monthly incentive of LKR 5000/= to LKR 8000/= based on their performance in course accreditation, involvement in their professional development, maintenance of class capacity and higher completion rate of students in the course, quality of Training delivery, and use of innovative approaches in teaching. A recent study has revealed that the incentive scheme has made immense contribution on improving training performance but it is not sufficient to arrest the turnover of academic staff.

### Trainer Training system – needs and shortcomings

It is understandable, the TVET trainers have challengeable role which needs competencies in following areas.

* Updated technical knowledge in his/her subject area in line with advancing technologies and technology applications in the industry with workplace practices.
* Skills in preparation of training material and planning lessons
* Instructional skills (Pedagogical skills) with updated knowledge in training and education technology,
* Digital readiness to explore new skills and knowledge, to facilitate on-line delivery of training and to comply with learning management systems.
* Quality assurance with courses accreditation and Quality Management System
* Skills in Communication, mother tongue and English language.
* High level of professionalism

At entry level of trainers, applicants do not have qualifications for all these skills or trainer qualification. Therefore, recruitment of trainers is done based on a qualification relevant technical skills and aptitude for other skills. Aptitudes are not skills, they the potential for skilling. Therefore, they should receive continuous training to develop those skills.

## **Financing TVET**

TVET institutions in the country are weak when compared with the general education and higher education systems. There are national schools in almost all cities of the country. There are well recognized general education schools in their localities. But the country has a very few TVET institutions with national stature and those too are located in Colombo. All TVET centers outside Colombo have weaker image than the schools in respective areas. That is the major barrier to attract school leavers to TVET system. Therefore, it is still a challenge to develop these TVET centers to have an attraction equivalent to schools and higher education institutions.

Even though there has been a huge investment in TVET sector by the government and through donor and loan funding in last two decades, it is much lesser than the investment in General education and higher education in the same period. If the investments in different education sectors since independence are compared, TVET has been given very poor treatment. It is not only buildings, workshops and laboratories, Staff also matters for the image. In 2021, total education budget is about LKR 173 Billion and TVET budget is about LKR 6.5 Billion which is about 3.8 percent. As it is expected to develop TVET as an education path alternative to higher education, it needs higher investment in training facilities as well as on human resources development.

However, to complement with government funding, TVET centers have potential to implement income generation works. Under free education policy implemented in treasury funded training institutions since 2016, no fees could be charged from pre-employment training of youth. But, courses fees could be charged from skills upgrading part time programmes conduced for industry employees. Ceylon German Technical raining Institutes is fully operational in evening and weekends with fee levying part time programmes.

Further, it may possible do some production and provide services using training facilities without compromising quality of training. GIZ had a VTW (1998 – 2004) project introduced a concept of training with production and it was piloted in number of VTA training centers. It aimed to generate funds while creating OJT environment for Trainees with entrepreneurial skills. Further, Skills Development Project (1998 – 2006) introduced a business arm concept to DTET and piloted at COT Maradhana and it was not continued as financial regulations became a barrier to make payment to staff. The Development Plan for TVET (2020 -25) prepared by TVEC has proposed for public TVET institutions to explore income generation works in cooperation with the Skills Development Funds which is a government owned company. Further, the Development Plan has proposed to explore the possibility of obtaining funding from ETF for up-skilling of Industry employees.

The section 83 of the TVE Act No 20 of 1990 has specified about Training CESS (Training levy) (industry)but no attempt has been made to implement it. Many countries use payroll levies[[23]](#footnote-23) as a mechanism to finance TVET. Therefore, it is proposed to initiate a discussion to explore alternative funding mechanism.

## **Regulations and Governance**

#### **Legal Framework Governing TVET Sector**

The legislative enactments passed by the parliament or service minutes relevant to TVET Institutions, provide the regulatory framework required to regulate the TVET sector. The Tertiary and Vocational Education (TVE) Act No 20 of 1990 has two parts; Part 1 for the TVEC and Part II for the NAITA. The Part I had been amended in 1999 as the TVE (Amendment) Act No 50 of 1999. The VTA had been established by Vocational Training Authority Act No 12 of 1995. DTET should have established under the education ordinance and its staff matters are managed under the Technical Education Services minute which has been revised recently.

#### **Issues relating to Regulation and Governance**

These Acts are not amended for long time exceeding 20 years and some of the prevailing issues are listed below:

* TVE Act No 20 of 1990 expected all training centers to have TVEC registration, but still many training centers operate in the country without TVEC registration.
* Institutions are not properly empowered to implement their objects and activities.
* Institutions have no capacities to implement many activities entrusted to them.
* Training Institutions should be empowered to pilot new concepts such as training with production and permit them to generate and use funds while strengthening training.
* Many national level regulatory agencies have not prepared regulations or revised regulations for long time

As such, there is a need for reviewing the existing Acts / Ordinances and make appropriate amendments for such enactments to empower the regulatory agencies to regulate the TVET sector more effectively so as to improve the governance and management envisaged in TVET sector.

## Data and Information, and Research

#### **Labor Market and Training Information**

The planning process for TEVET sector is hampered by not having regular labour market information (LMI) and information on national and regional skills needs. It is well conceived that identifying sources of and information for TVET planning is fundamental requirement in designing and offering demand-driven courses for wide variety of TVET seekers. There is no timely and accurate information about current demand for skills and available training opportunities. Moreover, no regular studies tracking competencies achieved, and thus, it is not possible to evaluate the performance of TVET institutions and TVET certificate holders directly.

