



**CONNECTING SKILLS
TO OPPORTUNITY**

LEARNING FROM SUCCESS

SEECs STRENGTHENING
EMPLOYER
ENGAGEMENT IN
CTEVT
SCHOOLS

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SEECS

STRENGTHENING
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CTE/VT
SCHOOLS



INTRODUCTION

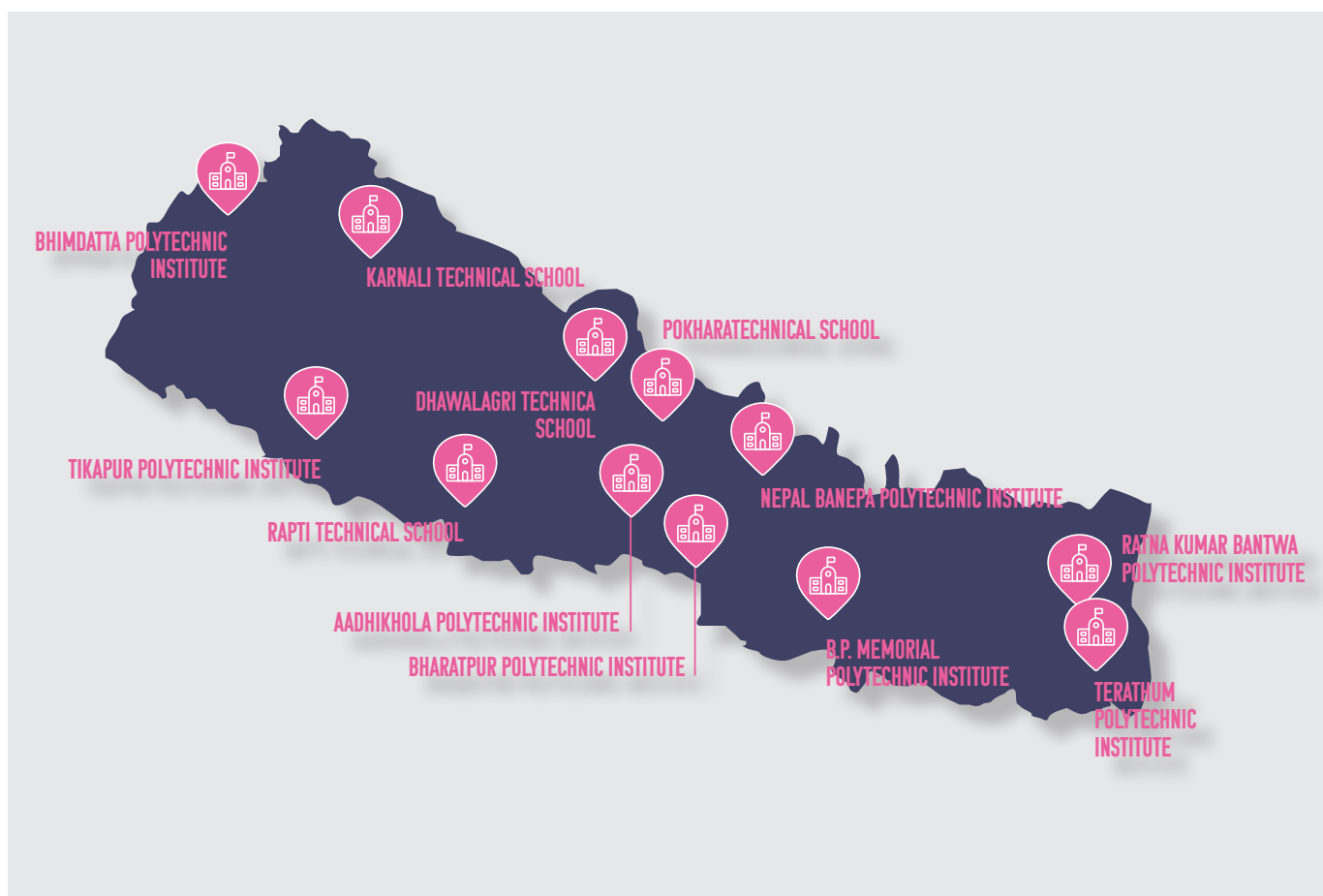
Nepal faces the joint challenges of unemployment and skills shortages in key sectors, due in large part to a disconnection between skills supply and employers' demand.

