

STATUS REVIEW TO SUPPORT QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NEPAL

Summary

The Government of Nepal is committed to enhancing the quality of skills development, making it relevant and responsive to labour market needs. Quality is defined as fitting the purpose and / or meeting customer requirements. In TVET systems, this means delivering graduates that are competent in skills, knowledge and attributes required by the strategic, economic and social goals of the labour market and the country, with a quality assurance system that provides the framework and processes for the consistent delivery of graduates with valid skills. However, as with any system the requirements of the clients change and evolve over time, and the TVET system must be able to adapt accordingly to meet the requirements for new skills, knowledge and attitudes.

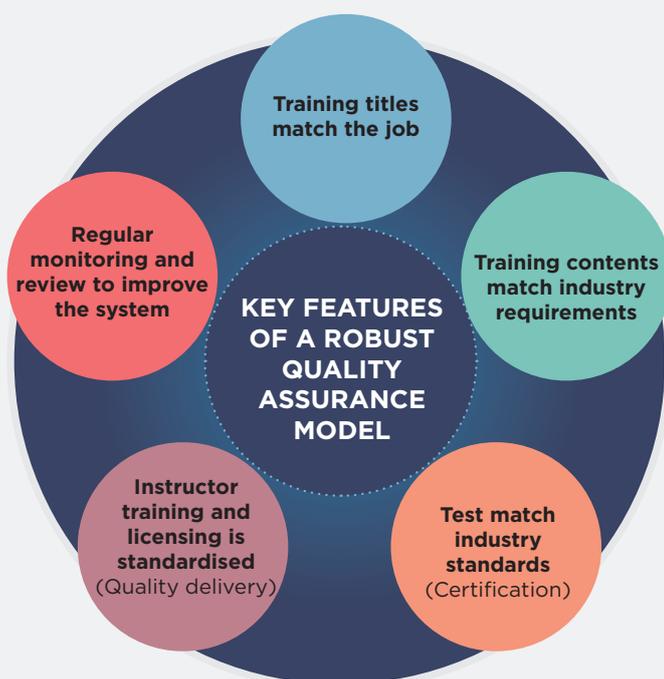
Clarifying the skills and attitudes required by the customers of the system, particularly those in business and industry, is a key step in establishing quality assurance systems. For this process to be effective, it must involve regular and systematic research into skills demand and analysis of economic trends, government priorities and local demands. One of the priorities of the Dakchyata: *TVET Practical Partnership* project is to address quality issues by supporting local stakeholders in reviewing current systems and identifying areas for improvement. In support of this, the Dakchyata project undertook a six-week status review to support CTEVT in developing an appropriate quality assurance model for Nepal. This Policy Brief summarises the main findings and recommendations from the status review.

Key Findings

Findings from the status review highlight several issues (from lack of involvement of employer leadership, to inconsistency in key systems and lack of facilities within institutes) which need to be addressed in order to progress development of quality assurance across the TVET system in Nepal. A brief overview of some of these key issues follows below:

Limited employer leadership and focus in key areas

The review found limited employer leadership in the development of both programmes and standards. In connection with this, it was found that current curricula appear to focus less on employer-recognised quality indicators which might more effectively reflect the needs of business and industry, and the job market.





Lack of well-structured standards and information

There is no well-structured system of quality assurance standards being applied across the whole TVET landscape. In addition, the system for accreditation of training providers – whether public or private – requires some re-structuring and to be rigidly enforced. It was also found that there is inadequate information about quality indicators across the three focal sectors of the study (agriculture, tourism and construction).

International learning and standards

Nepal TVET runs the risks of ‘reinventing the wheel’ because valuable learning from other countries on the use of current and well-developed QA standards is not yet being systematically considered in designing a system fit for the context in Nepal. Linked to this, international definitions of quality as they relate to satisfying employer and learner need are not being followed, leading to further distancing from international norms.

Scope to strengthen national goals and frameworks

The Nepal Vocational Qualification System (NVQS) Project is working towards improving the Quality Assurance System by creating career pathways and articulations between different occupations. However, lack of a coherent system of standards creates a challenging environment and risks hindering implementation.

Facilities at training institutions

The review highlighted several highly effective institutes but also found a diverse range of issues within others. It was found that most training institutions have inadequate equipment and facilities, training materials, and practical work-study opportunities for students. It was found that often, more focus is paid to quantitative goals and less on qualitative outcomes. Additionally, most trainers/instructors have received limited training and prior work/industrial experience themselves, and at the same time, instructional supervision and professional support for trainers and training providers requires strengthening.



Coordination and monitoring mechanism

Incoherence among various training providers is one of the major reasons for the prevailing challenges to an effective national training system. Overlap and confusion in the roles and responsibilities of various government training agencies also affect the efficiency and quality of the vocational training system. Although CTEVT has a legal mandate for quality assurance at the national level, its performance has thus far been limited to its own institutions.

Recommendations

Enhance employer involvement and a sector-based approach

Complete the establishment of the three existing Sector Skills Committees into legal entities and mandate them to develop sector profile analysis and set standards. In addition, enable employer leadership of the development process, by creating semi-autonomous sector bodies to ensure that labour market needs are accurately and consistently identified.

Build the capacity of employers

Deliver professional development programmes to immerse key staff from major employers in the three sectors in all aspects of training programme development, quality assessment, institute quality management, and quality indicators to reflect the skills and quality control required by the labour market.

Create a new Training Accreditation Division?

Recruit and train a full-time team of quality assurance and training accreditation staff under a new Training Accreditation Section within the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) to ensure that all quality assurance is coordinated by one section. Once the section is functioning there should be a complete re-assessment of all training establishments to make sure all meet the new quality assurance criteria for registration and accreditation.

Create and test a new Quality Assurance system

Create a comprehensive Quality Assurance system for the development and delivery of the curricula and qualifications, and pilot it through CTEVT affiliated institutions. New infrastructure for learning and assessment delivery would also have to be created within these institutions.



Establish other new systems and infrastructure

Recruit and train industry-experienced assessors for the external assessment of public and private training providers; apply the Quality Assurance framework to all delivery and assessment using a uniform approach across the whole TVET sector; and establish a rigorous monitoring and evaluation system to evaluate the relevance and quality of the Quality Assurance system for employers and learners.

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The review was conducted by an independent international expert in the spring of 2019. The review provides an overview of current processes for designing a quality assurance system in the country, profiles progress and the quality of institutes involved, and makes a series of key recommendations for its future development and refinement. The review was arranged around four key themes: the current National Skills Testing Board (NSTB); Quality Improvement Indicators and Skills Standards; current Quality Assurance practices in TVET centres; Coordination of TVET employer liaison and involvement.

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