Though the government has strengthened the systems in place for collection and compilation of human resource data, there are still some gaps. For example, the LMI Bulletin of TVEC encompasses data provided by many stakeholders such as Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau, and Public and private Training Institutions, but this data has not been effectively converted to useful information for the purpose of planning and making management decisions, and also for the use of career guidance and counseling services. Therefore, it is important that this fragmented data and information should be pooled and subjected to Big Data Analyses by experts to generate insight from large volumes of data for decipher market trends, correlations, customer preferences, hidden pattern, etc. The capacity of a suitable central institution, such as the Department of Census and Statistics or Department of Labour must be strengthened to develop a labour market information (LMI) system that is demand-driven and of a multipurpose nature. This proposed LMI system should produce regular, timely and relevant labour force, employment and human resource information to meet the needs of wide variety of users of both public and private sectors.

Besides, the three are many shortcomings as regard to even the use of the available data by the TVET officials and other concerned parties.

* Though the TVEC maintain a database and it carries many useful information, but evidences on whether senior TVET officials check them are not available. Further, there is no evidence as regard to whether any discussions are held regularly on critical information provided in the Labour Market Bulletin of TVEC.
* It is disheartening to note even the annual VT Analysis Reports produced by TVEC since 2014, relevant institutions did not take an interest to use that information to improve their system.
* Further, all TVET institutions have lot of data on all activities from enrollment to certifications. Almost all leading TVET institutions have established MIS as it is not possible to collect and collate all these data manually. But, the MISs are not capturing all relevant data as real time data entry is not facilitated. Therefore, there were deficiencies in data, and hence the critical analyses of data to produce management information are not well practiced.
* Moreover, in order to find out employability of TVET passed outs, they must be tracked after completing the courses. But it is not effectively happening. Moreover, for effective planning, TVET system needs information of labour market dynamism and demographic information.

#### **Research in TVET**

In many countries, TVET get a direction from a strong research arm to provide better information base, critical analyses, improved cost effectiveness, and varied perspectives better understanding of education and training processes. That is useful to push the TVET to a higher profile. Having identified the need of research, all the Act of TVET institutions have included an object or power to conduct research. Nevertheless, many institutions of TVET did not have capacity to make any research initiatives. Therefore, the Skill development Project, an ADB funded project implemented from 1998 to 2007 had created a project component to promote a research culture in TVET institutions. Accordingly, about 50 training managers and officers were trained on research methodologies and they completed about 30 research papers. Those papers were presented at a 3-day research convention held in BMICH in 2006.

Thereafter, TVEC established a research cell taking members from each leading TVET institutions and got a budget line from treasury to fund the research proposal submitted by trainers in different TVET institutions. TVEC held mini-research convention annually in early days. Research programmes is still operated but conventions are not held regularly. The Ministry and TVEC still recognizes the need of strong research programme and they gave prizes for three best research papers at the award ceremony held in 2019.

A present, TVET sector experiences so many areas that require further research and analyses. It needs effective information base and good research programme with capacity to undertake national level researches to lift the TVET profile of the country. Therefore, research capacity of TVEC and respective TVET institutions needs to be strengthened with a team of dedicated researches and with sufficient funding.

# Conclusion

TVET has the role develop skills workforce to enable people of the country to realize their employment aspiration and for the industry to have skilled workforce. This paper has analyzed the issues and gaps of the TVET sectors thus identified the challenges to be faced. Accordingly, 23 policies with strategies were formulated to address those issues. In Sri Lanka there is a criticism that policies are formulated with lot of fanfare but they are not effectively implemented. Therefore, all responsible institutions and stake holders are requested to be vigilant on these policy implementations. Further, the Ministry, NEC and TVEC are expected collectively to monitor implementation of these policy to lift the TVET profile of the country.

# Policy Proposals and Recommended Strategies

Having considered the issues highlighted in the Status Review given in Section 1 under 8 core areas, the policy and strategy formulation process proceeded to frame the relevant policies and strategies with respect to those 8 core areas.

The core areas include:

1. Access and Enrollment,
2. Qualification Framework, National Competency Standards and Curricula,
3. Training Facilities, Learners and Learning Environment,
4. Quality Assurance,
5. Human Resources Development and Management,
6. Financing,
7. Regulation and Governance and
8. Labour Market Information, Management Information System and Research

## Policies and Recommended Strategies

## CORE AREA - TVET 1: ACCESS AND ENROLMENT

**Policy context**

Increase of access to TVET is referred to as widening the opportunities for youth and adults to join the TVET system to acquire skills and become competent in preferred occupations which have demand in the labour market. Many youths especially in poor segments in the society do not have access to TVET as they are unaware of opportunities in TVET and labour market. Even after receiving information, many cannot explore training opportunities due to financial constraints. Even if parents of Persons with disabilities take interest to train their children for livelihood of their choice, they do not have access to TVET due to inappropriate and insufficient infrastructure, training facilities and trained staff. Increasing of female labour force participation will be useful to narrow down the skill gaps. As explained in the issues and gaps, TVET has to lead young females to follow non-stereotype route to choose courses for training. Issues and gaps explained under School to TVET transition addresses with appropriate policy with courses with all NVQ levels and medium of instruction and higher minimum wages.

**Directive Principles**

*DP 1: Accessibility to TVET should be ensured to all youth irrespective of education qualifications, poverty, disability, geographical locations and any other differences.*

*DP 2: Equal accessibility and opportunities for men and women should be achieved while relieving them from taking stereotype routes.*

*DP 3: Provide incentives to attract and retain potential youth for training TVET*

*DP 4: Attractive minimum wage and provision of social security benefit to inspire youth to TVET*

**Policy – TVET – 1.1:** **Establish / Improve Career guidance and counseling programmes to enable youth to make informed course choices and to minimize drop out from courses.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC to review available career guidance material and tools (Career interest test etc.) and develop a set of standardized career guidance materials in collaboration with career guidance arms of TVET institutions, Department of Education, Department of Man Power Planning and Employment and provincial councils with benchmarking international practices.
2. Institutions with CG centers should deliver them through network of career guidance centers with trained CG officers
3. Ministry of Education and Provincial Education Ministries should establish Career explores club in schools to facilitate long term deliberation on choosing a Career or an employment linked training course by school pupils.
4. TVEC should established ICT enabled career system for job placement with improvement of current job placement website
5. TVEC in cooperation with TVET institutions and NEC to conduct research for analyzing labour market dynamics to predict future jobs, occupational roles and labor market trends in local and foreign employment related labour market and minimize dropped out rate.