The role of employers in the strategic direction, quality assessment, and programme development of CTEVT schools is also often minimal and this has resulted in a lack of alignment between the skills taught and those required by industries. To make matters worse, most CTEVT schools have out of date learning equipment and facilities and most CTEVT instructors are unaware of current industry practice because they have come through an academic rather than industry route.

The Strengthening Employer Engagement in CTEVT Schools (SEECs) project was established by Dakchyata to address these issues and support strengthening, and implementation, of employer engagement to establish policy, processes, and practice in Nepal's TVET sector.

SEECs has focused on developing sustainable approaches for increasing the quality and relevance of the CTEVT school sector's delivery and responsiveness to labour market needs and operated in three key industrial sectors: agriculture, tourism, and construction. The project covers the period December 2019 through to December 2022.

SEECs was primarily implemented in 9 identified Dakchyata Supported Schools (DSS) and extended through a SEECs school mentorship programme to four Dakchyata Supported School Mentored (DSSM).



SEECs OBJECTIVES

SEECs has aimed to build models of quality training in the DSS and DSSM and wider TVET sector that develop the skills that employers consider relevant, thereby leading to growth in livelihoods, employment, and entrepreneurship.

Specifically, SEECs has aimed for:

- DSS/Ms to develop collaborative industry partnerships to enhance the quality and relevance of training programmes, assessment, learning materials and facilities
- DSS/Ms to enhance the quality of programmes by developing pre- and in-service training that promote instructors' up-to-date industry knowledge and by embedding industry experts' input into programme delivery
- DSS/Ms to build the capacity of school leaders for effective employer engagement by embedding employers in school governance structures and leadership development activities
- CTEVT to ensure the successful delivery, evaluation, and dissemination of SEECs through effective coordination and facilitation.
- DSS/Ms to promote employment outcomes for their local community through equitable access, developing employment and self-employment skills and providing Careers Advice and Guidance.

“Career advice guidance will be helpful to the learners so that they can make decisions about their future after completion of course and set an appropriate path. To achieve this, it has been important to build capacity within the schools so that they can offer this service effectively.”

MR. SHARAD KOIRALA, PRINCIPAL AANDHIKHOLA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

OVERVIEW OF SECS ACHIEVEMENTS



CREATED
FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT PLAN

DEVELOPED
ANALYSIS AND MATERIALS

DEVELOPED **PRE AND IN-SERVICE**
INSTRUCTOR PROGRAMMES



ENHANCED TRAINING PROGRAMS
BY WORKING WITH INDUSTRY EXPERTS



INCREASED **EQUITABLE ACCESS**
TO CTEVT SCHOOLS



**INCREASED EMPLOYMENT THROUGH CAREERS
ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**



**STRENGTHENED
CTEVT SCHOOL
LEADERSHIP**

**PROMOTED EICC/EMPLOYERS'
ROLE IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

**SECURED PROJECT FACILITATION,
COORDINATION AND MONITORING**



**SHARED
PROJECT
OUTCOMES**



**DEVELOPED
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND
SELF-EMPLOYMENT SKILLS**

HOW SEECs WORKED

SEECs treated effective employer and private sector engagement as a critical part of the development of relevant, quality, and sustainable training provision and emphasised the value of Private Public Partnerships (PPP) in providing innovative and sustainable approaches to developing more relevant and quality driven TVET provision.

“The private sector are highly motivated to engage, give their time and work with TVET schools to help shape curriculums and trainings because they realise that this will ultimately benefit them and their business.”

MR. DEEPAK KHANAL, PRINCIPAL RATNA KUMAR BANTWA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

SEECs also promoted the approaches to equitable access in pilot training for female learners, unemployed youths, and disadvantaged groups and, in addition, promoted the transition to a greener, climate resilient economy.

Additionally, the capacity of CTEVT schools' leaders and school instructors were developed through training and exposure to the private sectors and occupational skills upgrading programs.

Lumbini, Madhesh and Karnali each has one schools in the project. Bagmati, Province 1 and Sudur Pachim each had two and Gandaki province had four schools selected.

Achievements in detail:

Schools create new structures and routes for meaningful collaboration with the private sector

Employers' role in school leadership promoted through committees:

One of the key outcomes of the SEECs project has been the development of the EICC (Employers Information and Counselling Committee (EICC)) which integrate private sector actors into the schools' governance system. This investment into private sector inclusion reflects the schools' understanding that a private-led or influenced TVET system is likely to better meet the demands of the market and ensure that learners have the right skills and knowledge to take up roles in the workplace.

