

*An **open letter** from Brazil, Netherlands, Russia and South Korea enhancing TVET's capacity to address two major global challenges in the development agenda beyond 2015: youth employability and development and competitiveness.*

São Paulo, 14 August 2015

Many countries are recognizing the potential of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to support dynamic demographic and technological changes. These countries believe that prioritizing TVET and skills development is a key strategy to address youth unemployment and sustainable development. Ensuring that young professionals and adults have equal access to learning opportunities and develop skills, knowledge and capacities that are recognized and relevant for professional and personal development, is essential for the skills development agenda beyond 2015. In order to fulfil this purpose, we propose a six-key strategy plan to promote technical vocational education and training within the global agenda on education.

1. Encourage participation in education improvement plans

The success of an education programme requires a collective effort. Government, companies, families, and the media must contribute to school improvements so that children and young people have access to better education. Results are effectively achieved when everyone is committed to the education agenda.

2. Support a TVET pact between educational institutions, employers, young people and Government

Motivating young people to enter into and complete their TVET training. Making TVET more responsive to developments in society and the labor market and to innovations. Bringing about harmonization between the TVET and the labour market.

3. Make vocational education courses more attractive for youth

Developing courses where theory and practice walk hand in hand with business needs, modern pedagogical methods and educational resources is crucial to attract youth to vocational education and training. This is especially important for those seeking alternatives to enter the labour market quickly. Enriching the quality and entrepreneurial skills of educational and management staff through connectivity and knowledge exchange with the

business community, the use of state-of-the-art materials and the latest technologies, and assigning a central role in striving for quality improvement.

4. Promote innovative education practices, optimizing resources and expanding access

Identifying versatile technologies that provide better results and greater access is critical. Intelligent, flexible and adaptive systems, customized according to individual needs can be a promising path for schools, training centres, companies and students. Those technologies can contribute to reduce vocational education shortfalls and enable continuing education opportunities.

5. Prepare youth for the knowledge era

Focusing on cognitive and skills development is one of the key factors to help youth achieve solutions to complex problems. These skills will be fundamental to prepare youth and adults for technological and interactive work environments.

6. Train professionals to be part of the solution

Developing and strengthening vocational training programmes for adults and workers that have already gone through an initial qualification and intend to develop a second career and return to the labour market, is pivotal. Realigning the productive sector strategies in a very dynamic world is crucial to supporting the economy's competitiveness and productivity, and providing job opportunities.

7. Promote inclusion policies through technical vocational education and training

Developing qualification opportunities so that professionals can build their own careers and support their families, considering environmental, sustainability and technology development policies, is vital to build a world that is more just, has better income distribution and more prosperity, regardless of race, gender, religion, culture or nationalities.

8. Increase internationalization in TVET

Stimulating and facilitating national and international transferability, student participation in international skills competitions and internships, student mobility and initiatives aimed at gaining cross-border experience.