**Policy – TVET – 1.2:** **Appropriate financial and logistical support system for TVET trainees should be made available for the purpose of increasing accessibility to TVET by poor segments of society.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC in cooperation with leading TVET institutions prepare and approve criteria for payment, amount and selection.

* Financial support may be limited to employment link training programmes.
* Financial support may be used as an incentive to attract trainees for employment link training programmes with low social image and high shortage of skilled people.
* Special consideration to be given for students from vulnerable groups including person with disabilities.

1. The Ministry and All Training Institutions must ensure timely payment of approved allowances to trainees.
2. Relevant Institutions need to take actions to provide adequate accommodation facilities trainees in National Level Training centers
3. All leading training institutions work together to explore appropriate criteria to obtain training allowance from enterprises during apprenticeship and On the job Training

**Policy – TVET – 1.3: Inclusive TVET Programmes for vulnerable people should be facilitated in line with the National Policy on Disability for Sri Lanka -2003 and UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ratified by the Government of Sri Lanka in 2016.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC to take actions to transform TVET programmes conducted for persons with disabilities into the NVQ system with appropriate adjustments.
2. Each Training Institutions shall facilitate training centers to have staff trained for handling students with different types of disabilities who could work as shadow trainers[[24]](#footnote-24) for students with disabilities.
3. Training Institutions must train Career guidance officers to identify persons with disabilities and direct them to appropriate courses.
4. TVEC must monitor and ensure implementation of Reasonable Adjustments in NVQ Assessment for Candidates with Disabilities as introduced by the NVQ Circular 01/2021.
5. TVEC to arrange specialized training programmes for trainers and assessors for serving disable persons.
6. TVEC while assessing training centers for registration must monitor the compliance of facilities to be provided for disable persons.
7. MIS of respective institutions must facilitate compilation of enrollment and other relevant information on PwDs in TVET system.
8. TVEC to set up a sub -committee in the TVEC to promote and develop inclusive TVET with responsibility to monitor implementation of these strategies and monitor implementation of these strategies.

**Policy – TVET – 1.4:** **Female participation in TVET shall be promoted across all courses to enable increase of female participation in labour force.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. All TVET institutions must promote enrollment of females in all technical and vocational courses
2. TVEC to expand female friendly occupations with NCS, Curricula and training courses
3. The Ministry and TVEC must include a component in future projects to assist training centers and enterprises with technical trades to develop logistical facilities required for females
4. TVEC and Training Institutions to provide of skills upgrading and skill diversification courses for females to have wider career options.

**Policy – TVET – 1.5: TVET system shall recognize pre-vocational qualifications /achievements at school level and extend cooperation to conduct technical / vocational education in schools.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVET Institutions to provide services of Career guidance officers, trainers and training centers for vocationalizing general education.
2. TVEC to facilitate appropriate vocational qualifications under NVQ framework to recognize technical/vocational skills and soft skills of school children after completing Practical and Technical Skills subjects in school curricula.
3. Introduce an appropriate qualifications and assessment system to students in 13year compulsory education to facilitate seamless and effective transition to TVET system.
4. TVET Institutions to enroll students of 13-year compulsory education programme to relevant training courses.

**Policy – TVET – 1.6: Social Image of occupations and Training centers and training courses should be enhanced by improving minimum wages, occupational health & safety, ensuring retirement benefits and with integration of advanced technologies**

**Strategic Activities**

1. Wage Board of the Department of Labour to introduce NVQ based wage structure with attractive minimum wage.
2. The Department of Labour to ensure payment of EPF and ETF among informal sector workers and freelance workers.
3. All Training Institutions should facelift Buildings of training centers and their facilities to attract youth
4. All Training Institutions should develop Trainers as role model for trainees to follow them.
5. Industries and training centers should minimize dimensions of 3D (Dirty, difficult and dangerous) occupations by integrating with technologies, improving health and safety and improving working conditions.
6. Curriculum Developers to introduce modules on balancing income and expenditure and to prevent them from engaging in unethical practices such as drugs and alcoholism.
7. Curriculum developers to introduce a module to make trainees aware of social security system such as EPF, ETF and pension scheme of Sri Lanka Social Security Board.
8. Industry Sector Skills Councils to promote social image of practicing crafts person.

**Policy context**

## CORE AREA - TVET 2: QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK, NATIONAL COMPETENCY STANDARDS AND CURRICULA

TVET system has developed and implemented a National Vocational Qualification Framework in 2004 and it has outlined how to identify the skills needs of the industry, development of curricula and deliver of training programmes and conduct assessments. This has been executed as a unified qualification framework to be adopted by all TVET institutions in the country through an executive order signed by the Hon Minister of Vocational Training and Skills development based on the mandates given by the Tertiary and Vocational Education Act No 20 of 1990. Though NVQ Framework has grown to non-reversible level, expectations of NVQ Framework is not yet well realized. There are some vocational training centers still awarding non-NVQ qualifications. It needs active participation of the industry in development of competency standards and curricula, and to conduct NVQ assessments. Further, with the increased social demand, NVQ framework faces with new challenges such as recognizing vocational skills provided in schools and mapping and mutual recognition with foreign qualifications framework etc. Three policies listed below are expected to give momentum to NVQ and related issues to enable youth and industry to realize their skills aspiration.

