

## Forward

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a toolbox in which we ourselves decide what to store, and from which we ourselves decide what to extract, what to use, and for which purposes. Education is not an end in itself. Rather, it is one of the keys to sustainable development, peace and stability in a country and an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

TVET is an effective and efficient tool for empowerment – for enabling youth and adults alike to escape the trap of poverty and contribute to their community's economic and social wellbeing. Education, and in particular TVET, holds the key to poverty alleviation and economic expansion for Afghanistan.

Global experience has shown that the mere expansion of TVET does not solve the problems of unemployment and low economic productivity. TVET has to respond to the demand for skills and competencies of the labour market to create a competent, motivated, and adaptable workforce capable of driving economic growth and development.

The National TVET Strategy covers all education and training programmes that operate under the umbrella of technical and vocational education and skills development in Afghanistan. The strategy constructs a common platform from which to implement TVET programmes all over the country. It sets out a national framework for TVET to guide policy-makers, civil servants, programme implementers, teachers, managers, administrators, and any other stakeholders engaged in the socio-economic development of Afghanistan.

The National TVET Strategy has been developed with the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled (MoLSAMD) and UNESCO in close collaboration with the members of the Human Resources Development Board (HRDB) TVET Working Group, including the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), development partners, civil society, and the private sector. The development process was highly participatory and consultative, and we conclude by acknowledging and thanking all involved for their valuable contributions.

The National TVET Strategy will serve as a guiding document to strengthen the four pillars of the TVET system – governance, access, quality, and financing – to enable coordinated and effective provision of quality TVET in Afghanistan.

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## Acronyms

ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy 1387-1391 (2008-2013)
ANQA	Afghanistan National Qualification Authority
ANQF	Afghanistan National Qualification Framework
CESP	Committee on Education Skills Policy
DMTVET	Deputy Ministry of TVET (in MoE)
HRDB	Human Resource Development Board
IP	National Education Interim Plan 2011-2013
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NESP-II	National Education Strategic Plan II for Afghanistan, (1389-1393/2010-2014)
NHESP	National Higher Education Strategy Plan: 2010-2014
NSDP	National Skills Development Program
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
NTVETS	National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy

## Introduction

The National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy (NTVETS) for Afghanistan 2013-2018, “The needs of tomorrow’s workforce,” sets out a path towards creating a better future and improved conditions for all Afghans.

The aim of the strategy is to provide overarching policy guidelines to ensure coordination and facilitate close cooperation between all national stakeholders in TVET. These stakeholders include the public sector (MoHE, MoE, MoLSAMD, MoWA, and other line ministries such as of Rural Rehabilitation, Mines, Agriculture, Health, Commerce, Transport, Communications, etc. in line with their respective mandates), the non-profit sector (NGOs and community-based training providers), and the private sector (private proprietary training providers, private public partnerships, business associations, and enterprise-based training providers).

This strategy has been developed with the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders from the public sector, private sector, and international community. It defines the major principles of TVET development in Afghanistan over the next five years. The main thrust of the strategy is that TVET will be developed as an outcome-based system and will rely on dedicated and trusting cooperation among stakeholders to align priorities and avoid duplication of efforts.

The strategy development process has involved reviewing and assessing relevant legal, policy and strategic documents; consulting extensively with line ministries and other national and international stakeholders; and refining this nationally-drafted TVET strategy document to reflect the realities of the TVET system in Afghanistan as it exists today and set priorities for the future.

The NTVETS promotes and supports the introduction of learning outcomes in TVET. A learning outcomes or competency-based learning approach focuses on students’ practical learning needs and aligns these needs with the immediate needs of the labour market and economy. Select interventions that were initiated in Afghanistan in 2011 may offer guidance on the necessary steps to make competency-based learning a successful system-wide approach for TVET in the future.

The NTVETS promotes the establishment of a national training authority to ensure sound governance and coordination of the TVET system, including a set of management tools for decision-making based on monitoring and management of labour market information and research. The strategy also promotes a quality assurance system to increase the external and internal efficiency of TVET, to align competencies to qualification levels, and to allow for the mobility of learners within formal, non-formal and informal TVET and between TVET and general education and higher education. This may be achieved through a National Qualification Framework.

Finally, the NTVETS provides for a new funding system that ensures sustainability through the diversification of financial sources, including through the direct participation of the private sector, especially industries in which there is a growing demand for more and better skilled labour. It also promotes accountability and transparency and supports more effective mobilization and allocation of resources through an outcome-based financial mechanism complemented by cost saving and cost recovery measures. The resource implications of the NTVETS are assessed to allow the TVET system to expand at a rate that progressively meets existing labour supply and demand needs.

# TVET - Current Situation, Challenges, and General Trends



## I TVET – Current situation, challenges, and general trends

### 1.1 The policy and legal framework

The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS), the Millennium Development Goals, the Education for All (EFA) Goals, the Education Law, the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP I and NESP II), the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), and the Needs & Rights Assessment on Inclusive Education all highlight the vital role of the education system (from pre-primary to tertiary) in shaping the future of Afghanistan.

The 2004 Constitution guarantees all children and youth equal rights to access quality education when it asserts: “The state is obliged to devise and implement effective programs for a balanced expansion of education all over Afghanistan and to provide compulsory intermediate level education” (Article Forty-Three Ch. 2, Art. 22). The right to education for all Afghans is also reiterated in the Education Law adopted in August 2008.

Despite the progress that has been made over the past few years, half of the school age children in Afghanistan are estimated to be out of school. In addition to these children who are excluded from education, many other children are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion within the education system. The exclusion of these children and youth from and within the education system must be combated by the flexible provision of TVET programmes. TVET should be offered through government schools/vocational training centres, as well as through the private sector, with the support of the international community, and through community-based arrangements. In TVET programmes, youth should be able to learn technical and vocational skills based on their personal learning aspirations and in line with market needs. This would enable more youth to attain skills for employment and self-employment, while also paving the way for learners to progress in the education system.

When envisaged as the core catalyst for lifelong learning, education (in general) and TVET (in particular) has been shown to contribute effectively to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Policies and strategies on TVET are found in the following official documents of the Government of Afghanistan:

- Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS)
- National Education Interim Plan (NEIP)
- National Education Strategic Plan I, II, and (draft) III (NESP I, NESP II, and NESP III April 2013 draft)
- National Skills Development Program (NSDP)
- National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA)
- National Priority Programme (NPP) 1 “Sustainable Decent Work through Skills Development and Employment Policies for Job-Rich Growth”
- The 5 year Skills Development Plan (MOLSAMD)

In its TVET related components (i) Market-Friendly Labour Regulations and Facilitation of Sustainable Decent Work, (ii) Literacy for Labour, and (iii) Skills Development, the 2011 National Priority Programme 1 “Sustainable Decent Work through Skills Development and Employment Policies for Job-Rich Growth” emphasises the integration of skills development into broader active employment policies.

To respond to the urgent need to build up the TVET system in Afghanistan, in 2012, a TVET regulatory board was proposed to act as a national TVET authority. It is envisaged that the TVET Board would fall under the Afghanistan National Qualification Authority (ANQA) and provide TVET suppliers, donors, the government and civil society organizations with a common tool to help initiate standard qualifications and quality assurance in the TVET system. Under the coordination of the TVET Board, the TVET system could be built coherently and collectively in order to extend TVET opportunities to millions of Afghans and thereby contribute to the long-term peace and development of the country.

The Government of Afghanistan has initiated a new push (Presidential Decree N. 45) to harmonize the efforts of stakeholders in economic and social development. Comprehensive capacity building and human capital formation are key pillars in these efforts. TVET is expected to play a key role in this strategy by helping to develop the competent workforce required for sustainable development. It is hoped that TVET will provide the necessary “relevant and demand-driven education and training that corresponds to the needs of economic and social sectors for employment and self-employment.”

As such, this National TVET Strategy is an important component of the national policy framework for development and poverty reduction. The strategy highlights the need for the increased involvement of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and communities in the provision of education and training.

## 1.2 Analysis of external trends in the current TVET reform process

### 1.2.1 Political trends

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) is the foundational policy for the period 2009-13. It serves as the country’s overarching development framework, incorporates the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and adopts a multi-pronged approach to promote domestic and foreign investment in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy. This investment will encourage local economic development and increase the demand for skilled labour.

The ANDS informs the July 2012 Tokyo Framework, which is based on the principles of inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development to support transition and transformation. The Tokyo Framework focuses on five major areas of development and governance: representational democracy and equitable elections; governance, rule of law and human rights; integrity of public finance and commercial banking; government revenues, budget execution and sub-national governance; and, inclusive and sustained growth. The alignment of the Framework and aid commitments with the National Priority Programmes (NPPs) will lead to the

channelling of at least 50 percent of development assistance through the national budget of the Government of Afghanistan.

The Afghan Government's overall strategy is to implement the benchmarks set by the Framework through the 22 NPPs, which represent the specific and prioritised initiatives of the ANDS. The 22 NPPs, which are the main tools for Afghanistan to achieve development, economic growth and fiscal sustainability, are categorised into the 6 clusters of infrastructure development, private sector development, agriculture and rural development, human resource development, governance and security.

The Afghan Government regards the NPPs as a means to increase collaboration between government ministries, aiming to remove overlap and duplication and to develop and implement a clear, prioritised agenda in the respective sectors. The NPPs will eventually lead to safeguarded and sustained development gains when external funding declines and Afghanistan assumes full responsibility for its own development.

### 1.2.2 Economic trends

The convergence of demographic, social, economic and political challenges has a profound impact on the situation in Afghanistan. Afghanistan remains among the poorest countries in the world, with more than one third of the population living below the poverty line.

As a post-conflict country, Afghanistan's economic prospects depend on the handover of all security responsibilities to national authorities foreseen under the Transition in 2014, the continuous engagement of the international community to support long-term development, the positive impact of the extraction and mining activities on local economies, and the development of services and productivity gains in the agriculture sector.

The country experienced high levels of economic growth between 2003/04 and 2010/11, mainly driven by capital investment for reconstruction and high agricultural production. The real GDP growth increased from 7.3 percent in 2011 to an estimated 11.8 percent in 2012<sup>1</sup>. The average real GDP growth rate is forecasted to be 4-6 percent per annum between 2013-18 compared to a rate of 9 percent between 2003/04 and 2011-12. The economic growth has been heavily supported by foreign aid. Nevertheless, Afghanistan remains one of the world's least developed countries with a GDP per capita of only \$590 in 2012.

The security situation influences the public's perception of uncertainty. Uncertainty can lead to lower levels of investment. The number of newly registered firms decreased by 8 percent in 2012.<sup>2</sup> Agriculture, which is the main avenue through which to achieve sustainable and inclusive job and income growth, accounts for one fourth to one third of the GDP depending on annual output. Given agriculture's weight in the GDP, economic growth tends to follow the same cyclical patterns as agricultural output.

<sup>1</sup>World Bank, Afghanistan Economic Update, April 2013

<sup>2</sup>"Estimated Business Fixed Investment in Afghanistan" Afghanistan Investment Support Agency, May 2012

A historically small mining sector has shown continuous development, coupled by positive development trends in the services sector.

