

MEETING BASIC LEARNING NEEDS IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

UNESCO-UNEVOC Book Series
Technical and Vocational Education and Training:
Issues, Concerns and Prospects

Volume 2 2

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Meeting Basic Learning Needs in the Informal Sector

Integrating Education and Training for Decent Work,
Empowerment and Citizenship

Edited by

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BOOK SERIES SCOPE

The purpose of this Book Series is to meet the needs of those interested in an in-depth analysis of current developments concerning various aspects of education for the world of work with particular reference to technical and vocational education and training. The Series examines areas that are at the 'cutting edge' of the field and are innovative in nature. It presents best and innovative practice, explore controversial topics and use case studies as examples.

The audience for the Book Series includes policy-makers, practitioners, administrators, planners, researchers, teachers, teacher-educators, students and colleagues in other fields interested in learning about TVET, in both developed and developing countries, countries in transition and countries in a post-conflict situation.

The Series complements the International Handbook of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, with the elaboration of specific topics, themes and case studies in greater breadth and depth than is possible in the Handbook. The Book Series also augments the various other publications in the International Encyclopaedia of Technical and Vocational Education.

Topics to be covered in the Series include: training for the informal economy in developing countries; education of adolescents and youth for academic and vocational work; financing education for work; lifelong learning in the workplace; women and girls in technical and vocational education and training; effectively harnessing ICT's in support of TVET; planning of education systems to promote education for the world of work; recognition, evaluation and assessment; education and training of demobilized soldiers in post-conflict situations; TVET research; and school-to-work transition.

The Book Series Technical and Vocational Education and Training: Issues, Concerns and Prospects, and other publications in the International Encyclopaedia of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, are publications of the UNESCO UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNESCO-UNEVOC) in Bonn, Germany.

Those interested in obtaining more information about the Book Series, or who wish to explore the possibility of contributing a manuscript, should (in the first instance) contact the publishers.

INTRODUCTION BY THE SERIES EDITORS

Work is a major feature in most people's lives. Not only does it provide them with the means of survival in terms of food, clothing and shelter, but also the type of work undertaken by individuals and groups has a major impact on their self-identity, social status and standard of living. Improving education for the world of work can help increase the real incomes of workers in both the formal and informal sectors of the labour market, provide citizens with more choices in their working lives, help alleviate poverty, and empower individuals who would otherwise be marginalised.

As an important part of education for the world of work, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) has been identified by UNESCO Member States as a priority area within UNESCO's range of programme activities. This is to be expected since there is overwhelming evidence demonstrating that TVET can play an essential role in promoting sustainable development and economic growth, with clear benefits for individuals, their families, local communities and societies in general.

However, TVET is currently faced with several important challenges. Some are posed by the displacement of the traditionally strong focus upon manual work in favour of mental work, or at least the changing mixture of competencies required in the workplace. The boundaries between manual and mental work are fading away, as many traditional forms of work and the respective preparation processes for learning to work undergo changes. In addition, the shift from the Industrial Age to the emerging Information Age, and from localisation towards globalisation, has considerable implications for education and training for the world of work and TVET, as do moves to effectively harness information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve the reach and quality of delivery of TVET programmes.

A major area of debate at the current time concerns the place and role of TVET in the development of individuals and communities living and working in the informal sector. Traditionally, the Technical and Vocational Training and Education sector has played a limited role in the informal labour market. However, the pressures in favour of a greater role for a global market, stress on globalisation and technological change, the size, diversity, and the strength and sheer tenacity of workers and owners in the informal sector have combined to bring about a reappraisal of the links. Governments in developing countries have had to acknowledge that public service and formal sector jobs can no longer be a nation's main source of employment. The formal sector of the economy is shrinking. It is therefore not difficult to explain the re-emergence of the informal sector agenda. The policy constituency in developing countries is looking at different education and training perspectives for supporting communities and individuals in self-employment and micro-enterprise.

This publication presents case studies that integrate education and training with the achievement of societal goals of greater democratisation, participatory citizenship and decent work economy. Drawing from the International Labour Organisation's Decent Work Agenda, this book aims at a shift away from the narrow mechanical connotation of skills development and employment towards a rights-based approach in which the meeting of basic learning needs and the right to basic education are singled out as pivotal. It takes the stance that promoting the right to basic education is crucial for overcoming oppression and indecent working conditions. Education is indispensable for protecting other human rights – health, liberty, economic well-being and participation in the cultural and political life of the community as well as work-related issues such as representation, dialogue and security.