Those private sector employers engaged in EICCs and other schools' activities are experienced leaders who have demonstrable expertise and success in their chosen field who could add value to the school through their experience, networks, and potential to absorb learners post training. They have supported a range of tasks and processes that will shape the design, implementation, and monitoring of training. This includes inputting into market assessment and skills identifications, development and revision of skills curriculums, engagement in guest lectures and open days, and provision of apprenticeships and jobs.

“Curriculum development is most effective when it is industry-led. Whilst the agriculture sector has its challenges in linkages with industry, I can advocate for industry participation in the curriculum development and provision of training.”

MR. SHIV PANDEY, PRINCIPAL TERHATHUM POLYTECHNIC

The involvement of the private sector, both within EICCs and more generally, has served to motivate and inspire both learners and staff. Visits and monitoring of training by employers have served to improve quality assurance processes within the schools and ensure that all educational programmes and processes meet industry standards.

Capacity strengthening to prepare for a more engaged private sector:

School leaders (Principal, Vice-Principal, Coordinator, Head of Department, Instructor etc) assessed their capacity to engage and collaborate with industry representatives. Based on the gaps identified, the schools established clear strategies on how to improve industry linkages and looked to international good practice, including through an exposure trip to Philippines, to generate new ways of working with the private sector.

As many private sector actors have never engaged with the TVET sector before, it was important for the SEECs project to raise awareness and offer training to those who may be taking a more proactive role in training provision. This capacity support ensured that employers have a basic pedagogical understanding before they enter the classroom and work with students. An intensive week-long training package was designed by the DSS based on an analysis of employers' needs and experiences and a range of materials were designed and shared with CTEVT for further review.

TVET training better reflects the needs of the private sector

Programmes and materials developed through collaborative partnerships with employers:

Once a space had been created for the engagement of the private sector within the schools, a key benefit of their collaboration was in identifying demand and trends and shaping training. The EICC and project management of each DSS identified the following approaches as the best ways for schools to remain up to date on local industry and skills needed: exposure visits to industry, continued communication and connection with selected industry points of contact, and more formalised partnership between schools and specific industry actors or associations.




“There is high demand for bakers in Pokhara, but we hardly get the skilled baker in this field, if schools can produce the qualified baker, with relevant skills, then I will be able to provide jobs for them.”

MRS. SUNAINA PALIKHE, EAPC MEMBER

These engagements were often based on an initial more structured Labour Market Analysis (LMA) which brought together a range of private sector actors in the identification of key local job roles and skills gaps that should be addressed through training. The EICC and other employers then supported the schools to use this assessment to adapt and build upon the curriculums to ensure that they were market relevant for the local employers. All competency-based curriculums were shared with CTEVT for validation and approval.

As a result of these processes, 7 employer focused work-based programmes were developed and piloted by the DSS reaching 170 learners (42% female and 53% under the age of 24 years). Industry experts supported the schools in the implementation of these trainings through guest lectures, regular engagement with learners, and some direct training support.

Sector wise short-term skills training:

Sectors	Pilot Training (revised curriculum with new added skills)	DSS
Construction 	1. Local road supervision (540 hours)	GPI and BPMPI
	2. Construction Worker (390 hours)	RTS
Agriculture 	1. Off season vegetable Producer (390 hours)	RKBPI
	2. Community Agriculture Assistant (390 hours)	KTS and TPI
Tourism 	1. Small Hotel and Lodge Assistant (390 hours)	DTS
	2. General Cook (390 hours)	PTS
	3. Baker (390 hours)	NBPI

Sector wise number of beneficiaries:

Sectors	Total no of graduates	% Female
Construction	58	65%
Agriculture	55	30%
Tourism	57	31%

Schools and their staff have market-relevant knowledge and resources

One of the most significant challenges facing schools is lack of modern, market relevant equipment and facilities for learners to use for training. Also, outdated practices are used by instructors who may have limited engagement with industry and the approaches being undertaken. A key approach of the SEECs project was to ensure that the DSS had the knowledge, skills, and values to align with the market and employers for the future.

“By collaborating with the private sector in labour market assessments, schools have the opportunity to maintain and continually update their understanding of local industry practice and skills needs.”