Confronted with obstacles in doing businesses as well as by the fact that most Afghan companies are micro and small enterprises with limited financial and organizational structures, the business environment remains in need of further simplification. Doing business in Afghanistan is more difficult than in South Asia countries, particularly in relation to indicators like protecting investors, trading across borders and closing a business.<sup>3</sup>

Consumer price inflation almost halved in 2012, from 10.2 percent in 2011 to 6.2 percent in 2012. The government's policy has been to encourage industrial investment through a number of measures like trade and investment, currency reform, customs tariffs, and a simplified tax code.<sup>4</sup> The public spending increase targeted the supply of goods and services in addition to civil servant salaries and wages and a larger security bill.

Infrastructure, natural resources, private sector development, health and education have experienced higher increases in terms of operating and development spending.

The country runs an open trade system. Afghanistan is an observer to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has applied for full membership. Based on a relatively small stock basis of tradable products, exports are concentrated in a few markets, and, according to the Central Statistics Organization, have recently declined contrary to the expectations of a positive export response to the depreciation of the national currency. Total imports increased in 2012 by approximately 5 percent leading to a higher nominal trade deficit.

A slowdown of economic growth is expected in the biennium 2013-14 while increased public spending is expected to fuel demand for services.

The medium term prospect for economic growth is cautiously optimistic.<sup>5</sup> The main risks to which the national economy is exposed are related to the transition process and its impact on private sector development, the rising fiscal financing needs linked to the growth of government spending, the geographical distribution and impact of aid, and the pace of structural reforms (from the regulatory environment for private mining to the introduction of the value added tax to customs reform) to the capacity of the administration to execute the budget in a more efficient way and to ensure transparency and accountability to the whole system of governance.

### 1.2.3 Social trends

Three decades of conflict have had long lasting consequences on the human capital in Afghanistan. Encouraging improvements in quality of life have been achieved in recent years; however, human development indicators still remain at very low levels

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<sup>3</sup>ILO, Afghanistan: Time to move to sustainable jobs, May 2102

<sup>4</sup><http://www.state.gov/e/eb/rls/othr/ics/2012/191093.htm>

<sup>5</sup>World Bank, op.cit.

compared with the rest of the world. Afghanistan's ranking in the Human Development Index indicates a situation of poverty compounded by low levels of health, social services, education and nutrition, unequal access to safe water, and inadequate sanitation and electricity. A third of the population continues to live below the poverty line and more than half are vulnerable and at serious risk of falling into poverty. Life expectancy in Afghanistan is lower than in all of its neighbouring countries and lower than the average of least developed countries. The high maternal mortality rate still makes Afghan health indicators amongst some of the worst in the world.

The literacy rate in Afghanistan is one of the lowest in the world. Less than one third of Afghans over the age of 15 can read and write, according to the 2007/2008 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) survey. Nevertheless, considerable progress has been made since the fall of the Taliban. In 2011, more than 8.5 million students were enrolled in general education, with a third of these being girls, and a total enrolment of 10.5 million is expected by the end of 2013<sup>6</sup>. That said, there is still a large imbalance in access to education between gender groups.

Afghanistan is one of the countries with the youngest population in Central Asia. The proportion of the population aged 15 or below is higher than 50 percent, meaning that more than one in every two Afghans is economically dependent.<sup>7</sup> The wide base of the population's pyramid is expected to maintain a sustained rate of growth for the decade to come, especially in rural areas. The population is growing rapidly, putting additional strains on the country's resources, service delivery, and the labour market, which suffers from a lack of sustainable and decent work opportunities.

The profile of the labour force indicates a participation in the labour market of two thirds of individuals of the working age engaged in some form of employment, while less than one tenth of the labour force can be considered unemployed. In the urban labour markets, there is a lower participation and employment rate than in rural ones due to the lower participation of women, youth and the elderly.

Workers in the formal sector are estimated at about 1.5 million or about 20% of an estimated total workforce of seven million. The formal sector has been steadily growing and is expected to increase further as the economy formalizes over time, and tertiary service industries continue to grow.

The low level of open unemployment is counterbalanced by underemployment which is a condition affecting almost half of the employed individuals. Underemployment is correlated to the urban-rural divide in labour market participation; higher participation in rural areas is associated with underemployment and prevalence of poor quality jobs.<sup>8</sup>

The labour force profile shows barriers to accessing the labour market and a prevalence of informal networks as employment channels. Young employees are

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<sup>6</sup>Source: DM TVET

<sup>7</sup>"Afghanistan Job Challenges" ILO-WB Conference, on Creating Sustainable Jobs in Afghanistan, Kabul, May 2013,

<sup>8</sup>ILO, Afghanistan: time to move to sustainable jobs, op.cit.

generally bound to occupy temporary and precarious positions of apprentices and trainees.

The gender gap in participation, higher in urban than in rural areas, materialises in a low percentage of women engaged in paid employment. Women work predominantly in the informal economy and, in general, there is a gender differentiation in employment status. Female labour force participation is strongly correlated with seasonal labour demand in agriculture and households wellbeing, whereby the highest engagement corresponds to the poorest households. The underlying causes of the gender gap in participation and lower employment status are related to cultural elements including the position of families on the participation of female in the labour market, lack of job opportunities for females, lack of experience of females and low educational attainment of females.

The enforcement of the restriction for children to work under the age of 15 is not stringent and almost one fifth of Afghan children are performing child labour both in rural and urban areas.

Refugees, returnees, internally displaced people and irregular cross border migrants generally fall under the category of unstable and unskilled workers.

Nomadic Kuchi communities are considered socially and economically marginalized, according to the NRVA, and the Jogi, Jat, Gorbati and Chori Frosh communities face barriers constraining access to education and employment. Their main income-generating activities are almost exclusively to work in unskilled occupations. Education has been identified as one of the main paths to break the vicious cycle of low skills, unemployment, and poverty.<sup>9</sup>

Considerable population movements of Afghan repatriates have caused challenges in sustainable reintegration and reinforcing the rural-to-urban shift in population. Repatriation on the basis of voluntary return increased the overall population by approximately 20 percent after 2002 and has put pressure on the labour market. An Afghan Diaspora has grown out of two distinct waves of migration. The first occurred from 1980 to mid-1990s and was mostly comprised of educated groups migrating to developed countries. The second wave was during the Taliban regime and formed the 'near Diaspora' moving into Iran and Pakistan. Migrants were drawn predominantly from rural communities of Afghanistan and were less educated. New waves of out-migration seem to be increasing, especially for the most educated segments of the population, although the bulk of recent movements are for the purposes of temporary, seasonal and circular migration.<sup>10</sup>

Labour migration is a livelihood strategy and the pull factors and incentives are mostly related to expected wage gains and the opportunity to acquire new marketable skills not available in Afghanistan. The economic contributions of migration, especially towards poverty reduction, employment generation and women's empowerment in

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<sup>9</sup> Samuel Hall Consulting (2011), Jogi and Chori Frosh out-of-school children: a story of Marginalization. For UNICEF

<sup>10</sup> Managing and stimulating labour migration, ILO-World Bank Conference on Creating Sustainable Jobs in Afghanistan, Kabul, May 2013,

Afghanistan are extensive, for remittances form an important component of household incomes, as well as an effective mechanism of transferring new skills.

The promotion of employment opportunities for Afghan workers abroad is an activity under the National Priority Programme 1, and it refers to the promotion of employment mostly in the region and in Gulf countries with a series of measures.

About 11 million people in Afghanistan are illiterate and unskilled. Literacy rates are higher for younger people, especially in urban areas where schools are more accessible and where most of the skilled labour force migrates. The low literacy and education levels represent a constraint to the functioning of the labour market by hindering productivity, limiting intra-sectoral mobility, reducing the capacity to attract productive investments, diminishing the potential of aid-introduced growth, and increasing the skills mismatch.

According to the Central Statistics Organization, the new entrants to the labour market currently amount to about 500,000 individuals 16-18 years old. In five years' time, this age group will number about 750,000 individuals and in 10 years' time about 1.2 million individuals. Out of the 235,000 graduates from higher education, about 100,000 find a place in a university or in a TVET institution.<sup>11</sup> Large proportions of the labour market entrants are illiterate or possess minimal literacy and skills.

Despite the widely recognized importance of increasing employment opportunities, in light of the unpredictable economic indicators, there is no reliable or consistently administered labour market survey in Afghanistan. To date, there is no widely accepted definition of Afghanistan's labour market using indicators including salaries and wages or skills and abilities of the workforce.

The demand for skilled workers is growing and varies across the provinces. Employers indicated that a number of available skilled jobs are not filled due to the lack of adequate skills in the country. They report having to hire foreign skilled labour due to the shortage of skilled workers in the domestic market.<sup>12</sup>

The labour demand of the formal labour market is weak and dominated by the public sector. Self-employed working arrangements are the most common form of employment both in rural and urban areas. Households are the first employers in Afghanistan while formal employment is more common in urban areas, mainly due to public jobs, which comprise twice the number of salaried jobs in the private sector.

With about two thirds of people engaged in agriculture, this sector is the largest provider of employment. It is characterised by small family businesses and regional variations in terms of farm/market and subsistence based agriculture. In the non-farm sector, retail, trade and petty trade and shop-keeping activities are the main sources of employment, followed by services and construction. The public sector is a key source of employment opportunities in urban areas, with the large majority concentrated in Kabul province. The manufacturing sector plays a minor role in nationwide employment.

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<sup>11</sup>Source: DM TVET

<sup>12</sup>2012 USAID survey of business owners and managers of 959 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

The education and gender composition of the labour force is related to the different sectors: the highest prevalence of low skilled jobs occurs in agriculture, construction and residual service sectors. In agriculture and low skilled service sectors, there is the highest concentration of female employment and a prevalence of unpaid family work. Low skilled unemployment is prevalent in casual labour in construction, mining and quarrying sectors.

Under the ANDS, the Government of Afghanistan has committed itself to developing the skills of the Afghan labour force so that it is more productive, marketable, and able to compete more effectively. The shortage of human capital constrains the rate of return to physical capital, diminishes the profitability of investments, slows down the adoption of new technologies, hinders the structural transformation of the economy, and reduces the gains from migration.

Progress in educating youth in areas of skills shortages and in growing sectors of the economy (agriculture, mining, constructions and business management) and efforts to increase the population's literacy and skills are addressed by the National Education Strategic Plan II for 2010-14, which aims to improve the supply of TVET and literacy by increasing enrolment for individuals aged 15 and above by sevenfold.

#### 1.2.4 Technological trends

Most firms operate at or below potential in terms of technology use and in terms of resource use and access to information communications technology (ICT). However, some progress has been made, as the telecommunications sector grew at an average of 60 percent a year in the past decade, the number of Internet users has grown three times in the last two years, and service costs dropped by ten times.<sup>13</sup>

The capital-intensive mining sector is expected to produce relatively few jobs, mostly for skilled and semi-skilled workers. However, the Resource Corridor approach<sup>14</sup> uses mining development as an anchor for infrastructure development that underpins other sustainable local livelihood, social and environmental activities. Combining necessary investments in mining infrastructure with enhancements in livelihood, social and environmental elements is expected to produce spill overs to other economic activities and synergies with private-sector investment.<sup>15</sup>

The agriculture sector, which employs almost 60 percent of the labour force and provides livelihoods to more than 40 percent of Afghan households, faces a gap in utilization of modern technologies (irrigation, production, post-harvesting) and a limited availability of extension services, which limits the potential of agribusiness for job creation.

