

Extract of research findings on a **critical analysis of Technical and Vocation Education and Training and its contribution to job creation in The Gambia**

Introduction

A country wide survey was conducted in 2014 to critically analyse TVET and its contribution to job creation in The Gambia. The research was done by Solomon Atibuni, VSO Volunteer attached to NTA as a Labour Market Information System Researcher. The report was validated by relevant stakeholders in April 2015.

Below is an extract of the research findings relevant in implementing the recommendations outlined by the lead researcher.

Analysis of findings

Responsibility status of household respondents

55.4 percent of the respondents were non-household heads of which 45 percent falls in the age bracket of 16-35 years while 36 years and above accounts for the remaining 10.4 percent. 44.6 percent of the respondents were household heads, 36 percent of these respondents were 36 years and above and just 8.5 percent of the household head respondents were within the age category of 16-35 years.¹ The research findings showed that the household heads were responsible for providing the basic needs of the household members. This implies that most of the youth are dependants. The dependency ratio of household head respondents to non-household head respondents was 0.80 that is every 100 household head respondent supports (welfare and/or tuition fees) 80 persons.

Results indicated that a total of 58.4 percent household head respondents accommodated 1-5 persons above the age of 18 years in the same household, followed by 26.5 percent household head respondents who indicated harbouring a range of 6-10 persons above the age of 18 years in the same household. 4.4 percent household heads indicated to be harbouring at least 11 persons above 18 years. Only 10.8 percent of the household heads reported not having any one in their household above the age of 18 years². This shows that most of the youth above 18 years are likely depending on other adults perhaps within the same age group in the same households for their general wellbeing.

The study established the number of under 18 years dependants who were under the direct support of the household heads in terms of school fees, health costs, nutrition costs or other expenses. The results indicated that 65 percent of household heads were directly supporting between 1-5 dependants, 24.4 percent household heads were supporting between 6-10 dependants, and 3.5 percent were supporting more than 11

¹ Page 47

² Page 48

dependants, whereas 7.1 percent had no dependant below the age of 18 years under their direct support in terms of school fees, health cost, nutrition cost or other expenses.³

It is evident that there is a huge financial pressure on working household heads to support children and even adults probably of same age group within their households.

Employment record of household respondents

Among the household head respondents, the study found that only 63.6 percent were engaged in gainful work or employment that is remunerated and 36.4 percent household heads were not engaged in any gainful work or employment that is rewarded⁴.

The statistics indicate that only 15.6 percent of the study respondents were currently studying (academic institutions or TVET). 84.4 Percent of the respondents were not actively or directly studying of which 44.4 percent are household heads and 39.9 percent were non-household heads. This implies that the 39.9 percent of non-household heads were not taking up trainings of any nature hence will likely remain unemployed and continue to live within the poverty circle⁵. Among the respondents who admitted to be students, 53.4 percent were in senior secondary level (Grade 10-12), followed by 20.8 percent who were in Junior secondary school, 7.1 percent were in the university, 5.5 percent were pursuing Primary Teacher certificate (PTC), 5.1 percent were attending Technical schools, 4 percent were pursuing Higher Teacher Certificate (HTC), 2.2 percent were attending Vocational school and only 2 percent indicated others (Madrasah, French and nursing (1))⁶.

The results showed that among those respondents, who had admitted to have attended TVET programmes, 60.6 percent had already been employed in the public, private, formal and informal sectors and a total of 39.4 percent had not been employed.⁷

The results indicated that out of the TVET graduates, 57.1 percent have been applying for jobs and only 42.9 percent have not been applying for jobs.⁸

Among the TVET employed categories of respondents, 38.2 percent were absorbed in the various employments in a time frame of 12 months or above, after graduating from TVET training institutions. Whereas, 23.5 percent were employed within a period of 1-3 months, 20.4 percent were employed either while attending skills training or in a period of below 1 month from graduation, 9.4 percent were employed between 9 to 12 months and 8.5 percent were absorbed between 3 to 6 months respectively⁹.