The present volume looks at the interlinkages between EFA and work. Basic education in its current state is not imparting the necessary skills for entry to the labour market. In view of this gap, the case studies pose the crucial questions of what essential skills and which basic learning needs have to be addressed for productive and decent work. The case studies stress the need to build education for all on a firm foundation of literacy, numeracy, science and technology, and values of citizenship; they call for a better balance between vocational and general education; they question the often narrow vocationalist tendencies in non-formal education and instead propagate its linkages with formal learning and its enhancement through inter-sectoral linkages with health, culture, environment, infrastructure, and basic needs such as provision of housing, water and sanitation.

The case studies do not emphasise one kind of education rather than another. They highlight different modalities in different settings – basic education, vocational training centres, in enterprises, in non-formal education – from a systemic and integrated perspective.

The publication of this volume launches the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Encyclopaedia of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and the Book Series Technical and Vocational Education and Training: Issues, Concerns and Prospects. The following contributions seek to demonstrate the action that national governments, NGOs, donors, business and community-based organisations are taking through a whole range of learning programmes, in education and training systems, and in the world of work itself, in order to make an impact on attitudes and capacities relevant to the informal sector. Although this book mainly provides case studies of learning programmes for the informal economy in countries in South Asia, Latin America and Egypt, the lessons learnt have much to offer to researchers, policy-makers and practitioners working in other parts of the world.

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PREFACE

In advancing the vision of adult learning articulated at the International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) held in Hamburg in 1997, the UNESCO Institute for Education has been conducting studies on the different areas and dimensions of 'Adult Learning and the Changing World of Work'. One question that has been central to this area is: What constitutes adult learning for those who traditionally secure their survival in the informal economy, as well as for those school leavers and dropouts who are forced to work in this sector?

In answering this question, the informal sector or popular economy may be defined in various ways, but there is an increasing recognition that it is a phenomenon that has come to stay and that government policies aimed at economic and social development, including national education and training policies and programmes, should target those who work in this sector. In particular, basic education and continuing education and training are being seen as key to empowering people and as crucial to strategies for reducing poverty. Moreover, there is a growing awareness that education is a human right of fundamental significance to promoting decent work and humane living conditions.

It is in view of such considerations that UIE and the ILO planned to conduct studies in South Asia (Nepal, Bangladesh, India) to develop an understanding of the quality provision of education and skills development in and for the informal sector. But while the present volume had its start in these South-Asian country studies, they have been expanded upon by including case studies from other countries. The two-fold aim in doing so was to provide an inter-regional perspective and to incorporate cross-cutting issues widening the conceptual and analytical understanding of the complex educational processes in this sector.

This anthology has two main aims. The first is simply to bring together the facts about the basic learning needs and skills of people working and living in the informal economy and to present case studies from different countries examining the rich variety of educational and training strategies for meeting these learning needs. The second aim is to present an understanding of knowledge and skills acquisition in the informal sector from both a systemic and an integrative perspective. The chapters presented below portray the grave problems facing educational and training systems vis-à-vis informal sector workers, even as they look at holistic solutions to these problems, that is, solutions that take into account principles of lifelong learning and innovations in informal, non-formal and formal adult learning. The systemic and integrative perspective offered here goes beyond the educational and training domain in order to understand the role of social partners and the interfaces between the educational system, the broader institutional environment, and links to social and economic policies.

Both aims call for a wider, more encompassing vision than is ordinarily in evidence concerning the informal economy, which has largely remained outside the purview of educational analysis. Such a broad frame of vision is also called for because the informal world of work is quickly becoming more global and interlinked, as well as a sphere in which both survival and growth call for the use of comprehensive educational and training strategies tied to issues of equity, cost-sharing, outreach, scale, rights and entitlements, economic and social empowerment and civil society participation. The dearth of livelihood opportunities and profound inequalities in societies and economies around the world have of necessity brought these concepts into sharper focus in relation to national educational goals and policies.

It is our hope that this publication will contribute to a greater educational and policy dialogue about how best to deal with segments of the population which lie outside the system of formal work and education. We also trust that it will facilitate the identification of concrete actions promising constructive changes in educational and training systems for improving living and working conditions in the informal economy.