<sup>13</sup>The World Bank, Afghanistan Economic Update.op.cit.

<sup>14</sup>Afghanistan Resource Corridor: Skills Strategy Development, Altai Consulting, September 2012.

<sup>15</sup>The World Bank (2012), Resource corridor initiative- Technical Summary. Washington DC

### 1.2.5 Summary of External Environment Analysis

The following diagram summarises some trends in the External Environment, in which the TVET system is to operate:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Afghan Government's overall policy was defined to implement the benchmarks set by the Tokyo Framework through the 22 NPPs. The government strives to introduce democratic reforms.</li> <li>• High economic growth between 2003/04 and 2010/11, mainly driven by capital investment for reconstruction, high agricultural production. GDP per capita increased by three times. Inflation is under control. Current accounts in balance due to foreign aid inflow.</li> <li>• Continuous engagement of the international community to support long-term development.</li> <li>• Positive impact of the extraction and mining activities on local economies, development in services and productivity gains in the agriculture sector.</li> <li>• The private formal sector increased fivefold and registered formal enterprises increased from 1,139 in 2004 to 5,465 in 2011. Regulatory framework for doing business improved on indicators of start-up and tax payments.</li> <li>• Spending increased on infrastructure, natural resources, private sector development, health and education.</li> <li>• Human capital stock increased at 6.5 million students in general education in 2009 (1/3 girls), teachers doubled since 2002. Labour market participation at 66% of working age population (almost 100% male, 50% female).</li> <li>• Official unemployment rate at 8%. Employment growth in formal economy boosted the demand for skilled workforce in growing economic sectors.</li> <li>• ICT costs decreased by one</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan's economic prospects depend on the handover of security responsibilities to national authorities, aid dependency throughout transition (2012-14) and transformation decade (2015-2025).</li> <li>• Newly registered investments declined. Exports declined. Monetary indicators degraded and currency depreciated.</li> <li>• Businesses still restrained by red tape, low policy predictability and corruption. Doing business indicators low on protecting investors, trading across borders and closing a business.</li> <li>• Private sector companies consist of 92% micro and small enterprise.</li> <li>• Self-employment adds little value to GDP</li> <li>• Official unemployment rate low but underemployment high.</li> <li>• The private enterprises' fivefold growth has been mainly driven by the construction and service industries, for both domestic and foreign companies.</li> <li>• Low ranking in Human Development Index (poverty compounded by lack of rule of law, low level of health, social services, education and nutrition, access to safe water, adequate sanitation and electricity and natural disasters).</li> <li>• 1/3 of the population below poverty line and 50% vulnerable and at risk of falling into poverty.</li> <li>• Population in self-employment at more than 60% and informal economy at 80%.</li> <li>• 48% underemployment.</li> <li>• 45% youth and women in paid jobs, in informal economy with urban and rural, and regional differentials.</li> <li>• Imported skilled labour in growing economic sectors.</li> <li>• New technology has low status in</li> </ul>

<p>tenth. Internet users grew by three times between 2011 and 2012.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Resource Corridor approach is expected to produce spill overs to other economic activities and synergies with private-sector investment</li> </ul>	<p>critical sectors like agriculture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow implementation of high tech acquisition and reduction of digital divide.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive national policy for development and governance and aligned with donors' benchmarking supports investments and development of growing sectors of the economy.</li> <li>• The commitment of donors' community to support the implementation of the ANDS through NPPs.</li> <li>• The positive economic outlook.</li> <li>• The positive impact on employment of the extraction and mining activities on the local economies, the development in services and the productivity gains in the agriculture sector.</li> <li>• A growing stock of human capital and new entrants in the labour markets with better skills, including 4,000 university graduates per year.</li> <li>• The Resource Corridor, anchoring extractive and mining activities to local value chains, expected to produce spill overs to other economic activities and synergies with private-sector investments.</li> <li>• Cross-border labour mobility, migration of skilled workers, remittances and acquisition of new skills abroad. Assets from the Afghan Diaspora.</li> <li>• The regional networks in the process of being established may lead to more trade and export in the local area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security situation increases uncertainty and level of investments.</li> <li>• The pace of the structural reforms is slowed down by deteriorating political situation</li> <li>• The rising financial needs reduce the government spending and impact on geographical development</li> <li>• Aid flow accounting for high portion of GDP and distribution do not materialise along plans.</li> <li>• The average real GDP growth rate is lower than forecasted at 4-6% per annum between 2013-18, which is already lower than the rate of 9% between 2003/04 and 2011-12.</li> <li>• The pressure on the labour market of 500,000 entrants that could increase to 1.2 million in a decade at current demographic trends.</li> <li>• Self-employment, households and micro-enterprises remain the main employers.</li> <li>• Agriculture remains affected by technology gaps and productivity low.</li> <li>• Mining and extractive sectors are not labour intensive and develop as enclaves with little or no impact on the wider economy or can trigger destabilising effects on exchange rates, governance, macroeconomic stability and public investments.</li> <li>• Security and uncertainty issues discouraging circular migration and fuel a new wave of migration.</li> </ul>

## 1.3 Current Situation in the Technical Vocational Education and Training System

### 1.3.1 Government TVET institutions

The main institutions governing the TVET system in Afghanistan are the following:

**The Ministry of Education (MoE)**, through its Deputy Ministry for TVET (DM TVET), is responsible for formal TVET. It coordinates and administers supervises 145 public TVET high schools (grades 10-12, including night shifts) and 105 TVET institutes (grades 13-14). The training is primarily institution-based and most training courses run from two to five years.

In 2013, the MOE enrolled 85,415 (8,470 females) students across Afghanistan in 250 TVET schools and institutions, of which 39 are in Kabul province. The 250 schools and institutes (105 institutes and 145 high schools) provide three-year courses culminating in a grade 12 certificate, with an additional two-year course culminating in a grade 14 diploma. A lack of quality teachers, standardised training curricula and quality training material, shortages of equipment, and lack of electric power and water hamper some of these schools and institutes. Efforts are being made to upgrade the out-dated curriculum.

In the last few years, the MoE's TVET provision has been enhanced substantially in term of quantity and quality. The number of schools and institutes has increased from 42 to 250, and student enrolment has increased from about 15,000 students to 85,415 students in 2013. The new entrants in 2013 totalled 26,440 (4,153 female) while the graduates were 10,737 (3,244 female). The number of teachers in technical schools and institutes of the Ministry was 2,659 in 2013.

In terms of geographical distribution, the construction of new public TVET institutions is certainly providing more opportunities for youth to access TVET in the provinces. This is a welcome development considering that in 2002, nearly half of all public TVET institutions were based in Kabul. In 2011, 96 percent of TVET high schools (grades 10-12) and 63 percent of TVET institutes (grades 13-14) were in the provinces outside of Kabul.

The MOE plans to become a provider of technical skills in combination with literacy for illiterate adults (Draft NESP III).

**The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)** has 17 universities that provide Multidisciplinary Bachelor and Master Degrees and 14 higher education institutes with approximately 136,500 students. Additionally, there are more than 60 private universities, mainly in Kabul, but also in Khost, Kunduz, and Balkh. MOHE is also proposing to establish "Community Colleges" to produce graduates with middle-level skills that match the needs of the economy.

**The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD)** through its General Directorate of Skills Development, is responsible for informal TVET in Afghanistan. It manages a network of 42 public vocational training centres (VTCs), out of which 22 are functioning and located in urban areas across the country. In 2013, a total of 279 staff worked on TVET at MoLSAMD and NSDP, out of which 118 were on

the government payroll and 161 were project-based. The TVET operational and developmental budget of MoLSAMD for the year 2013 is USD\$9.85 million. Of the total committed budget for TVET, USD \$1.388 million is allotted from the government budget while USD \$8.462 million is from international aid. The VTCs offer short-term skills training programs ranging from six to nine months. The trainees are generally youth and adults, unemployed, with varying levels of education but who wish to learn skills to enter the labour market and are between 15 and 45 years of age. In 2012, there were 12,025 trainees enrolled in VTCs and about 7,000 people will be trained in 2013.

**The National Skills Development Programme (NSDP)** is the flagship programme that falls under MoLSAMD. About 51,171 trainees received training through courses overseen by the NSDP and contracted out to NGOs and private training providers through a competitive bidding process. NSDP introduced competency-based training in the country and have developed National Occupational Skills Standards (NOSS) through its curriculum development unit. Up to now, this unit has developed 157 NOSS and provided training for training providers on how to develop curricula based on the NOSS.

**The Committee on Education and Skills Policy (CESP)**, which falls under the Office of the First Vice President, is in the process of developing legal, regulatory, and operational frameworks for the ANQA and TVET Board. As CESP and NSDP work on the development of standards for the TVET system, it is expected that a mechanism for the recognition and certification for prior learning and informal training will become possible.

Sector-based public training institutions are operated by the Ministries of: Information and Technology, Public Works, Transportation and Aviation, Finance, Agriculture-Irrigation and Livestock, Interior Affairs, and Health. Each Ministry has its own budget and staff. Enrolment in sector-based public training institutes (not counting the portion of Higher Education that can be regarded as TVET) is estimated at 44 percent of the total students in TVET.

### 1.3.2 Private training providers and NGOs

The private sector is the largest TVET provider in Afghanistan (50.7 percent). There are 40 licensed private institutions, and 120 others are in the process of being licensed by the MOE/DMTVET. Private sector for-profit providers offer training to an estimated 150,000 students mainly in areas of information and communications technology, management, accounting, and languages (mainly English).

In the absence of a policy or framework for accreditation and national standards for vocational education and training, institutions themselves are not registered or accredited. Thus, courses are not validated and certificates or credits for learning are arbitrary. This situation denies employers reliable information regarding the competence of graduate trainees, and denies the trainees a recognized qualification as a basis for accessing decent employment or for continuing their education.

NGOs offer training to around 30,000 students mostly in basic vocational skills (10.1 percent). Based on a survey conducted by NSDP in 2009 (which can be regarded

as baseline data for the quality of TVET provision in Afghanistan), there are about 100 national and international NGOs providing vocational training in Afghanistan.

Their enrolment capacity is about 30,000 trainees annually, and they provide training in rural and urban areas. Course duration varies from three to 18 months. There is no accreditation and certification system for these NGOs. Their trainings are not recognized in the formal TVET system, which means that trainees cannot easily continue their education to gain higher-level skills in their trade. The skills provision by TVET sub-systems is summarised as follows:

### Overview of TVET providers

Provider type	Level	Delivery	Managed by
Public TVET institutes	Grades 13-14	Formal	MoE
Public TVET high schools	Grades 10-12	Formal	MoE
Public TVET training centres	Short-term (6 to 12 months)	Non-formal	MoLSAMD and NSDP
Private TVET providers	Mix of the above	Mix of formal and non-formal	Not all have contacts with MoE, MoLSAMD and/or NSDP
NGO TVET providers			

Source: ILO Paper "Developing Demand Driven Skills", Conference Creating Sustainable Jobs, Kabul May 2013, extracted from USAID Workforce Development in Afghanistan, an informal summary of key data, 2012.