**Directive Principles**

*DP 1: TVEC shall execute its mandate in regulating the quality and relevance of TVET by strict implementation of NVQ Framework and quality assurance system.*

*DP 2: All TVET institutions (both public & private) are expected of comply with NVQ framework and its quality assurance achieved through NCS developed with industry participation, competency-based curricula and assessments, and course accreditation.*

*DP 3: ISSCs are expected to provide the direction with industry foresight on skills development to the TVET institutions.*

**Policy – TVET – 2.1:** **Review and Revise NVQ Framework and make provisions to benchmark with international best practices**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC to review NVQ framework to add following features.
   1. Accommodate Foundational Vocational levels to recognize achievements in Vocational skills by school children
   2. Facilitate higher level modular certificates at NVQ level 5, 6 and 7 and diplomas at NVQ level 7
   3. Facilitate higher level graduate certificate and graduate diplomas beyond level 7 for graduates
2. TVEC to work on mapping and mutual recognition with regional or global qualification frameworks widely accepted in regions where Sri Lankans seek foreign employment and higher education opportunities
3. TVEC to promote NVQ based recruitments in public sector, private sector and foreign employment with recognition from the Ministry of public Administration, Wage Boards of the Labour Department and Foreign employment Bureau.
4. TVEC to seek recognition for NVQ for Higher education in local and global higher education systems.
5. TVEC to explore Competency Based Training and Assessment for different modes of education and training while being sensitive to the cost of training and assessment
6. ISSCs to facilitate at least 50 percent of industry-based assessors.

**Policy – TVET – 2.2: Review National Competency Standards (NCS) and curriculum development processes periodically to reflect skills demanded in the industry, effective learning and training process and to complete development work within reasonable timeframe.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC and NAITA to review the methodology of development of National Competency Standards and curricula in cooperation with industry bodies to reflect reality of competencies used in the industry.
2. TVEC and UoVT to review the methodology of development of curricula to facilitate learning of competencies specified in relevant National Competency Standards with compulsory modules for all technical skills, soft skills, underpinning knowledge and underpinning skills and optional modules for regional variation in relevant competencies.
3. TVEC, NAITA and UoVT to review and improve institutional capacities, Human and other resources and procedures to complete the development of NCS and curricula within reasonable time frame
4. TVEC to develop a system including industry and district TVET forum to Identify priority occupations and industry / technology sectors with demand for skills in the industry to develop National Competency Standards and curricula
5. TVEC to implement a rationale mix of NVQ level 1 – 4, 5 & 6 and 7, NCS and curricula to facilitate qualification progression.
6. TVEC, NAITA and other NCS and Curriculum developers to ensure Implementation of newly developed NCS and curricula.
7. TVEC and NAITA to introduce standalone units and modules to facilitate skills upgrading and career development in respective occupation.
8. TVEC to conduct research and innovate NVQ Framework to explore alternative applications of competencies such as competency-based performance management model. (Example skill matrix)
9. TVEC and NAITA and Foreign Employment Bureau to incorporate skills needs for foreign employment in relevant NCS and curricula

**Policy – TVET – 2.3:** **Industry collaboration should be further strengthened to bring industry foresight to develop and delivery of training programmes.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. The Ministry and TVEC jointly review the existing industry collaboration models and decide appropriate reforms.
2. TVEC and TVET institutions to explore Industry collaboration through the Industry Sector Skill Councils (ISSC) and also through the National Industrial Training Advisory committees (NITAC) which plays a complementary role to get direction for TVET development.
3. Industry Sector Skills councils should continue to provide inputs to TVEC, NAITA and other TVET agencies to develop National Competency Standards, curricula and assessment tools
4. ISSCs to extend cooperation to TVET institutions to conduct assessments, facilitate apprenticeship and OJT in industries with advanced technologies, industry trend analyses, prepare industry related career guidance tools and to nominate members to National Industry Training advisory committees (NITAC)

**Policy Context**

## CORE AREA - TVET 3: TRAINING INSTITUTIONS AND FACILITIES, LEARNERS AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Traditionally the capacity of TVET sector is estimated based on the training opportunities available for pre-employment training through Institutional training and enterprise-based apprenticeship. Many training courses are run under capacity and therefore, TVET institutions are struggling to enroll students to full capacity. But, all youth and school leavers do not seek training opportunities in TVET institutions. Instead, they directly enter labour maket. This scenario could be explained by following reasons.

* A large number of poor youths in age group of 15 to 18 are not attending the schools or any other training institutions[[25]](#footnote-25). Because of poverty, these youth may directly enter the labor market.
* Many TVET centers offer a limited number of training programmes/courses. Sri Lanka Occupational Classification has more than 5000 occupations[[26]](#footnote-26) and youth may have aspiration to choose one of these occupations. But, the Western Province has 497 courses in 126 occupations (TVEC website) and other provinces have courses in lessor number of occupations. Therefore, training centers should have wider spectrum of occupations with wider course-mix to cater to the labour market needs and youth aspirations. Though training institutions cannot cover all occupations available in the industry, enterprise-based apprenticeship could conducted in wider number of occupations.

As a large number of youths directly enter labour market without pre- employment training, they have skills gaps especially in knowledge domain. Therefore, TVET has a role to provide further training and re-training to the employees with skills gaps[[27]](#footnote-27) and also to further improve the completion rate of TVET trainees to enable them to realize their full potential. Further, the training system needs to reforms to address advanced skills, skills for livelihood occupations, entrepreneurship and skills for foreign employment. As such the TVET institutions have an obligatory role in providing a wider spectrum of training opportunities as listed below.