Adama Ouane
Director, UNESCO Institute for Education
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Madhu Singh
UNESCO Institute for Education
April 2005

ACRONYMS

APE	Association for the Protection of the Environment
AGCCD	Association of Garbage Collectors for Community Development
AMM	Annapurna Mahila Mandal
ASCE	American Society of Civil Engineers
ASTRA	Application of Science and Technology to Rural Areas
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BIMT	Bangladesh Institute of Marine Technology
BMET	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
BSE	Barefoot Solar Engineers
BTEB	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
CID	Community and Institutional Development, Cairo
CAPART	Council for Advancement of Peoples Action and Rural Technology
CEI	Integral Education Centre
CESDER	Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Rural
CIMO	Calidad Integral y Modernización
Cinterfor/ILO	Centro Interamericano de Investigación y Documentación sobre Formación Profesional/International Labour Organisation
CONAFE	Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo (Mexico)
CONFINTEA	Conférence Internationale sur l'Education des Adultes
CSIR	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
CTD	Centre for Technology Development
CTD/STD	Centre for Technology and Society for Technology and Development
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DANIDA	Danish Agency for Development Assistance
DCSSI	Development Commissioner of Small Scale Industries
DDC	District Development Committee
DFL	Disease-Free Laying (of Tasar moth eggs)
DHAN	Development for Humane Action
DHRDC	District Human Resource Development Committees
DOEACC	Department of Electronics Accreditation of Computer Courses
DST	Department of Science and Technology
DTE	Directorate of Technical Education
DWCRA	Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ENRED	Foro de Redes de América Latina y el Caribe
EPC	Employment Promotion Committee
FORMUJER	Regional Programme to Strengthen the Vocational and Technical Training of Low-Income Women
FPO	Fruit Products Order
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIAN	Gujrat Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network
GOI	Government of India

GTZ	German Agency for Technical Assistance
HSC	High School Certificate
HSEB	Higher Secondary Education Board
HSTP	Hoshangabad Science Teaching Programme
IAMR	Institute of Applied Manpower Research
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INA	Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (National Training Institute)
INATEC	Instituto Nacional de Tecnología
INFOCAL	Instituto Nacional para la Formación y Capacitación Laboral/National Institute for Labour Training
INPRHU	Instituto de Promoción Humana
INVUR	Instituto de la Vivienda Urbana y Rural
ITI	Industrial Training Institute
KSSP	Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad
KVIC	Khadi and Village Industries Commission
MAWTS	Mirpur Agricultural Workshop and Training Programs
MAYA	Movement for Alternatives and Youth Awareness
MEADOW	Management Enterprise and Development of Women
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
NATRAS	Niños y Adolescentes Trabajadores
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NCVT	National Council for Vocational Training
NIF	National Innovation Foundation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation
NOS	National Open School
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSS	National Skill Standard
NVTC	National Vocational Training Centre
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEP	Organizaciones Económicas Populares
ORGANIC	Organisation of Self-Help Collective
PET	Programa de Economía del Trabajo
POCET	Programa de Educación para el Trabajo
PRADAN	Professional Assistance for Development Action
PROIMUJER	Programme for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women in Employment and Vocational Training
SENA	Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje
SETU	Social, Educational and Training Unit of the Church in Delhi
SEWA	The Self-Employed Women's Association
SHG	Self-Help Group
SIDA	Swedish Agency for International Development
SKIP	Skills for Progress
SPMS	Sri Padmavathy Mahila Abyudaya Sangam

SSC	Secondary School Certificate
SSD	Science and Society Division
STD	Society for Technology Development
STEP	Support to Training and Employment Programme
SWRC	Social Work Research Centre, Tilonia Rajasthan
TEVT	Technical Education and Vocational Training
TRC	Technology Resource Centres
TRDEP	<i>Thana</i> Resource Development and Employment Programme
TRYSEM	Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment
TTC	Technical Training Centres
TTTC	Technical Teacher Training College
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UCEP	Underprivileged Children's Educational Programme
UIE	UNESCO Institute for Education
UNCHS	United Nations Committee on Human Settlements
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nation Industrial Development Organisation
VDC	Village Development Committee
VEC	Village Education Committee
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VTCDs	Vocational Training and Community Development
VTI	Vocational Training Institutes
VTTI	Vocational Teacher Training Institute