The largest provider of technical skills in Afghanistan is the **traditional informal apprenticeship system**, which is also recognized as an effective pathway to employment. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the traditional informal apprenticeship system in the country has a capacity of in-taking about 300,000 apprentices per year, thus likely making it the main provider of technical skills in Afghanistan.

The ILO estimated<sup>16</sup> that out of 530,000 companies about 60% had fewer than five were with less than 5 employees. Within the 75,000 "bazaar" companies surveyed, there are on average five people engaged in the company: three journeymen and two apprentices.

A provisional estimate by GIZ<sup>17</sup> indicates that between 600,000 and 1 million apprentices are working in small companies operating in bazaars in Afghanistan. If confirmed, the informal apprenticeship system would therefore have a capacity for skills transmission that is about ten times higher than the formal TVET system.

<sup>16</sup> ILO, Afghanistan: time to move to sustainable jobs, op.cit.

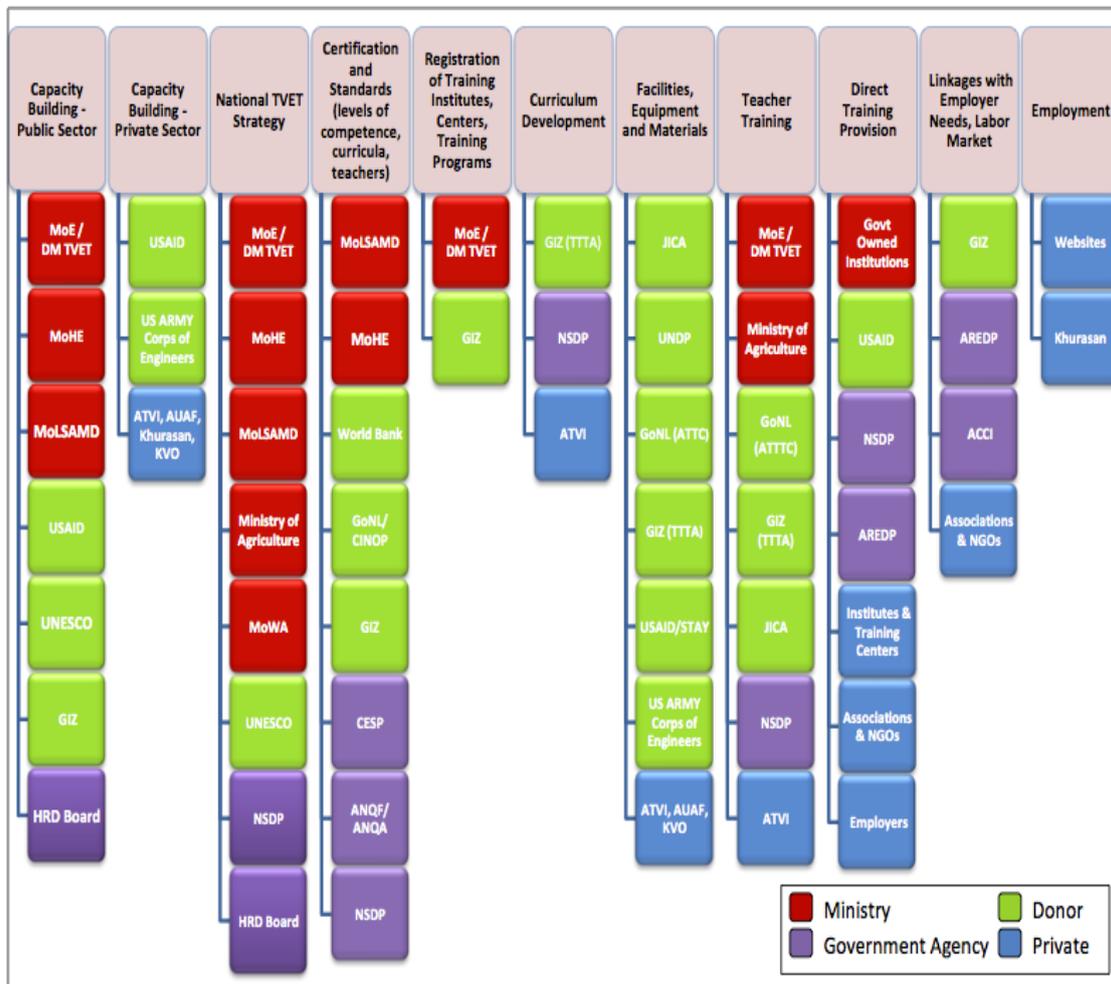
<sup>17</sup> GIZ, Bazar study-preliminary findings, Kabul 2013

### 1.3.3 Overview of the TVET stakeholders and engagement

No single ministry looks after the entire range of TVET providers including private suppliers and NGOs. The MoE gathers data for public TVET high schools and institutes, while MoLSAMD gathers data on its VTCs. Neither the MoE nor MoLSAMD has conducted extensive monitoring of the private and NGO TVET providers. This information is crucial to plan and invest in the TVET sub-sector. By failing to monitor private and NGO TVET providers, the government is missing data on up to 80 percent of total TVET trainees.

TVET areas in Afghanistan are targeted by projects and programmes implemented by different national actors and international development partners. An overview of the stakeholders' engagement indicates the areas of TVET targeted by support. The NTVETS aims to provide a solid basis for greater complementarities between the national stakeholders and the international development partners. It also indicates directions and priorities to plan future, well-coordinated interventions.

Diagram 1: TVET Stakeholders and Engagement



Source: 1391/2012 Education Joint Sector Review, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2012

## 1.4 Challenges of the TVET system in Afghanistan

The TVET system in Afghanistan has made progress in recent years, particularly in terms of the legal and policy framework, discussions on internal and external mechanisms of quality control, platforms for participatory governance, the formation of thematic working groups, the NOSS developed as preparatory work for the ANQF, and the training of teachers.

The TVET system has sought to address the skill needs of productive sectors with higher growth and job creation potential, such as agriculture and rural development, building and construction, commerce and business, mining, transport, manufacturing, energy and water, tourism/eco-tourism, health and nutrition.

Remarkable progress has also taken place on the side of access to training opportunities, particularly through the construction and rehabilitation of training institutions all over the country. The total enrolment in TVET is estimated at 238,000 spaces. The capacity to take in new learners annually is estimated at 130,000.<sup>18</sup> The annual intake of formal TVET schools and institutes has increased of five times from an estimated 20,000 in 2007/08 to an estimated 70,000 in the current year<sup>19</sup> but the number of job placements of students graduated from TVET schools and institutions remains much lower. The quality of skills acquired through TVET are still poor mostly because of the systemic deficiencies and low capacity of service-providers.

Nevertheless, the TVET reform process requires improvement, adjustment, and further systematization in areas such as the overall governance of the system to involve social partners, accessibility of training and relevance to the labour market, attractiveness of training opportunities to increase demand, quality and flexibility, and sustainable financing.

### 1.4.1 Governance

In Afghanistan, the TVET system is characterized by fragmentation, lack of coordination between different delivery partners, and lack of standard qualifications. The following points outline the key elements of TVET system governance in Afghanistan:

1. Public TVET institutions under the MoE concentrate on producing mid-level technical graduates at the grade 12 level and skilled technicians at the grade 14 level.
2. Public and private companies, NGOs and private TVET providers offer TVET programmes.
3. Non-formal TVET public institutions run under MoLSAMD, NGOs and private providers offer employment-oriented TVET programmes to various target groups, including school leavers, employed people, school drop outs and marginalized groups in the labour market. Unlike formal TVET, these programmes are not yet systematically delivered. No formally recognized TVET certification is available for

<sup>18</sup>TVET Private providers survey. DAI/USAID 2011

<sup>19</sup>Source: DM TVET

learning outcomes achieved through non-formal and informal modes of training or learning.

4. Skill trainings are not based on an approved qualification system, and every training provider produces and issues its own certificates.
5. Informal training is widespread, but due to the absence of a systematic assessment and certification system, currently, there are no mechanisms to recognize informal occupational learning.
6. Stakeholders at all levels (sectoral, local/regional, national and international) are not systematically involved in setting objectives, systematically implementing and monitoring TVET programmes.

A TVET Board is under establishment by CESP and should fall under the proposed ANQA. The TVET Board will comprise of representatives of different sectors including: government ministries, public and private TVET providers, and the donor community. CESP has developed an Act for the ANQA, as well as a structure and standard operating procedures for the TVET Board and the ANQA.

#### 1.4.2 Access for All

TVET in Afghanistan is mostly centre-based, and there are limited pathways between formal and non-formal TVET and the general education system, which limits opportunities for trainees to continue their learning. The TVET sub sector needs a paradigm shift. In the minds of many Afghans (as is the case in many other parts of the world), TVET is considered second-class education. This may be one reason why many students, once obtaining the grade 12 certificate or the grade 14 diploma from technical schools and institutes, take the *Kankor* examination with the objective of entering higher education at university.

Students currently enrolled in TVET schools and institutes express their desire to continue their studies in a higher education institution. The absence of career guidance negatively impacts individual and social recognition of TVET. The existing conditions in many TVET institutions are not conducive to change this second-class image of TVET. The inability to provide practical skills, the focus on books and lectures, the TVET teachers who have mainly academic backgrounds with no technical or industrial experience all negate the vision of an “education sector that engenders a healthy workforce with relevant skills and knowledge” as is key to Afghanistan’s long-term economic growth. Limited access to TVET is not exclusively related to the availability of physical facilities, although territorial coverage and distribution of TVET opportunities is far from being completed.

#### 1.4.3 Quality

The weaknesses in terms of quality and efficiency concern all areas of the TVET system and the elements of TVET delivery.

TVET needs a new quality management system. In line with international best practices, the TVET system in Afghanistan seeks to move towards a system based on occupational standards, which will replace the current curriculum-centred approach

and establish an assessment system open to graduates and candidates from all formal, non-formal or informal TVET schemes.

The system of occupational standards, together with standard-based assessment and certification, is unanimously considered the centrepiece of TVET reform efforts to make the system more relevant, demand-orientated, and accessible. It requires further conceptualization and accelerated implementation.

Key quality challenges include lack of quality training material, out dated equipment, teaching and learning methods and approaches that differ from one training provider to another and an absence of competency-based training materials and assessment systems.

The shortage of a core corps of TVET teachers/instructors represents one of the obstacles to TVET development in Afghanistan. The quality of TVET teachers/instructors has suffered as a result of the low reputation of their profession. Most TVET teachers/instructors have relatively low formal qualifications, severely affecting TVET delivery at higher qualification levels. Furthermore, technical teachers suffer from low morale, low social and technical recognition, and inadequate remuneration. Many did not want to become technical teachers but were placed in technical teacher institutions as a last choice because there were no other options available to them.

#### 1.4.4 Financing

The increase in the 2012-13 budget in public spending on the education sector has only partially alleviated the structural under-funding of the public TVET sector.