* Institutional Training (Training at Training Centers)
* Enterprise Based Apprenticeship
* Training through Public – Private partnership
* Further Training and Re-training of Industry Employees
* Training for Livelihood occupation / jobs
* Entrepreneurship development
* Training and Skilling for Foreign Employment

Therefore, it is very conceivable that there is an urgent need to rationalize the existing network of TVET Training centers by establishing new centers, if required, and to improve existing centers with economically viable size, good social image and uniform course mix in each district to ensure greater accessibility for training seekers and to meet the skills needs of the industry.

**Directive Principles**

*DP 1: TVET Institutions are expected to establish training facilities with uniform course mix with uniform geographical distribution and facilitate all social groups to have access to TVET programmes of their choice.*

*DP 2: NAITA is expected to explore full potential of apprenticeship with wider number of occupations and enterprises with advanced technologies.*

*DP 3: TVET institutions are expected to facilitate skills for up-skilling in advanced technologies, skills in livelihood occupations, entrepreneurship and foreign employment.*

**Policy – TVET – 3.1: Rationalizing and strengthening of TVET center network to broad-base the training provisions and enhance the access**

**Strategic Activities**

1. The Ministry with all TVET institutions review the existing network of TVET centers and introduce reforms to ensure rational distribution of training centers and courses in all geographical locations to facilitate uniform course mix in each district with adequate human and physical resources including the provisions to deliver them in languages in demand.
2. All TVET Institutions should improve social Image of training centers by improving and maintaining physical resources (i.e. well maintained buildings and pleasing surroundings, name boards, bill boards, etc.), training resources (i.e. training workshops, laboratories, IT facilities, library, etc.) and study areas and rest rooms with changing facilities, recreation facilities etc., so as to make a positive impression on the public and attract potential trainees.
3. All TVET institutions shall take steps to modernize existing training programme/courses, including the programmes/ courses to make them attractive to the youth.
4. All TVET Agencies should provide course mixes covering wider number of trades to enable youth to select courses according to their choices including the provisions of foundation courses/programmes with NVQ level 2 courses, particularly to attract school leavers with poor grades.
5. All TVET centers shall conduct regular Training Needs Assessments surveys by covering wider stakeholder groups - industry employees, community involved with livelihood occupations, those involved or aspiring to join overseas employment markets, etc., and design and offer short-courses/programmes offered on part time and fee levying basis
6. All TVET centers are required to establish facilities for co-curricular activities to promote and facilitate holistic development of trainees
7. All TVET Institutions, particularly the flagship institutions (such as CGTTI and other National Institutes) should cooperate with smaller centers / feeder centers to establish mutually beneficial and synergistic linkages, and also to promote the progression of TVET trainees to higher level NVQ qualifications.
8. The TVEC is expected to strengthen grant scheme for private and NGO training centers, and facilitate commercial banks to provide loans with subsidized interest rates for development of private training centers.
9. The TVEC shall formulate and issue regulatory directives making compulsory for any training agency to seek prior approval from TVEC for setting up of new training centers.

**Policy – TVET – 3.2: Review and expand apprenticeship benchmarked to international best practices.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. NAITA is required to expand apprenticeship-based training for wider range of occupations available in the labour market in compliance with the NVQ Framework.
2. NAITA need to explore and use modern methods of workplace learning with relevant theory and practical.
3. NAITA needs to get cooperation of large-scale industries including BOI and Export Processing Zones Industries to expand apprenticeship ~~and OJT~~ to provide training in advanced Technologies
4. NAITA is required to strengthen inter–enterprises cooperation (between large and medium scale enterprises) to facilitate quality training in all modules of an occupation in a number of organizations. When inter-enterprise cooperation is not possible, apprenticeship should be supported by supplementary training inputs by instructors with appropriate quality assurance.
5. NAITA is required to review situational apprenticeship to identify emerging occupations in the industry.
6. NAITA could enroll employees in informal (short term) jobs in the formal sector for apprenticeship programmes and facilitate them to earn an appropriate NVQ certificate.
7. NAITA is required to encourage industries to provide a training allowance to apprentices.

**Policy – TVET – 3.3: Promote Public -Private training center Partnership to explore synergetic effect on training capacity and industry relevance**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC and state TVET Institutions to explore and establish public - private training center partnerships to deliver programmes that require high human resource expertise and advanced technological inputs
2. ISSCs, TVEC and TVET Institutions should explore TVET centers and industry partnerships to deliver training in specialized areas with advanced technology and to explore innovative training modes
3. The Ministry and TVEC must consider provisions of projects and donor funding for start-up capital for proposed partnerships with feasibility study and risk analysis.
4. TVEC should establish collaborations with local and overseas TVET agencies in order to build capacities of TVET institutions and TVET teachers /trainers.

**Policy – TVET – 3.4: TVET Centers besides providing pre-employment training for youth, shall provide Further Training and Re-Training for Industry Employees**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC, NAITA and other institutions with delegated authority for RPL to expand NVQ certification for industry employees without formal training.
2. TVET institutions to provide technical assistance to industry for promotion of firm-based training and skill upgrading courses for industry employees with Record of Achievement Certificate under NVQ Framework
3. TVET institutions to develop and conduct advanced skills modules in demanding occupations for foreign employments
4. TVEC and TVET institutions to develop on-line learning modules and make them available to the public through social media channels
5. The Ministry and TVEC consider offering subsidies for further training of industry employees when formulation of new TVET projects
6. TVEC and ISSCs to explore funding from Employee Trust funds for skills upgrading of industry employees who contribute to ETF.
7. TVEC and TVET institutions to facilitate re-training of industry employees who have lost the jobs beyond their control due to Covid or any other reasons

**Policy – TVET – 3.5: All training centers shall have a livelihood training arm to provide skills for nearby communities to enable them engage in livelihood works effectively.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. All TVET institutions to establish a separate section / unit to organize programmes / courses to cater for skills needs of community, livelihood and gig job holders for effective performance of their jobs in cooperation with public and private industry lead bodies in following subject and areas.