MR. SHALIK RAM DANGI, PRINCIPAL RAPTI TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Pre- and in-service instructor programmes developed to ensure up to date industry knowledge (Occupational Skills Upgrading):

DSS/M, with the support of their EICCs, reviewed school instructors' industry knowledge based on the jobs and skills identified through the labour market assessment process. With the support of expert trainers, an instructor Occupational Skills upgrade programmes (OSU) was conducted in collaboration with EICC and CTEVT to minimise the skills gap of instructors. In some cases, more niche and bespoke skills development for instructors was provided directly by industry experts.

To support the ongoing career development of instructors, the schools have developed new monitoring tools and processes, such as classroom-based observation and regular discussions, to assess the quality of instructors' training. Any gaps identified are used to shape further development steps for the instructors.

Facilities and equipment plan developed through collaborative partnerships with employers:

DSS, with the support from EICC, reviewed and managed sector specific schools' equipment and facilities (Suitable for Skills Testing) and information and communication technology (ICT) needs. The schools have begun the process of modernising their schools to better meet industry requirements based on these assessments and discussions. This development of assets and facilities will continue and will be potential area of partnership with the private sector actors who can support in the procurement of new assets.

Leadership development deepens knowledge and skill of senior management team to grow schools:

School management teams have strengthened their leadership skills through the SEECs project by being given space and tools to reflect on and assess their quality of the processes in place within the schools. These tools have supported principals to identify key areas of development e.g., supervising and building teaching quality, operations and planning, leadership styles that will support the long-term functioning of the school. All DSS conducted built strategies on school leadership development for employer engagement in a sustainable manner within the school activities.

The DSS participated in an international exposure visit to the Philippines to deepen their understanding of industry engagement. Such opportunities provided the schools with a time to reflect on their own roadmap for how to implement new ways of working with industry.

Equitable access to CTEVT schools is increased through supporting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI).

TVET has been challenged by its ability to create an inclusive environment for all people and access and attainment within TVET has not always been possible for specific groups facing gender, ethnic, and social discriminations. The SEECs project has worked to break down some of the challenges faced by disadvantaged groups and sought to improve the inclusivity of the schools.

Schools developed GESI Units to lead process:

The leaders of the schools all understood that access and engagement of underserved and disadvantaged communities in TVET was vital for more inclusive growth of the overall economy. To make sufficient progress in this area, each school created GESI units, led by GESI coordinators, who have served as focal points for the spearheading of this issue in schools. The coordinators have supported the schools to analyse their GESI credentials and progress, led awareness raising within schools and communities, and coordinated and often led technical trainings for the GESI learners.

“As we discussed in the EICC committee meeting we came to know that the social, cultural, and economic aspects are the main barriers to access for many underserved groups. To address this, we collaborated with local groups and bodies to identify the GESI barriers and generate ways to overcome these barriers to gender equality, such as by raising awareness on domestic violence, language barriers, gender and sex, equality and equity, man dominated society and women employment.”

MR. RAM NARAYAN CHAUDHARY, PRINCIPAL B. P. MEMORIAL POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

Identification of barriers to TVET and action to increase inclusivity:




DSS/M involved over 150 local community group members and stakeholders to identify barriers to access in TVET and analysed GESI requirements to assess whether the school infrastructure supports equitable access or not. These engagements were often a chance to convince stakeholders and school staff of the importance of improving the inclusivity of TVET services for disadvantaged groups and improve knowledge on how they could contribute.

Through these processes, each school developed a GESI school strategy and analysed the key steps that were required to improve access, such as adaptations to the physical campus, adaptation to culture such the introduction of GESI-friendly language, or establishment of quotas to increase representation of specific groups.

Development of courses for disadvantaged and underserved groups:

13 training courses of 7 days were designed specifically for underserved groups based on their specific needs and the need for both soft skills, covering content about equality and rights, and the occupation hard skills. 260 people (47% female) graduated from the GESI focused training across 13 trades. The 390- or 180-hour short courses were conducted based on the demands of local employers and GESI communities.