A system of incentives for enterprises to provide training, both at the workplace and through their own in-service training structures, is not yet developed. The eligibility criteria for private providers that have access to public TVET funds through the call for proposals launched by the NSDP are not enforced for quality standards and, moreover, mechanisms for determining eligible costs are not in place.

Costs of TVET will remain high if it is to be provided primarily as centre-based training, which is the predominant mode of TVET delivery in Afghanistan. As with most other countries, public TVET programmes in Afghanistan are usually more expensive than general education, requiring a lower than average teacher to student ratio, substantial investment capital, and a larger operational budget for recurrent expenses and additional resources for the implementation of practical training.

A revised funding mechanism based on a modified public accounting legal framework will allow for linking resources to results, diversifying sources, saving on costs and meeting the quality and access targets set out in government plans. In the absence of such a mechanism, budgetary constraints will continue to prevail and relevance, quality, access, coverage and attractiveness of TVET will not increase to the levels necessary to meet the economic demand for skills of the economy and the social demand for skills of the citizens.

### 1.4.5. Summary of analysis of the current situation in TVET in Afghanistan

A summary of the current internal situation in vocational education and life-long learning reveals the following trends:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strong policy framework: ANDS, NESP (I,II,III), NEIP, NPP1,</li> <li>• National programmes: NSDP, NAPWA, NPP1</li> <li>• Governance and coordination bodies: HRDB, Technical Working Group in TVET (TVET TWG), Committee on Education and Skills Policy (CESP)</li> <li>• Donors coordination mechanism</li> <li>• International initiatives on overall TVET system reform and specific TVET areas</li> <li>• Concepts for internal and external mechanisms of quality assurance and control, including ANQF</li> <li>• Public spending in education and in TVET sector increased</li> <li>• Public supply of TVET increased</li> <li>• Enrolment in TVET increased</li> <li>• Communication campaign to increase TVET attractiveness planned</li> <li>• Incentive systems identified</li> <li>• Mobility paths between technical education and higher education identified</li> <li>• Links between adult literacy and technical skills programme defined and piloted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System governance and coordination of key stakeholders not defined</li> <li>• No systematic involvement of social partners in tripartite platforms for TVET governance, implementation and M&amp;E</li> <li>• System management weak (MIS, M&amp;E)</li> <li>• Low relevance to labour market skills demand, institutional and operational links with industries and sectors, LMIAS, ALMPs and instruments (public and private employment services).</li> <li>• Limited access: intake capacity and coverage of public and private TVET suppliers, inclusion and limited access of marginalised groups.</li> <li>• No liaison with the informal apprenticeship system</li> <li>• Low mobility between formal and informal TVET and between TVET and formal education</li> <li>• Low quality of the skills delivery system, (QA, ANQF, registration, accreditation, credit, assessment and certification mechanism not adopted).</li> <li>• Low attractiveness of TVET and absence of career guidance</li> <li>• Low financial sustainability of the system</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A National TVET Strategy provides direction for reform, areas for interventions by national programmes and coordination of and guidance to international donors.</li> <li>• A recognized and resourced National TVET authority reinforces TVET governance, management, relevance and quality assurance.</li> <li>• Approved ANQF allows establishing qualifications levels, mobility within TVET and among TVET and formal education.</li> <li>• Social partners' involvement strengthens relevance of supplied skills to the demand of growing economic sectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A national TVET authority not fully endorsed and adequately resourced does not overcome separation and fragmentation of TVET bodies.</li> <li>• Lack of social dialogue on TVET reduces relevance to the labour market and reduces the impact, effectiveness and sustainability of the reform.</li> <li>• In the absence a NTVET authority that ensures management, QA system, LMIAs, MIS, R&amp;D, and a mechanism of incentives, the systematic involvement of enterprises in training development (curricula, courses, assessment and certification) and delivery is not</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competency-based training (CBT) curricula and modular courses developed on the basis of existing NOSS to increase flexibility and allow wider participation of different target groups to skills development programmes.</li> <li>• New occupational standards, developed at different qualification levels, enlarge the provision of skills in demand by growing sectors.</li> <li>• Incentives to workplace training, reform of formal apprenticeships and involvement of the private sector increases skills relevance.</li> <li>• Links between informal and traditional apprenticeship and school-based training and better-regulated workplace training enlarge access to vulnerable groups.</li> <li>• Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and certification of skills acquired through work experience increase the stock of skilled workers requested by the growing industries.</li> <li>• Increased national and international resources augment the number of training institutions, upgrade existing ones, widen the intake capacity of TVET suppliers and ensure better territorial coverage of remote areas to better reach marginalized groups.</li> <li>• Retraining current teachers, employing better qualified ones and upgrading managers' qualifications reinforces the TVET delivery system.</li> <li>• Higher responsibility and autonomy of TVET institutions increase intake capacity and responsiveness to local labour markets.</li> <li>• TVET research and development improves training methodology and enlarges offers of programmes for new trades.</li> <li>• Diversified funding mechanism, including cost saving and recovery, ensures sustainability of TVET programmes, financial autonomy and investment capacity of TVET institutions.</li> </ul>	<p>effective and skills matching not efficient. There is a high risk that the system remains supply driven, with small investments in curricula and programmes leading to qualifications for new jobs in demand, and its attractiveness remains low.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recognition by employers of certified qualifications, corresponding salary levels and conditions of work, as well as attractiveness for students to join TVET remain at current low level if standardisation, harmonization and quality systems are not adopted.</li> <li>• In the absence of accreditation and registration, the quality, technical capability and offer of private suppliers is not benchmarked against quality criteria and provided certification is not related to formal qualification levels.</li> <li>• The capacity of widening access and inclusion of vulnerable groups remains low if RPL systems are not put in place.</li> <li>• Priority setting driven by international aid in the absence of revised coordination and integrated funding mechanism</li> <li>• Lack of devolution of autonomy to public training institutions affects delivery capacity, partnering with employers for workplace and apprenticeship training, investments on new curricula, programmes, equipment and material, quality of trainers and incentives to develop training options for vulnerable groups.</li> <li>• The absence of a body responsible for the coordination of TVET research and development prevents the system from identifying new priorities and setting attainable targets for investment.</li> <li>• Current financial mechanisms, entirely depending on central budgets and international aid, perpetuate the gap between supply and demand and slow down the overall reform effort.</li> </ul>
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## Strategic vision, mission, and goals



## II Strategic vision, mission, and goals

### 2.1 Vision statement

The NTVETS formulates a vision of an affordable and fitting TVET and skills development system in Afghanistan that contributes to achieving the country's economic and social development plans and creates competent and self-reliant citizens (men and women), thus improving the livelihoods of all Afghan people.

### 2.2 Mission

The strategy will aim to work towards a modern, relevant, responsive, inclusive and equitable TVET system that promotes more employment of better quality individuals, higher productivity for enterprises, and growth and development for society. The strategy aims to clarify the roles, responsibilities, structures, and requirements of TVET actors, reduce duplication of efforts and increase collaboration between various stakeholders. The strategy will establish linkages between education and training providers and the labour market, according to concepts of supply and demand, and to promote and embed the crosscutting themes of equity, access and quality in all TVET strategic planning and implementation.

### 2.3 Goals

The overall objective of the National TVET Strategy is to create a competent, motivated, adaptable, and innovative workforce in Afghanistan, which will contribute to poverty reduction and social and economic development. The strategy aims to build this workforce through facilitating demand-driven, high quality TVET that is relevant to all sectors of the economy, at all levels, and accessible to all people (men and women).

The specific objectives of the strategy are:

1. Reinforce Governance: Coordinate all formal, non-formal and informal education and training provided by all public and non-public institutions and providers.
2. Increase Access: Steer TVET providers towards the actual needs of all population groups, including the most vulnerable to exclusion.
3. Improve Quality: Orient the TVET system to provide skills for the occupations in all segments of the labour market, building a system for standardized qualifications and learning recognition.
4. Strengthen Financing: Develop a financial system that ensures the sustainability of demand-driven TVET programmes for all.

**The Afghanistan National TVET Strategy sets out an approach to achieve these objectives under the four main pillars of Governance, Quality, Accessibility, and Sustainable Financing.**

# **Strategic Objective 1: Governance and Management of the TVET System**



### III Strategic objective 1: Governance and management of the TVET system

#### 3.1 Governance overview

A clear system of governance for the TVET system is crucial to ensure effective and meaningful contributions of various stakeholders, to guarantee that the system is steered with competence, and to draw on the wide range of available TVET expertise in Afghanistan.

The TVET system is the domain of multiple stakeholders. TVET is a sub-sector of the education system, but it also equally responds to the labour needs emerging from sectors such as trade and industry, agriculture, extractive industries (mining), health, labour and social affairs and services. The TVET system must cooperate on equal terms with the private sector, which is expected not only to be the final users of skills but also to play an active role in TVET, from governance to delivery.

In order to promote formal, non-formal, informal, and enterprise-based TVET programmes and to respond to the rapidly changing requirements of the labour market, the governance of the TVET system should be organized in a way that:

1. Adequately responds to multi-sector and multi-stakeholder demands
2. Provides for flexible interactions with a variety of public and private organizations, the economic sector, and other organizations and interest groups in the country

Operates with flexibility to appropriately respond to the education and training demands of individuals and to the needs of the society.

#### 3.2 The ANQA and the TVET Board

The governance mechanism of the TVET system is proposed to reflect the wide range of stakeholders, beneficiaries and social and economic interests in the country. There are five main government bodies with the responsibility of decision-making on TVET. These are the MoE (DMTVET), MoLSAMD, NSDP, CESP, the Human Resource Development Board (HRDB) and its Technical Working Group on TVET (HRDB TWG-TVET).

An Afghanistan National Qualification Authority (ANQA) is under establishment, comprised of six regulatory boards operating under its structure. There will be one board for each of the following education subsystems: primary education, secondary education, higher education, Islamic education, literacy and non-formal education, and TVET. The ANQA is to be set up as an “autonomous organ” with its own legal status, as per the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the MoE, MoHE, MoLSAMD, Ministry of Finance, and the First Vice President in 2008.

Under this structure, the TVET Board will be the governing and regulatory body of the TVET system. In 2012, a decision was taken that the first board to be set up under the ANQA would be the TVET Board. Established in 2009, CESP has prepared the legal and operational framework of the ANQA and the standard operating procedures for the TVET Board. Draft regulations for the TVET Board as the regulatory body for the TVET system have been drafted but have yet to be submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval.

### 3.3 The TVET Board: Composition and functions

The composition of the TVET Board includes relevant public and non-public stakeholders. In particular, it will be formed by representatives of ministries, public TVET schools and institutes, public and private TVET providers, the private sector (including employers and business representatives such as chambers, businesses, industries, trade unions, and private professional associations), civil society, women's associations, and NGOs. The membership of the board will have a fair and proportional representation of both public and non-public organizations. The Chairperson and other members of the board will be appointed by the Council of Ministers.