* Quality and hygiene of products or produces
* Occupational health and safety
* Financial management and customer care

1. TVEC to conduct research to explore scope and dimensions of livelihood and gig occupations

**Policy – TVET – 3.6: Promote Entrepreneurship Development (ED) among TVET trainees and TVET Certificate and diploma holders.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. All TVET institutions should offer module/s to all TVET trainees to create awareness on entrepreneurship and this should be a pre-requisite for TVEC registration of training centers.
2. The Ministry and TVET institutions should review on-going ED programme periodically and improve them accordingly.
3. TVET institutions and TVEC should develop Occupational specific ED programmes and deliver them to certificate holders in respective occupations.
4. The Ministry should monitor the implementation of SEPI (Self-employment promotional Initiative) loan scheme with periodic revision of regulations and make sure availability of funds in SEPI revolving fund to disperse loans.
5. TVET institutions should establish ED promotion unit to offer advisory services to the SMEs established by TVET passed outs.
6. TVEC to make periodic studies to evaluate progress and weaknesses of ED programmes and propose actions to mitigate weaknesses and to propagate best practices.

**Policy – TVET – 3.7: Skills needs for foreign employment shall be included in courses delivered under NVQ framework and bridge the skills gaps of existing qualification holders for foreign employment.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC and Foreign Employment Bureau to identify key occupations covering large percentage of vacancies in foreign employment using Pareto analysis.
2. TVEC to revise NCS and curricula to include the skills needs for foreign employment considering countries where Sri Lankan are employed.
3. TVEC to link with qualification authorities of labour destination countries and map Sri Lanka NVQ with vocational qualifications of those countries.
4. TVEC, Foreign Employment Bureau and TVET institutions to develop modules on advanced skills for foreign employment and deliver to experienced crafts persons to realize foreign employment aspiration of craft persons and the country.

**Policy Context**

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## CORE AREA - TVET 4: QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TVET

As there have been many TVET providers in public, private and NGO sectors, quality assurance has become important to maintain uniform standards in programmes conducted by different institutions. The Tertiary and Vocational Education Act No 20 of 1990 has introduced registration of training centers and courses as a quality assurance tools in TVET. Thereafter, the Tertiary and Vocational Education (Amendment) Act No 50 of 1999 has mandated TVEC to establish and maintain systems for quality assurance in technical and vocational education and training including standards in respect of occupational skills, training programmes, testing and quality management system. Accordingly, TVEC introduced training standards for courses with course accreditation in late 1990s. Thereafter, with the development of NVQ framework in 2004, actions were taken to strengthen Registration of Training centers and Accreditation of courses to meet the requirement of NVQ. This is minimum requirement of quality for NVQ. But consistent quality could be achieved only though a quality culture. Therefore, the Ministry and TVEC have introduced many quality features such as Quality Management System, Quality Improvement System with star certifications, skills competition and excellence award to training centers.

Though many quality assurance programmes are launched by TVEC, as explained in the section 2.4.2 on ‘Issues related to Quality Assurance in TVET’, at any point of time, there are many training centers with registration expired and many courses with accreditation of expired. Further, QMS and QIS are installed only in about 250 training centers. Skills Competitions are not held regularly. In fact, quality is a difficult area as it is dependent on attitude, habits and culture and QMS demand continuous improvements. Therefore, Quality assurance should be supported by well formulated policy and strategy intervention.

**Directive Principles**

*DP 1: TVET programmes should be quality assured.*

*DP 2: Quality assurance programme should be easy to understand and comply with*.

**Policy – TVET – 4.1: Review and Revise quality assurance process to ensure quality assurance in design, delivery and assessment of training programmes in TVET**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC to review current quality assurance tools; registration of training centers, pre-registration approval, accreditation of courses, Quality Management System (QMS) and Quality Improvement System (QIS), Continuous improvement and make them simplified but without compromising effectiveness.
2. TVEC and UoVT to review current quality culture training programme and plan them deliver to all trainers and managers including private sector within next 5 years.
3. TVEC and all TVET institutions to develop a quality culture in TVET system where all stake holders including managers, trainers, trainees and parents are committed to achieve quality.
4. The Ministry and TVEC to hold skills competitions and excellence award to training centers regularly to lead competent person to expertise and also to institutionalize quality culture.
5. TVEC to make public aware of importance of quality to demand quality delivery from training centers.

**Policy Context**

## Core Area - TVET 5: Human Resources Development and Management

TVET is a system with many sub-functional areas such as education and training, curriculum development, training and assessment management, research, ICT, buildings and equipment repair & maintenance, procurement and accounts etc. All these functional areas need proficient and motivated staff to manage TVET system to attract youth and industry employees for skills development programmes to enable them to realize their employment aspiration and to meet skills needs of the local and foreign employment.

In Sri Lanka, all TVET institutions recruit staff based on technical qualifications and on aptitude for teaching and other skills. Aptitudes are not skills, they the potential for skilling. Therefore, they should receive continuous training to develop those skills.