Sector breakdown of short-term skills training

Sectors	GESI focused Training	Graduates	Female %	DSS/M
Construction 	1. Mason (390 hours)	20	1%	BPMPI, Janakpur
	2. Junior Plumber (390 hours)	20		GPI, Gorkha
	3. Tile and Marble Fitter (390 hours)	20		RTS, Dang
	4. Assistant Plumber (175 hours)	20		API, Syangja (DSSM)
Agriculture 	1. Computer Hardware Technician (390 hours)	20	79%	RKBPI, Ilam
	2. Mushroom Production (390 hours)	20		KTS, Jumla
	3. Organic Vegetable Farming (390 hours)	20		TPI, Kailali
	4. Off Season Vegetable Production (180 Hours)	20		TPI, Terhathum (DSSM)
	5. Community Agriculture Assistant (180 hours)	20		BPI, Baitadi (DSSM)
Tourism 	1. Barista (180 hours)	20	54%	DTS, Mustang
	2. General Cook (180 hours)	20		NBPI, Banepa
	3. Barista (126 hours)	20		PTS, Pokhara
	4. Bakery (160 hours)	20		BPI, Chitwan (DSSM)

Schools better promote and prepare learners to be work ready

In the past, TVET learners have not always been effectively supported to think through and plan their post-education journey. Students have often completed courses which they have limited interest in following long-term or they feel confined to seeking employment rather than establish their own enterprise. The schools have therefore worked hard to ensure learners are better prepared for their post-education journey.

Entrepreneurship strategies devised to steer schools' support for entrepreneurial graduates:

DSS/M developed a school entrepreneurship strategy to promote learner business opportunities. The strategies have been heavily influenced by the EICCs and local industry representatives, including the establishment of production units, value chain models, and how best to expose students to industry to inspire them.

Employment increased through Careers Advice and Guidance (CAG) and employability skills:

DSS/M have developed 'Careers Advice and Guidance' (CAG) strategies, training models and materials aimed at enhancing learners' employability and job seeking skills and, also involved local employers to visit the school to discuss job opportunities and arranged industry visits for Instructors and learners.

Entrepreneurship and self-employment skills developed:

To ensure students' ability to flourish post-training, DSS/M conducted local market assessments of skills to identify which would best lend themselves to self-employment either in the immediate or longer-term. In addition, communication, networking, and marketing skills were all recognised by EICC members and the private sector as being essential for any learner considering a move into self-employment and new training content developed to effectively cover these areas.

Schools establish themselves as incubator hubs:

Entrepreneurs often have few sources of support as they design, develop, and grow their enterprises. To address this, the DSS have established incubator hubs to better support students during this process. The incubators are designed to support students to produce high-quality products and access a more extensive value chain by leveraging the schools' linkages. In addition, DSS have strengthened or established linkages with financial institutes to improve access to finance for budding entrepreneurs; something which is traditionally challenging for micro, low asset or underserved entrepreneurs.

The way ahead:

Building and strengthening structures and routes for collaboration with the private sector

- EICC and general employer engagement should grow through the growth of relationships with local industry associations.
- EICCs should be formalised into the governance systems of schools with a clear mandate to work with. This needs to be documented and shared with CTEVT for wider dissemination and scaling.
- Schools, and their EICC, should continue to build learning materials and resources that support pedagogical skills development of the private sector and work with TITI and CTEVT to test and formalise approaches.

“The engagement of industry people plays a vital role in the TVET sector and within our school. Their advice on marketable skills is readily adopted into our work-based training and staff and instructors are keen to hear their work experience.”

MR. TEKENDRA BAHADUR THAPA, PRINCIPAL KARNALI TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Ensuring training delivery reflects the needs of the private sector

- To build and maintain momentum in adapting training to become more market relevant, assign school leads for labour market assessments and curriculum revision and creation.
- Gather local employers, EICC members and school instructors together in DACUM workshops to transform local demand into curriculum.
- Ensure that private sector is engaged in all parts of the TVET cycle from skills identification, curriculum adaptation, to integration into training and ongoing monitoring of quality and progress.

Strengthen schools' and staff knowledge and resources

- Utilise EICC members in the assessment of instructor skills gaps and integrate them into capacity strengthening and OSU training being provided.
- Standardise and document instructor observation processes and mainstream across all courses.
- Build space and time for schools' leadership teams to reflect on capacity and promote networking of leadership teams to ideate, share, and discuss how to improve functions of their schools, including their own capacity as leaders.
- Work with CTEVT and TITI to formalise leadership development activities into a replicable set of resources.
- Work with EICC and local employers to assess equipment and resources for market relevance and identify priority areas for procurement.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is mainstreamed to build equality

- Invest in GESI personnel and units to spearhead progress and serve as focal points for the process.
- Build, pilot and document the results of GESI based TVET training and assess the longer-term impacts through Tracer studies.
- Collaborate externally with services, authorities, and employers to understand need and create support for GESI services.
- Assess the resources, time and inputs required to bring about cultural and physical GESI change within schools.