Representatives of the following government ministries will be present in the TVET Board:

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Higher Education
- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Rural Development
- Ministry of commerce and Industry
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Information and Culture
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Economy
- Ministry of Urban Development
- Ministry of Energy and Water
- Ministry of Women Affairs

Under the ANQA's overall coordination of the education system, the specific responsibilities of the TVET Board include decision-making, implementation, and provision of services to TVET authorities and providers at the central, regional, and district level. Specifically, the TVET board will:

- Consult in TVET policy and legislation;
- Develop a TVET quality assurance and evaluation system and supervise its implementation;
- Provide support in the development of National Qualifications Framework(NQF) for TVET, in cooperation with the relevant government bodies and monitor its implementation;
- Assist in the occupational standard setting process and approve the NOSS produced by different bodies;

- Develop rules and procedures in coordination with stakeholders for occupational skills assessment, supervise their implementation, approve assessment instruments, and manage assessment data;
- Develop a TVET certification system and supervise its implementation;
- Develop a recognition and credit mechanism and supervise its implementation;
- Develop a registration and accreditation system for TVET institutions and supervise its implementation;
- Support the development and implementation of technical teacher initial and continuous training to be provided by the MOE, MoLSAMD and other concerned ministries;
- Assist in the development of a system of Labour Market Information and Analysis (LMIA), linked to the exiting LMIA Directorate of the MoLSAMD and ensure its monitoring;
- Conduct fund raising meeting with donors for TVET financing;
- Facilitate a conducive environment for the further development of private TVET provision;
- Devise strategies for capacity building of public and private TVET providers;
- Conduct, assign and supervise all necessary research and development actions;
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation of the TVET reform;
- Manage potential conflicts among the different stakeholders in the TVET system;
- Conduct all other activities necessary to foster the further development of demand-oriented, relevant and accessible TVET.

The TVET Board may establish different units as deemed necessary for the fulfilment of its functions. These units may also include subject specialists who are not appointed members of the TVET Board. The Board will be equipped with staff, facilities, and tools to undertake its activities.

This organizational set up is expected to harmonize the TVET sub-systems in a comprehensive and integrated system encompassing formal, non-formal, and informal TVET.

### 3.4 Stakeholders' Involvement

The strategy recognizes that TVET operates as the interface of different sectors of the society, notably the education sector, the labour market, industry, agriculture and rural development, and public administration. In order to serve and relate to all these sectors with high quality and relevant instruments, the TVET system is to involve all relevant stakeholders in its governance. The most important stakeholders include government, the donor community, NGOs, employers, civil society, the business sector, workers and employees represented by trade unions and professional associations, and public and private TVET providers.

Different stakeholders are expected to contribute with their own expertise, experience and capacities to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the TVET system. Specifically, stakeholders are needed to play a major role in the following functions of the TVET system:

- Policy development, drafting and reviewing through participation in relevant bodies and panels;
- Quality assurance through active involvement in setting occupational standards and conducting occupational assessments;
- TVET delivery through the provision of training to their own staff, offering internships to trainees and providing opportunities for apprenticeship training;
- Monitoring and evaluation through participation at the TVET stakeholders' tables at central and provincial levels and in the Management Boards of TVET institutions; and
- Contribution to the development of the TVET financing system.

### 3.5 Public private partnership

International experiences prove that successful TVET systems are built on strong and well-defined partnerships between government and non-government sectors. The NTVETS recognizes that public private partnership needs to be further strengthened and institutionalized in Afghanistan.

The government has the statutory function of regulating the TVET system through establishing laws, by-laws, and regulations and supporting and supervising their implementation through a quality management system. Examples of regulatory functions include establishing a system of occupational standards, conducting occupational assessment and certification, setting up a national qualifications framework, establishing accreditation mechanisms for TVET providers, defining rules and mechanisms for TVET financing, and monitoring the overall TVET system.

The non-governmental sector needs to play a decisive role in the TVET system by providing training opportunities in large companies and apprenticeship training in small and micro enterprises. In addition to these workplace-based TVET schemes, non-government TVET institutions will become an increasingly important pillar of the overall TVET supply. Private TVET is important to fully utilize the experiences and capacities of the private sector for improving the quality and relevance of TVET, increasing the overall TVET supply and strengthening accessibility to the system, as well as helping to relieve the government burden of TVET delivery. The role of non-public TVET providers will be better defined and institutionalized in the course of the strategy implementation.

In cooperation with stakeholders, the TVET Board will undertake initiatives to create a conducive environment for the development of non-public TVET supply. This includes establishing an enabling regulatory environment (licensing, registration and accreditation), increasing access to support services provided within the TVET system, and supporting initiatives to improve the quality of TVET delivery.

Considering the infant stage of TVET development in Afghanistan, another key role of the government is to develop and/or strengthen the physical capacity and the technical capability of public and non-public TVET providers in programme delivery. This includes supporting pre-service and in-service training for TVET teachers and managers as well providing instruments and tools to strengthen the effectiveness of TVET providers.

In consideration of the current status of the private sector and non-public TVET institutions in Afghanistan, it is expected that the government will continue to play a major role in providing TVET, with crucial support from the donor community.

### 3.6 Decentralization

The NTVETS promotes a decentralized TVET system. In its vision, the central authorities will remain responsible for the formulation of national policies and the national regulatory functions including, *inter alia*, the standardisation of the system (occupational standards, assessment, certification, accreditation, TVET teacher training and upgrading), the coordination of and the guidance to authorities at lower levels, and the provision of support instruments to implementing partners. Central government authorities may delegate part of their own functions to the decentralised levels of the administration as appropriate.

The strategy also promotes the decentralization of responsibility to TVET institutions with the purpose of improving the internal efficiency of these institutions and the external efficiency of the system. This will allow the institutions to better respond to the local specific economic, social, and skills development needs of communities across Afghanistan.

The strategy recommends that the government undertake a review of current legislation, including rules of public financial accounting, which will stipulate a degree of autonomy to TVET institutions, and introduce modifications to the legal framework as necessary. Parameters of TVET system decentralization will be clearly defined in the regulations, and their implementation will be regularly monitored and evaluated.

The central TVET authorities will plan, coordinate, support and supervise TVET provision at the central and provincial levels, secure funding for public TVET institutions, develop support mechanisms for non-public TVET supply, and implement the regulatory functions with the coordination of the TVET Board. The central authorities will also support provincial and district TVET offices and delegate functions according to their respective capacities.

To ensure the relevance of TVET and more structured links with local labour markets, more responsibilities will be directly assigned to TVET institutions. With the acquisition of wider management responsibilities, public TVET institutions will be required to form their own management boards involving all relevant local stakeholders, including representatives of local business communities. The management boards will be responsible for school supervision and will approve plans, budgets and reports. Non-public TVET providers will also be encouraged to form their own management boards with the stakeholders of the areas where they operate to ensure their integration into the local economic environment.

In addition to a new legal basis, the implementation of TVET system decentralization requires strengthening capacities at all levels, especially at district, provincial and TVET institution levels. The TVET board and the central level authorities will allocate resources for training and capacity building of lower level authorities, including managers of TVET institutions and the members of their management boards.

### 3.7 Management information system

Effective TVET planning also requires information about TVET institutions and their facilities, programmes, technical teachers and other staff employed in the TVET system, data on intake and graduates, and number of trainees passing occupational assessments. Occupational standards, assessments, and results need to be stored in dedicated databases. A consolidation of these initiatives, with the aim of developing a comprehensive TVET Management Information System (TMIS) under the TVET Board and linked to the Education Management Information System (EMIS), is considered a matter of priority.

### 3.8 Monitoring and evaluation system

To monitor the progress of the TVET reform envisaged in this strategy and to identify bottlenecks and difficulties at an early stage, the TVET Board, in coordination with other stakeholders, will set up a TVET monitoring system (TMS) that will:

- Translate the objectives of this strategy into indicators and identify means of verification for the indicators
- Ensure that indicators are aligned with other national development indicators
- Make sure that relevant information to verify progress is generated through the TMIS
- Support baseline studies and analysis and supervise regular data uploading and updating

The TVET Board will compile the monitoring results in a TVET Progress Report to be submitted and published annually.

### 3.9 Labour market information and analysis

The analysis of labour market information (LMI) is a pre-requisite for re-orienting TVET to focus the offer on labour market demand. LMI concerns the supply side of the labour market – i.e. demographic developments, number of school leavers at different levels, number of unemployed by province and qualification profile, etc. LMI also concerns the demand for skills development/ upgrading and occupational qualifications in the labour market. On the basis of this information, the present and future demand for TVET can be analysed to forecast skills needs – for example, skill shortage, skills mismatch, employment trends by sectors and occupations, emerging markets, new investments, and economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.

Some labour market information and forecasting are already available through MoLSAMD, the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) and other institutions. The DMTVET has recently established a Directorate for Labour Market Analysis. The LMAIU of MoLSAMD and Directorate of Labour Market Analysis of DMTVET will provide LMI data to the TVET Board. Gathering such labour market information and data will not be replicated within the TVET system. However, the TVET Board will analyse the available LMI to make this information available to TVET stakeholders for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the relevance and effectiveness of the TVET system.

Analysing the labour market to inform the TVET system is a continuous process to track changes in demand and requirements for skills and qualifications and to make adjustments at an early stage. This will allow the TVET system to react by reviewing occupational standards and developing new ones, changing training plans, curricula, courses and materials, and building appropriate teaching capacities.

### 3.10 Building research capacities

TVET development is currently hampered by a serious lack of relevant data and information necessary to inform planning, monitoring and innovation in the TVET system. Information about costs of TVET, labour market trends, availability and impact of existing TVET delivery schemes (especially those outside of the public TVET delivery system), perceptions and satisfaction of stakeholders is not easily available.

TVET-related research is currently provided mostly by international expertise due to the fact that national capacities are rather underdeveloped. In order to become self-reliant in the long run, high quality domestic TVET research capacities need to be built in Afghanistan.

Research capacities will be built at TVET authorities at the central and provincial levels to identify research needs, manage research activities, and utilize research outputs by feeding them back into the TVET planning processes. To undertake these tasks, the TVET Board will establish a Research Unit that will work in close coordination with other research initiatives in the MoE, MoHE, MoLSAMD and other line ministries.

The mandate of the Research Units includes:

- Identifying, compiling and managing available information on TVET in their areas of responsibility;
- Making information available to interested stakeholders, i.e. through publishing research results;
- Ensuring that information is appropriately taken into consideration in all planning and monitoring processes;
- Identifying research needs; and
- Contracting research projects to research institutions and supervising their implementation.

The Research Unit will complement the TVET Management Information System and the monitoring and evaluation of TVET. The TVET authorities will also take initiatives to

strengthen other TVET research capacities, particularly those of institutions that are engaged in TVET teacher training.

The measures to be taken include:

- Liaising with the MoHE and the concerned universities, colleges and centres to discern human capacity building needs;
- Providing funding for research projects and contracting research to Afghan universities and other research institutions;
- Ensuring that all TVET research conducted by international experts will be used for research capacity building within Afghanistan by attaching research projects to relevant Afghan institutions and assigning Afghan counterparts to join international experts; and
- Identifying research needs and priorities, particularly in relation to new jobs and qualifications, and developing a medium-term research plan to guide Afghan research institutions.