TVET AWARENESS AND TRACKING METHODS IN THE GAMBIA

According to the survey 76 percent of the respondents argued that there is no available tracking systems/tools on TVET developments, 22.6 percent acknowledged the

³ Page 48

⁴ Page 49

⁵ Page 56

⁶ Page 56

⁷ Page 86

⁸ Page 87

⁹ Page 88

availability of tracking system and only 1.4 percent were not aware (do not know or had no idea)¹⁰. The research findings further showed that majority of the respondents totalling to 71.9 percent have never heard about the TVET initiatives in The Gambia whereas only a minimal total of 28.1 percent indicated to have knowledge of Technical and Vocational Education and Training programmes. 52.7 percent of those who have heard about TVET or TVET related programmes were from the urban area and the rural area accounts for the remaining 19.2 percent¹¹. Among the respondents who were aware of the current TVET initiatives and programmes, 67 percent of the respondents were aware of the current initiatives and programme via mass media (television, radio and print media) , 16.5 percent identified peer group influence in which they are informed by their friends who are either enrolled for TVET courses or whose relatives or someone close to them is enrolled. 8 percent cited an unclear system, 3.6 percent indicated the high cost of university education which drives them to search for alternative education hence coming across TVET programmes, 3.3 percent identified National Training Authority's outreach programme of national sensitization and 1.6 percent quoted the traditional and religious feasts for the tailoring as their source of information towards TVET¹².

Level of TVET Education and distribution of Training Institutions

The results indicated that a total of 82.5 percent had never attended skills training and apprenticeship and only 17.5 percent have attended skills training and apprenticeship. This therefore implies that the general enrolment for TVET programmes in The Gambia is standing at a rate of 17 percent.¹³ 60.5 percent out of the total respondents had no skills centers within their settlement areas, and only 27.1 percent respondents had skills centers whereas 12.5 percent had no idea¹⁴. According to the survey results the closeness of registered and non-registered training institutions to the respondents is presented in descending order; Brikama, Kanifing, Banjul, Basse and Mansakonko arguing that skill centers in their area of residence are in the range of 0-5 kilometers, and few suggesting 6 to 10 kilometers whereas those in Kuntaur, Kerewan have skill centers located more than 11+ kilometres. However, the distribution of registered training institution across the LGA's differs from the above mentioned pattern as shown below; out of the 69 registered TVET service providers in the country, there are 50 skills centres in Kanifing, 11 in Brikama, 3 in Kerewan, 2 in Banjul, 2 in Basse, 1 in Janjabureh while there is no known skills centre in Mansakonko¹⁵. This shows that there is an uneven distribution of formal TVET institution in The Gambia. This implies that current or potential TVET students are/will be obliged to incur extra cost in the form of transportation or accommodation to access TVET facilities.

Master Craft Persons and apprenticeship programmes

¹⁰ Page 114

¹¹ Page 98

¹² Page 80

¹³ Page 60

¹⁴ Page 61

¹⁵ Page 66

The results indicate the available apprenticeship programmes (includes programmes not registered with NTA) in which skills are learnt from local mentors without specifically going through the traditional academic path or the structured TVET programmes; 25.3 percent learnt carpentry and joinery, 17.4 percent learnt welding/fabrication and tailoring/dress making respectively, 8.6 percent learnt building and construction, 6.0 percent learnt auto mechanic (automotive), 5.5 percent learnt driving (trucking), 3.3 percent.

The survey further revealed that driving (trucking), beauty therapy, aquaculture, computer literacy, electronic servicing, mechanic (motorcycle and bicycle repairing; panel beating and spraying), sales/marketing, well digging, wood carving and sculpture, plumbing among others were the major skills identified to be delivered through the informal arrangement of apprenticeship¹⁶.

Majority of the respondents i.e. 65.6 percent cited non-existence of formalized traditional apprenticeship systems for skills attainment, followed by 34.4 percent who showed lack of knowledge on such a system of apprenticeship whereas only a negligible 20 percent allude to the existence of traditional apprenticeship systems in the country¹⁷. This implies that majority of The Gambians are not informed or aware of the existence of formal (structured) apprenticeship systems delivered by the Master Craft Persons.