**Directive Principles**

*DP 1: TVET system should be supported by well qualified and adequately remunerated teaching staff*

*DP 2: TVET Staff must remain abreast with continuing advances in technology and technical education.*

**Policy – TVET – 5.1: Review and revise human resource development and management system to have competent and motivated staff at all levels in TVET.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. All TVET institutions to have cadre positions with appropriate mix of permanent, contractual and visiting staff.
2. The Ministry in consultation with TVET institutions, review the exiting salary structures and propose a unified SOR and attractive salary structure across all TVET institutions to attract and retain best talent.
3. All TVET institutions adopt merit based promotional schemes supported by effective staff appraisal system.
4. University of Vocational Technology shall introduce a suitable post graduate study programme for managerial staff in TVET system.
5. All TVET institutions should conduct periodic HR audit to identify staff with excellent performance and good practices and propagate such good practices across all TVET institutions.
6. All TVET institutions take steps to internalize relevant international best HR practices.

**Policy – TVET – 5.2: Technical and Teaching competencies of TVET Training Staff must be continually upgraded.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. The Ministry, TVEC and UoVT to should take actions to develop a central dedicated trainer training institution with accommodation facilities for participants with a network of trainer training centers across the country. This institution should provide training in following area but not limited to;
   * Pedagogical training and teaching competencies considering changing teaching, training and learning practices,
   * Skills development programmes in par with technological advancements and changing work practices in industry and exposures to modern facilities in the industry.
   * IT skills to develop and deliver courses, and
   * Communication skills and English Language skills.
2. TVEC and UoVT to periodically review and revise Trainer qualification (NVQ Level 5 for Training and Assessment) benchmarking international practices and facilitate all trainers to have NVQ Level 5 trainer and assessor qualification or higher.
3. TVEC to issue circular instructions making compulsory for all new recruits to undergo induction programmes.
4. UoVT and TVEC to have linkages with national and international higher education institutions to provide opportunities for further professional development for preparing potential staff for future managerial positions.
5. TVET institutions to introduce a scheme to provide periodic industry attachment to trainers and technical teachers to stay abreast with recent advances in technology.
6. TVET institutions to establish a system to employ relief trainers / instructors to conduct classes when trainers take short term and long term leave.
7. TVEC to facilitate on-line leaning portal for skills upgrading of all TVET staff.

**Policy Context**

## CORE AREA - TVET 6: FINANCING TECHNICAL AND VOCATION EDUCATION

In Sri Lanka, the government play the central role in provision and financing of TVET courses. Many social groups make repetitive complains about low budget allocation to the education sector in the country. But, TVET has a complain about lowest allocations among education sectors which is about 6% from total budget of education sector. TVET institutions need to request higher allocations of course by showing their contribution to the economy. TVEC should work on ROI (Return on Investment) from TVET. Further, it is possible to assess remittances of foreign currencies from foreign employment of NVQ holders.

TVET institutions has lost significant income due to free technical education policy adopted in 2016. In order to offset that lost for some extend, TVET institutions have potential to generate funds to complement treasury allocations.

* Conduct part time programmes for industry employees on fee-levying basis
* Start production and services under the concept of ‘Training with production’ without compromising quality of training.

In addition, TVEC and TVET must consider to obtain industry contribution for TVET and start a dialogue on implementing section 83 on TVE Act no 20 of 1990 on training Cess and payroll levy as explained in the issues and gaps in the section 2.6 above.

**Directive Principles**

*DP 1: State assume the responsibility for providing adequate funding for TVET*

*DP 2: Explore potential of TVET to generate funds to complement the treasury allocation.*

**Policy – TVET – 6.1: State to provide adequate funding for state TVET system while providing conducive environment for private sector investment into TVET sector.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. The Ministry to take steps to enhance the annual treasury allocation to meet the recurrent and capital expenses of maintenance and development of TVET system.
2. TVEC to assess ROI in TVET and per students cost and inward remittance from foreign employment of NVQ certificate holders to demand higher allocation from the treasury.
3. TVEC and TVET institutions do effective project innovations and prepare realistic estimates and budgeting for public and donor funding.
4. The Ministry and TVEC shall ensure that donor funds are disbursed for needy reforms of TVET sector decided based on the risk and Rate of Return (ROI).
5. The Ministry and TVEC to provide project base funding to develop private and industry TVET intuitions in subject areas / fields where public TVET institutions are not performing effectively.
6. TVEC to negotiate with banks to facilitate loans scheme for private TVET institutions with subsidized interest rates.

**Policy – TVET – 6.2: Facilitate TVET system to generate funds to complement the treasury allocation.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. TVEC and TVET institutions should explore income generation projects such as fee-levying part time training and training with production without compromising quality of training.
2. The Ministry and TVEC in consultation with the treasury shall develop and issue circular instructions to facilitate retaining for working capital and disbursement of incentives from generated funds.
3. The Ministry, TVEC and employer organizations to explore funding from ETF for up-skilling industry employees.
4. TVEC and TVET institutions Explore Cess and payroll levy as specified in TVE Act No 20 of 1990 and to introduce new legislation to get industry contribution for TVET development.

**Policy – TVET – 6.3: Make sure efficient utilization of funds**

**Strategic Activities:**

1. TVET institutions to make investment decision based on effectiveness and efficiently
2. TVET institutions to make sure rationalization of resources to make sure use of funds more efficiently

**Policy context**

## CORE AREA - TVET 7: REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND EFFICIENCY

All public sector organizations have been established based on an ordinance or Acts passed by the Parliament of Sri Lanka. Those legislations give the legal mandate as well as the direction for those institutions to move forward. Under fast changing social, political and economic environment, any legislation cannot be static and they also should be reviewed and revised periodically to meet challenges in changing environment.