In cooperation with research initiatives existing at other institutions, the TVET Board's Research Unit is eventually expected to develop a pragmatic and easy-to-implement concept of continuous analysis, skills forecasting and monitoring of TVET progress. The monitoring will use the information produced by the network of stakeholders, LMI producers, and tracer studies to understand the main signals and trends of the labour market.

### 3.11 Awareness raising about TVET reform, system and institutions

In Afghanistan, TVET suffers from a relatively poor public image. TVET is usually associated with low status jobs, low salaries, and lack of personal development opportunities. This is partly due to low quality TVET programmes that may not allow TVET graduates to successfully compete in the labour market. TVET is generally perceived as a place of last resort for those students who failed to get into higher education. This misconception needs to be rectified.

Therefore, TVET authorities, together with their stakeholders (in particular business organisations), will invest in public awareness campaigns to promote a renewed TVET system offering high quality TVET programmes and occupational qualifications based on the needs of the labour market with clear opportunities for personal career advancement. The campaigns will also raise awareness about accessibility, highlighting that TVET is open to all target groups in both the urban and rural areas. Special efforts will be directed to create awareness and ownership for TVET among employers and the private business sector.

Skills competitions within Afghanistan and Afghan participation in international skills competition events will be promoted in order to upgrade the image of TVET and enhance occupational professionalism in the country.

### 3.12 Managing TVET international cooperation

The process of TVET reform requires the successful utilization of substantial expertise and resources. The Government of Afghanistan invites international partners to continue and increase their financial and technical assistance to the TVET sector. However, cooperation projects must be aligned with the NTVETS and support its objectives and principles.

The TVET Board, in collaboration with the HRDB, will ensure that all official bilateral and multilateral cooperation is coordinated and that planned activities are geared towards the achievement of the objectives of this strategy and integrated in the annual and mid-term activity plans. Appropriate mechanisms for donor cooperation will be organized to ensure coordinated approaches and to avoid duplicating or conflicting activities. Project monitoring mechanisms should be aligned to the national TVET monitoring system.

## **Strategic Objective 2: Access for all**



## IV Strategic objective 2: Access for all

### 4.1 Equal access and equal opportunity

The TVET system strives for social inclusion by increasing overall access to relevant formal, non-formal and informal TVET for all target groups, while ensuring equality of access. The NTVETS has been developed with the aim of meeting the training needs of all Afghans, taking into consideration local, community-specific needs. For this, emphasis should be placed on improving access to TVET institutions, with a special focus on access in rural areas and deprived communities, in order to reach people who are most in need of TVET opportunities.

The NTVETS also aims to increase access to TVET for all social groups, notably those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and those with special needs. Particular attention should be given to increasing access for:

- School drop-outs;
- People without formal education, including illiterate people;
- Entrepreneurs and employees (including formal and informal apprentices) in both formal and informal enterprises who require skills upgrading and access to recognized qualifications;
- Farmers and their families;
- Unemployed people who need initial TVET or retraining to support their reintegration into the labour market;
- People with special challenges for participating in the economy, such as widows, people with disabilities, people from marginalized ethnic groups and other groups that are disadvantaged in the labour market; and
- Girls and women from all regions of the country.

As a result of promoting access for all, the TVET system in Afghanistan will build a competent and adaptable workforce that responds to the needs of the different segments of the labour market. Increasing access to TVET will contribute to higher productivity and the occupational requirements of rural labour markets, which employ most of the working age population in both agriculture and off-farm activities. It will also work towards meeting the human capital needs of national enterprises, necessary to attract new investments, as well as the civil service, which will help improve the quality and efficiency of public service delivery. Finally, increasing access to TVET will meet the needs of vulnerable groups, people in rural communities, unemployed youth, persons with disabilities, and migrant workers threatened by exclusion. Education and training opportunities will help these people to fully realize their potential for productive work and contribute more substantially to economic and social development. Within vulnerable groups, women are more vulnerable to social exclusion than their male counterparts, and the TVET system will take measures to prioritize the inclusion of women.

## 4.2 Pathways

The TVET system will promote vertical and horizontal mobility and progression between different TVET training opportunities, qualification levels, and occupations. The ANQF is expected to institutionalize nationally recognized qualifications, allowing for flexible movement of trainees between formal, non-formal, and informal TVET subsystems.

The ANQF will also allow for flexible pathways between formal and non-formal TVET and general, Islamic, and higher education. TVET should always create the possibility of career progression and continuation of learning. Through a number of targeted actions, barriers will be removed in order to clear the pathways for a more flexible learning system.

## 4.3 Positioning TVET in the national education and skills training system

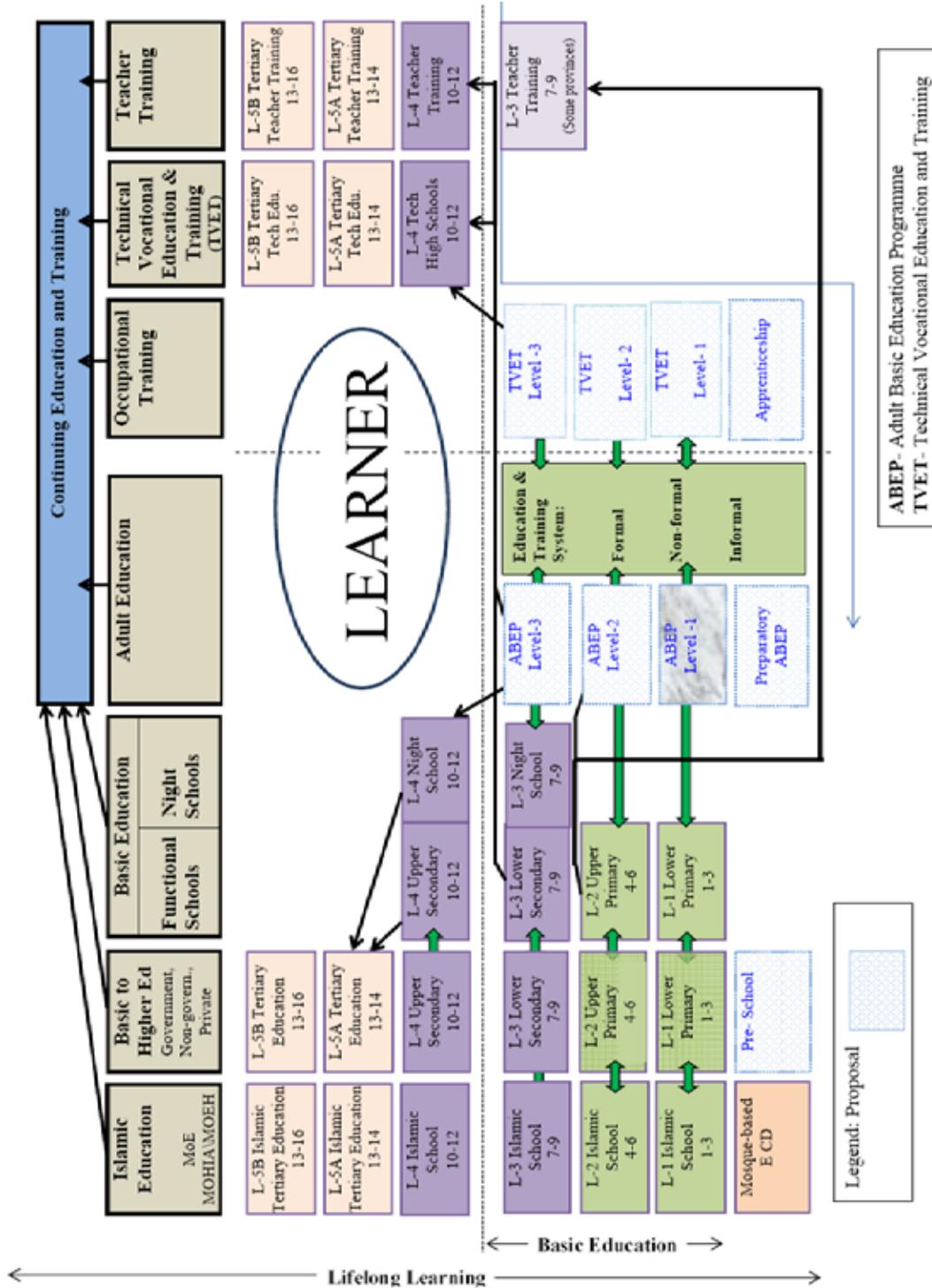
The strategy aims to remove the barriers to progression in the education system that discourage learners and may contribute to inefficiencies, such as dropouts from key levels that offer no further progression. From a learning outcomes perspective, the highest levels of TVET are equivalent to short cycle higher education and could be at the same ANQF level; however, permeability is difficult.

The below graph illustrates how TVET and the proposed Adult Basic Education Program (ABEP) will fill gaps within the current (and future) Afghan education and training system by strengthening non-formal education with pathways to the formal education system.

TVET and ABEP and the emerging lifelong learning system are all supposed to become linked to the general education and tertiary education systems through bridges and ladders. This flexible and permeable system allows learners to enter and exit at different points and levels. It allows for equivalencies and recognition, validation and certification of their learning achievements within the framework of the ANQF.

Such alternative pathways for education, training and learning will also make the education system more inclusive and encourage more people to engage in and further their learning. Close collaboration between providers of short-term vocational training courses and longer-term vocational training schools and institutions will be necessary in order to make sure that such linkages are strong and benefit learners who wish to combine different learning paths.

Proposed positioning of TVET in Education and Training System in Afghanistan



Non-formal and informal education programmes should adhere to the standards set in the ANQF and be accredited through the TVET Board of the ANQA. Youth and adults who are the beneficiaries of non-formal education programmes have access to pathways to continue their education in the mainstream education system. In this way, education, which is not an end in itself, consists of building blocks to be added one to another, vertically or horizontally, leading the learner to their chosen learning outcome.

#### 4.4 Flexible organization of TVET delivery

The TVET system will allow and encourage a more dynamic development of TVET programmes and flexible delivery, in order to respond to the changing occupational requirements and to accommodate the different demands of the target groups. Flexible organization of TVET will be achieved through:

- Outcome-based organization, modular training organization, access to occupational assessment leading to recognized qualifications, and coordination mechanisms for allocation of resources and provision of support;
- Integration of formal, non-formal and informal TVET into a coordinated system that ensures equal attention to access for all target groups;
- Assistance to formal and non-formal initial TVET schemes: TVET institution-based and cooperative training, all short-term TVET, skills upgrading schemes in and by enterprises, traditional apprenticeships provided by skilled crafts persons and informal learning such as learning on-the-job and self-organized activities; and
- Support to all public and non-public TVET institutions, providing both formal and non-formal TVET, as well as to informal training providers (companies, apprenticeship training, and informal apprenticeships).