Preferred career path

When the youths, and parents were asked on their preferred career path that they would consider for themselves or their children or siblings or someone they take care of, majority of the respondents totalling to 41.8 percent mentioned university education, followed by 19.5 percent who preferred business (trade, commerce and family business), 14.8 percent preferred technical career as 10.5 percent preferred vocational career, 6.8 percent preferred the informal sector with only 3.8 percent indicating preference to learning at employment site (apprenticeship)¹⁸. It is important to note that this quantitative results was backed by the Focus Group Discussions held in Tabasasa Trading Centre, Basse, Tumana District and youths of Janjanbureh Trading Centre¹⁹.

¹⁶ Page 80

¹⁷ Page 82

¹⁸ Page 99

¹⁹ Page 100

Appendix A: Responsibility status of household respondents

Age of respondent		Are you the head of this household?				Total
		Yes	%	No	%	
	16-25 yrs	75	2.5	950	32.2	1025
	26-35 yrs	178	6	378	12.8	556
	36-45 yrs	325	11	151	5.1	476
	46-55 yrs	327	11.1	84	2.8	411
	56+ yrs	410	13.9	70	2.4	480
Total		1315	44.6	1633	55.4	2948

Source: Atibuni Solomon, (2014). A critical Analysis of Technical and Vocation Education and Training and its contribution to job creation in The Gambia

Appendix B: Demand driven/employable courses per LGA

LGA	Most marketable course	Rank (according to community demand)
Basse	welding/metalwork/fabrication	1st
	tailoring/dressmaking	2nd
	carpentry and joinery	3rd
	Building and construction/architectural draught man ship	4th
	business studies (administration and management)	5th
	mention electrical (electrical engineering and installation)	6th
	auto mechanic	7th
Janjanbureh	tailoring/dressmaking	1st
	welding/metalwork/fabrication	2nd
	electrical (engineering and installation)	3rd
Kuntaur	tailoring/hairdressing	1st
	carpentry and joinery	2nd
	auto mechanic	3rd
	business studies	4th
	tie and dye/batik and detergent making	5th
	building and construction/architectural draughtsmanship	1st
	tailoring/dress making	2nd

Kerewan	carpentry and joinery	3rd
	sewing	4th
	welding/metalwork/fabrication	5th
	beauty therapy/hairdressing/manicure/pedicure/cosmetology	6th
	business studies	7th
	driving (trucking)	8th
	auto mechanic and animal husbandry	9th
Mansakonko	tailoring/dressmaking	1st
	carpentry and joinery	2nd
	welding/metalwork/fabrication	3rd
	building and construction/architectural draughtsmanship	4th
	detergent making	5th
Banjul, Kanifing and Brikama	catering/cookery and hotel management, computer studies, plumbing, home economics/science (hygiene, interior design, home furnishing, cleaning), mechanic (panel beating and spraying), mechanic (motorcycle and bicycle repairer), business studies, beauty therapy/hairdressing/cosmetology, baking/pastry, banking/teller and insurance	No ranking available

Source: Atibuni Solomon, (2014). A critical Analysis of Technical and Vocation Education and Training and its contribution to job creation in The Gambia

Note that all the demand driven courses in Basse, Janjanbureh, Kerewan, Kuntaur and Mansakonko LGAs are highly employable in Banjul, Kanifing and Brikama LGAs.

Appendix C: Similarities and differences in courses demanded in rural and urban areas

Area of residence	Demand driven course
Only Urban area	Beauty therapy/hairdressing/manicure/pedicure/cosmetology, business studies, electronic (service and repairer), home economics, humanities, social sciences, and plumbing
Both rural and Urban	tailoring/hairdressing, welding/metalwork/fabrication, sewing, electrical (engineering and installation), driving (trucking), carpentry and joinery, building and construction/architectural draughtsmanship

Source: Atibuni Solomon, (2014). A critical Analysis of Technical and Vocation Education and Training and its contribution to job creation in The Gambia

Note that courses demanded in the rural area are not specified in the table above because according to the survey, all the most employable courses in the rural area are highly employable in the urban area as well.

