



Policy | Brief

Unlocking Bottlenecks for Skills Development in Tanzania

1.0 Introduction

Tanzanian TVET system has achieved significant milestones, particularly in increasing the number of young women and men enrolled in technical education and training. Recognizing valuable contribution of stakeholders in skills development, the National Council for Technical Education (**NACTE**) organized two Technical Education and Training (TET) Fora on 10th December 2020 and 27th May, 2021 at PSSSF hall in Dodoma drawing participants from training institutions, government agencies, and employers. The two events aimed to create a platform for stakeholders to discuss challenges related to skills development in Tanzania and recommend strategies to address the challenges. This brief presents key issues raised during discussions.

2.0 Challenges

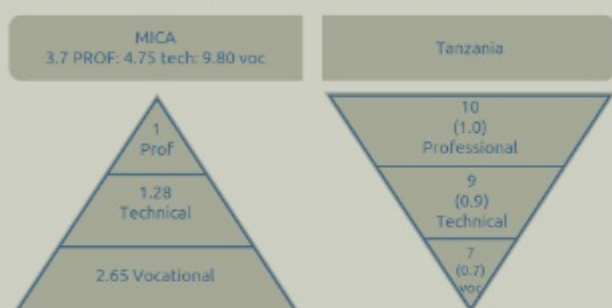
2.1 Skills Mismatch

There is a mismatch between skills supply and demand for labor in the Country because education and training is too often disconnected to the industry. This situation has been caused by several factors including inadequate investment in teaching and learning facilities for skill development especially at TVET level, low preference to technical and vocational levels skills – “degree-holder syndrome” and general aspiration to acquire degrees or equivalent qualifications.

2.2 Skills Imbalance

While the current Technical Education and Training Policy (1996) encourages industry to take an active role in the education training and improve manpower balance among the technical cadre of engineers/technologists, technicians, and craftsmen to the internationally accepted ratio of 1:5:25, the skill- mix-levels for Tanzania pyramid is bottom up (10 professional : 9 technicians : 7 artisans (National Skills Development Study, 2014).

BENCHMARKING: "SKILL - MIX - LEVELS" PYRAMID



2.3 Funding Skills Development

Skills gaps and skills mismatch are dealt with in silos or standalone approach in which stakeholders do not collaborate to a common goal. Employers are also reported to be reluctant in supporting skills development initiatives including training of students/graduates at the workplaces due to cost related to accommodating these graduates as well as fear of unknown related to skills/ capacity to work with new technologies. However, there is also a concern by employers that Skills Development Levy (SDL) could be used to support entire chain of skills development including basic education and technical education, unlike the current practice where SDL is allocated to only vocational and professional training and loans for Higher Education Students' Loan Board (HESLB).

2.4 Enabling Environment to Investors

Foreign Investment is not coming just with the capital, but also the investment package contains new technologies and managerial skills which can be acquired for human capital enhancement. Despite several initiatives in the past to improve business-enabling environment (BEE) and promote investment, conditions for doing business in the country have not been addressed satisfactorily. One of the areas that have been affected is transfer of skills due to foreign investing. It is perceived that there is delay of work permits, and high cost of acquiring work permits by foreign investors.

2.5 Skills Development Coordinating Organ

Currently issues of skills development are dealt with in silos. There are uncoordinated efforts by various stakeholders who take part in skills development. While initial efforts were to establish sector skills councils, these councils have not been able to address challenges related to skills effectively due to the absence of the overarching coordination body. The Sector Skills Councils also need to be strengthened by an Act/Policy.

2.6 Fostering Innovations

The National Science and Technology Policy of 1996 recognizes and provides for the need to establish relative priorities of programs for generating new knowledge and to determine strategies for the -

application of science and technology for development. There is increasing efforts by technical institutions to innovate various technologies that could be developed to address some of the challenges in the society. However, these innovations lack funding and support to their full developments so that they can contribute to the National economy.

- iv. Since there are uncoordinated efforts for skills development in the country, there is a need to institute an over-arching body to coordinate skills development issues in Tanzania; and
- v. There should be strategies for institutionalization aiming at promoting and protecting intellectual property rights for local innovations.

3.0 Recommendations

- i. To promote work based programmes by providing incentives to employers such as reduction of SDL contribution depending on the number of students received by the respective employers;
- ii. Widening the scope of using funds collected as Skills Development Levy by supporting skills development in all levels including Technical Education and Training. This will reverse the existing pyramid of education;
- iii. To acquire skills and new technologies from foreign investment, there is a need of holistic approach in creating a conducive business environment by undertaking comprehensive regulatory reforms as reiterated by the Head of State at several occasions. The holistic approach includes a review of the policies and regulatory agencies as well as streamlining and rationalizing taxes and levies to ensure inclusive participation of the private sector.

Copyright @ National Council for Technical Education 2021

National Council for Technical Education
P.O. Box 7109,
Plot No. 719/1/4, Mikocheni Light Industrial Area,
Dar es Salaam - Tanzania.

Phone: +255 22 2780; 077/2780321

Fax: +255 22 2780060

Email: info@nacte.go.tz

Website : www.nacte.go.tz