“We need to understand more about the post-training journey of learners to ensure we are doing the right thing. Tracer Studies and following on monitoring are valuable instruments to assess graduates' status and should be part of the annual program planning.”

MR. HARKA LAL SHRESTHA, PRINCIPAL POKHARA TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Schools better promote and prepare learners to be work ready

- Integrate careers advice and guidance support at multiple stages of a students' journey.
- Collaborate with EICC members and employers to identify the skills options that lend themselves most readily to self-employment and enterprise development.
- Establish a comprehensive set of soft skills training materials which can be built into a curriculum and validated by CTEVT.
- Build incubator linkages with financial institutions to support improved access to finance for entrepreneurs.
- Utilise Tracer Studies to explore employment outcomes of trainees and assess which aspects of their training and work readiness best supported them.

“Skills need to be identified by Employers. Often, curriculums do not address the demands of employers. To be an effective reflection of market demand, curriculums need to be revised and DSS believe that employers are key in this process.”

MR. KHADGA SUBBA, PRINCIPAL DHAWALAGRI TECHNICAL SCHOOL

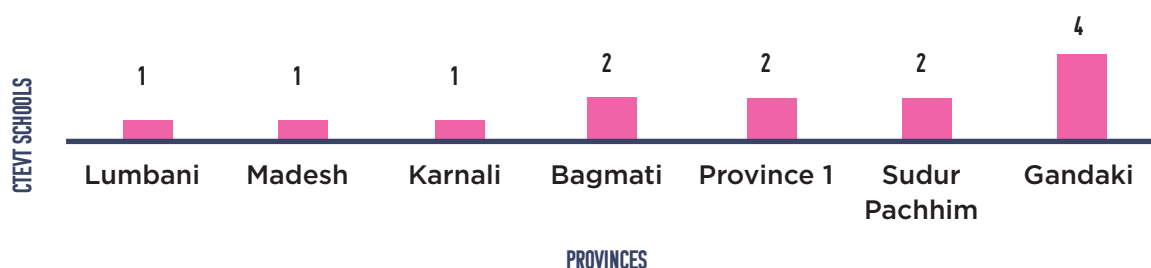


APPENDIX

Dakchyata Supported Schools (DSS and DSSM)

S. No	CTEVT School	Province	DSS/M	Location	Main Sector
1	Karnali Technical School	Karnali	DSS	Jumla	Agriculture
2	Tikapur Polytechnic Institute	Sudur pachhim	DSS	Kailali	Agriculture
3	Ratna Kumar Bantwa Polytechnic Institute	Province 1	DSS	Ilam	Agriculture
4	Bhimdatta Polytechnic Institute	Sudur pachhim	DSSM	Patan, Baitadi	Agriculture
5	Terathum Polytechnic Institute	Province 1	DSSM	Terathum	Agriculture
6	Rapti Technical School	Lumbani	DSS	Dang	Construction
7	B.P. Memorial Polytechnic Institute	Madesh	DSS	Janakpur	Construction
8	Gorkha Polytechnic Institute	Gandaki	DSS	Gorkha	Construction
9	Aadhikhola Polytechnic Institute	Gandaki	DSSM	Aadhikhola, Syanja	Construction
10	Dhawalagri Technical School	Gandaki	DSS	Mustang	Tourism
11	Pokhara Technical School	Gandaki	DSS	Pokhara	Tourism
12	Nepal Banepa Polytechnic Institute	Bagmati	DSS	Kavrepalanchowk	Tourism
13	Bharatpur Polytechnic Institute	Bagmati	DSSM	Bharatpur	Tourism

PROVINCEWISE DAKCHYATA SUPPORTED CTEVT SCHOOLS





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For more information, visit the Dakchyata website: <https://www.dakchyata-nepal.org/>

Dakchyata: TVET practical partnership is a skills development programme, funded by the European Union and delivered by the British Council in partnership with the government of Nepal, to realise the potential of young people who – equipped with the right skills – can contribute to national economic success in the agricultural, tourism and construction industries.

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