Usually, many legislations are drafted and passed with very ambitious programmes. As these Acts have been enacted at different times and there are overlapping mandates given to different institutions. The mandates given to the TVET providers have not been revised as per changing needs of the current and the future labour market requirements which have resulted in overlapping and duplication of TVET delivery. Therefore, any legislation should be refined sometime after enactment. Further, TVET should establish an effective planning and monitoring culture.

**Directive Principles**

*DP 1: All public TVET institutions should explore their full mandates to make their service more effective.*

*DP 2: All TVET reforms should be supported by revised legislations.*

*DP 3: Changing socio-economic environments demand reforms in legal framework and their enforcements.*

*DP 4: All TVET agencies and centres have effective planning and monitoring*

**Policy – TVET – 7.1: TVET institutions and regulatory agencies should be empowered with legislative enactments which are reviewed and updated periodically.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. Review the mandates of TVEC and TVET agencies enacted by respective Acts of parliament periodically and align them to suit changing requirements of TVET provisions with special reference to following.
   * Strengthen Regulatory Mechanism
   * Avoids duplication of functions and powers
   * promote public, private, NGO and Industry based training
   * Promote industry collaboration with TVET sector
   * Facilitate timely responses to changes in the labour market
   * Facilitate income generation through industry services
   * Facilitate collaborative TVET programs with local and foreign institutions in areas of high labour market demand.
   * Empower staff of respective intuitions to execute the powers vested by the Acts.
   * Empower respective institutions to take legal action against violators of provision of the Acts.
   * TVEC to have Greater collaboration with Divisional Secretariats to identify unregistered institutions and promote compliance with regulations.
2. TVEC shall get TVE Act amended to facilitate effective implementation of NVQ frame work and quality assurance.
3. The Ministry must monitor implementation of full mandates of Acts at periodic interval.

**Policy – TVET – 7.2: TVET Sector Development Plan, in keeping with the National Policy, must be prepared and implemented under the provisions of TVE Act No. 20 of 1990.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. The Ministry and TVEC in cooperation with leading TVET institutions prepare 5 year National TVET development plan in keeping with the National Policy Framework on TVET and updated annually
2. TVEC by October of each year, should prepare a macro level forecast of annual training demand for next year and all TVET institutions should develop annual training plans to meet that demand
3. All Training centres should have 5 year development plan and annual implantation plan and TVEC should consider its availability and effectiveness in implementation for renewal of registration of training centres.
4. TVEC should develop and implement Vocational Education and Training Plan for industry sectors and provinces as directed by the TVE Act no 20 of 1990.
5. The Ministry and TVEC should monitor the effective implementation of above plans and ensure development of the TVET sector as per policy directions.

**Policy context**

**CORE AREA - TVET 8: DATA, INFORMATION AND RESEARCH**

In order to make informed decisions, training and labour market data need to be collected and collated to produce information and make right and timely interpretation. That needs continuous research and documentation too.

To facilitate this process, TVEC with the assistance of three consecutive foreign funded projects have made arrangement to analyse training and labour market information. TVEC analyses labour market demand by analysing vacancies published in newspapers and demand for foreign employment and other relevant data in Labour Force survey. Further, TVEC collects and collates all supply side training data continuously. They publish Labour Market Information Bulletin twice a year with labour market and training information. This is quite satisfactory system but with following shortcomings and issues.

* Absence of real time data entry leading to inaccuracies in information and reports.
* Delays in collecting and collating training information.

In order to avoid these issues, TVEC and foreign funded projects have made many attempts to develop MIS and LMIS, but they were not succeeded to give required outcomes. However, VTA, NAITA and DTET has computer based system to collect and collate training data and TVEC has computerised system for registration, accreditation and assessment with relevant databases which could be accessed through TVET website.

Routine data collection and collating cannot enlighten critical issues in TVET. It need research and TVEC has a programme to promote institutional level research among TVET staff. In addition, TVET sector needs a few national level researches to test national level hypotheses.

**Directive Principles**

*DP 1:* Analyses of labor market and training information and research findings should be available for senior officials to make informed decisions.

*DP 2: Senior officials should be abreast with analytical reports on labour market and training information.*

*DP 3: TVET sector must be fostered through a vibrant research and innovation system.*

**Policy – TVET – 8.1: Facilitate informed decision making with central MIS with linkages to training institutions and with national and Institutional level research.**

**Strategic Activities**

1. The Ministry and TVEC shall take determine effort to strengthen the existing MIS system with extensive linkage with network of TVET Institutions.
2. TVEC must coordinate and support all training institutions and centers to have transaction support MIS with operational and financial information with real time data entry.
3. TVEC through the central MIS should maintain a graduate tracking facility to estimate employability.
4. TVEC and all public TVET institutions must compile reports on management information annually to support decision making by respective institution, regulatory bodies and the Ministry and the policy makers.
5. TVEC to identify sources, capture and map data relevant to demand for and supply of skills in the labour market.
6. TVEC shall strengthen the research and innovation programme in the following lines.
   * Seek enhanced treasury allocation to support research and innovation undertaken by the staff of TVEC and TVET institutions
   * TVEC to introduce national level research identified issues and themes of national importance
   * TVEC to obtain a cadre for full time research staff
   * Conduct the research symposium annually and publish proceedings

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17. **Foot note - A person with unconscious competency has enough experience with automated actions to apply the skill. Example: competent driver could drive a vehicle unconsciously.** [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. **Foot note - Special apprenticeship had started in late 1970 to train technical supervisors which has been converted to NDES of the Institute of Engineering Technology, Katunayake in 1985.** [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. **Foot note - A New or an emerging occupation initially begins at one or two enterprises. Any training in such emerging occupation is situational to those enterprises. That training in an enterprise is called the Situational Apprenticeship.** [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
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27. **Foot note- Training of an employee for a new occupation** [↑](#footnote-ref-27)