#### 4.5 Apprenticeship training

The flexibility of TVET delivery rests on strengthening and further developing apprenticeship training as a modality of TVET provision. Apprenticeship training is provided at enterprises, and this is where the bulk of practical training takes place within the TVET system. The major advantage of apprenticeship training is its link with the world of work to which apprentices are systematically exposed and where they learn occupational skills in real life situations. Experience shows that this leads to significantly better training outcomes, practical skills and work attitudes. Furthermore, enterprises get to know the trainees, which often leads to employment after graduation. Finally, apprenticeship training tends to be more cost effective than school-based TVET, as enterprises already have the machinery needed for training, and if apprenticeship training is to be supplemented with formal training at TVET institutions, these training periods are generally much shorter. The development of technical, core and entrepreneurial skills is at the heart of the informal and traditional apprenticeship system that proves relevant to the current labour market needs, sustainable in costs, attractive and effective in providing status and social recognition to the learners. It nevertheless suffers from, the technology limitation of the informal enterprises as well as of the limited prospects for further learning it can offer. The

strategy considers informal apprenticeship as a resource to invest in and support through establishing links to formal TVET and by recognizing the learning it provides.

#### 4.6 TVET for self-employment

Self-employment represents an important route into the labour market, both in urban and rural areas. However, self-employment requires more than being technically competent in a certain occupational field. In order to become successful, entrepreneurs need self-confidence, creativity, a realistic assessment of the market, basic business management skills, and an openness to risks. Furthermore, starting a business requires access to finance, access to necessary permits and licensing, and access to land or structures from which to operate.

TVET providers are encouraged to consider the work environment in the local, micro- and small-business sector when designing their training programmes. For example, this includes the introduction and use of appropriate technologies and the organisation of internships or cooperative training programmes with micro- and small-enterprises.

The TVET executive bodies will also undertake initiatives to strengthen and raise the quality of traditional apprenticeship in preparing youth for self-employment. More attention on entrepreneurial skills development, working conditions, and occupational safety and health in the curricula of formal and non-formal training as well as in informal training will be considered.

#### 4.7 Vocational guidance and counseling to promote TVET

Increased attention will be given to career guidance in its articulation in career, vocational and employment counselling to enable future trainees, in particular youth, to choose the right career and make full use of the initial and life-long learning opportunities provided by the TVET system. This will help expand access by increasing demand for TVET.

#### 4.8 Gender equality

The TVET system will promote gender equality in access to TVET opportunities and within TVET programme delivery. All TVET opportunities will be equally accessible to females. TVET institutions will develop proactive gender policies and strategies in order to promote opportunities for girls and women in TVET and ensure non-discrimination. Strategies could include specific outreach and awareness raising about TVET opportunities to females and their families, the provision of female-only dormitories at TVET schools and institutes, and inclusive education practices within TVET schools and institutes. The TVET strategy reiterates the importance of equal access for female candidates, as emphasized in the ANDS, which states that gender concerns must be the “collective responsibility” of all sectors of the government.

## **Strategic Objective 3: Quality**



## V Strategic objective 3: Quality

### 5.1 Call for quality

The goal of the TVET system is to create a competent and adaptable workforce (both male and female) to support economic and social development in Afghanistan. A strong TVET system enables an increasing number of citizens to find gainful employment and self-employment in the different economic sectors in the country.

The TVET system strives for the highest quality and relevance of all TVET programmes. The NTVETS lays the groundwork for developing quality management, continuously monitoring the relevance of TVET programmes, and providing support and capacity building to TVET institutions to achieve defined quality standards. An important mechanism for this will be the introduction of a competency based training (CBT) system, based on occupational standards, accreditation, assessment, and certification.

### 5.2 Outcomes-based approach

The national TVET system will be organized as an outcome-based system. This means that skills and competencies needed for each occupation will become the final benchmark of teaching, training and learning.

Competency is a broad concept embracing the ownership and application of a set of skills, knowledge and attitudes that are necessary for each occupation and to successfully compete in the labour market, either as an employee or entrepreneur. Competencies will be described in the NOSS, which are currently under development by the NSDP and shared with the DM TVET of the MoE, and may be further developed by all those knowledgeable about education and training and the world of work. The NOSS define the competency outcomes of all training and learning and will form the benchmark for quality management within the TVET system.

Upon completion of TVET programmes, learners' competencies will be measured through occupational assessment, which is based on the NOSS. A candidate who has proven their own competence through an occupational assessment will be awarded a National Occupational Certificate in a standardised occupational area. Occupational assessment leading to certification will be open to everybody who has developed the required competency through any means of formal or non-formal TVET or informal skills development. Therefore, certification will be based on the competencies of the individual, rather than the means through which they acquired these competencies. The outcome-based system is a tool to accord equal value to all forms of TVET delivery.

In the outcome-based TVET system, the goal of TVET providers is to teach the skills, knowledge and attitudes trainees need to be able to demonstrate to meet the occupational standards and hence receive certification. Thus, TVET providers have to develop curricula based on the NOSS, leading to a qualification through an appropriate learning process.

### 5.3 Institution building for outcome-based TVET

The previous TVET system did not consider the competency requirements for different occupations demanded by the labour market and led to a failure in responding to the evolving demands of the labour market. The outcome-based TVET system is therefore the centrepiece of TVET reform, for it will respond to the demand for relevant skills, facilitate the recognition of the wide range of non-formal training and informal learning schemes available and open access to certification for populations previously denied the opportunity to have their skills recognized.

In the outcome-based TVET system, the central government will meet its responsibility for ensuring quality and relevance of TVET by monitoring the setting of NOSS, which should be comparable to international standards, and by organising an occupational assessment and certification system which offers NOSS Qualification Certificates to those who have proven that they are competent in accordance with the defined occupational standards.

In the process of building an outcome-based TVET system, the government has the statutory responsibility to set rules and regulations in cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations (social partners) and other stakeholders of the world of work.

### 5.4 Occupational standards

Occupational standards define the competencies of a worker according to the requirements of the labour market, which are the competencies a person needs to have in order to be considered "qualified" in a certain occupation. Competencies include a wide range of skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to perform a specific job.

Occupational standards will continue to be developed for all occupational fields at all relevant qualification levels attainable within the TVET system. It is estimated that around 750 NOSS will need to be developed. Each occupational standard is broken down into units that describe a set of "employable" competencies. Occupational standards will be described in the same, nationally approved, format and will be publicly available. This will enhance transparency about occupational qualifications among employers, trainees and TVET providers.

Responsibility for organizing, facilitating, approving and endorsing occupational standards rests with the TVET Board. However, as occupational standards reflect the competency requirements of the world of work, employers' and workers' organizations, along with public and private TVET providers will be important partners in the development of the standards. The TVET Board will therefore form panels of experts in the specific occupations for approving standards.

The TVET Board will approve proposed occupational standards as NOSS, once checked against the needs of the labour market and the compatibility with international standards. The TVET Board will produce and disseminate the standard setting procedures.

Occupational standards must be relevant to the needs of the labour market. Therefore, the identification and clustering of new occupations will be based on labour

market analysis that will also indicate the need for revision and adaptation of existing ones.

Identification and clustering of occupations will be undertaken in close cooperation with MoLSAMD and MoEDM TVET and as well as with other concerned bodies in the public and private sector. This participatory standard setting process will ensure that occupational standards are aligned with the National Classification of Occupations.

Internationally compatible occupational standards support the international competitiveness and mobility of Afghan employees. Thus, occupational standards should reflect – as far as possible – international standards of competence, while at the same time be based on workplace requirements within the country. Standard setting procedures should also include methods of adapting or adopting existing standards from other countries. As a rule, occupational standards approved as NOSS by the TVET Board can be developed by different bodies at the national level.

### **5.5 Occupational qualification assessment and certification**

Assessment and certification are ways to verify individual competencies in an outcome-based TVET system. All defined levels of qualification, occupational assessment and certification will be offered and certificates awarded upon passing the specific assessment.

Assessment and certification will be accessible to all candidates who feel competent and meet the requirements of the respective occupational standard, irrespective of how and where they were trained or learned. Contrary to past practice in Afghanistan, obtaining certification will no longer depend on attending a formal TVET programme. Graduates from any formal or non-formal TVET programme, as well as those who have acquired their skills on the job (through traditional apprenticeship or self-learning) will be able to be assessed and obtain certification.

Hence, occupational assessment will be the major tool to integrate different TVET delivery modes, recognize prior learning, and increase access to the TVET system and its qualifications for a larger segment of the population. In order to improve the employability of TVET graduates, occupational qualifications and certificates need to be recognized by employers. Experts from the industries and representatives of workers' organizations will be members of the groups of assessors.

The TVET Board will bear the responsibility for establishing and facilitating a national occupational qualification assessment and certification system. The TVET Board will set the rules and procedures for developing and conducting assessments and will supervise and regulate the implementation. The TVET Board will issue a National Occupational Qualification Certificate on behalf of the ANQA to people who successfully pass the occupational assessment.

## 5.6 ANQA and ANQF

The strategy envisages that there will be a national qualification authority (ANQA), and a TVET Board. The TVET Board will be established with the functions of accreditation, certification, monitoring and evaluation for quality assurance, analysis of labour market needs, and the approval of NOSS. These functions will be formalized with the promulgation of the proposed legislation for the establishment of the ANQA.

The TVET strategy promotes the introduction of a tiered system of qualifications based on the proposed ANQF. A key activity in the TVET strategy implementation plan is to establish the necessary trust in various levels of qualifications by different users and key stakeholders. This will require systematic institutional communication between the government and the private sector to ensure that occupational standards and qualifications are mutually beneficial to employers as means of identifying skilled employees and to learners as means of possible progression in the education system and labour market and to training providers as a tool to structure their delivery.

The CESP has proposed the adoption of the ANQF based on eight levels of certification. The draft ANQF is the result of extensive consultations with major stakeholders to ensure that, once introduced, the framework is accepted by the education system at large (both public and private institutions) and the employers (public, private, national and international agencies). The ANQF is conceived as a framework that embraces all the education subsystems, and this comprehensive development will require time and consensus. For the sake of TVET system reform, a vocational qualification framework will be developed as a priority.

The TVET Board will focus on the application of the ANQF to the TVET system. The ANQF will define the levels of qualifications, ensure that different qualifications are comparable, and facilitate horizontal and vertical mobility within the TVET system first and, in the future, across the other education sub-systems.

The ANQF applied to TVET will define the different occupational qualification levels, level descriptors (i.e. define the scope and composition of qualifications and the level of responsibility a qualified person can assume in the workplace), and formulate rules for horizontal and vertical mobility (i.e. rules for moving between different occupational areas and between different qualification levels). Occupational qualifications should also provide opportunities to move into the general education system and progress to higher education.

Therefore, the qualification levels for TVET will be developed with a view to eventually being integrated into an overarching ANQF that, in the future, will define qualification levels, relationships and equivalences among different levels of the education system as a whole.

The ANQF will set rules and requirements to ensure mobility between general education and TVET, and to move up from occupational qualifications into the higher education system. A national qualifications framework is considered as the major tool to promote mobility through the recognition of individual achievements, the establishment of equivalence (credit system) and the alignment of training programmes to common standards.

The TVET Board will liaise with the general and higher education authorities to further develop and establish a broader ANQF that aligns TVET to general education and higher education policies on qualifications.

## 5.7 Curriculum development and preparation of training programmes

With the introduction of occupational standards, new outcome-based curricula will be developed. Curricula will have to consider requirements of both the target groups and of the specific local labour markets.

As a final result, once the outcome-based quality assurance system is fully established, setting national curricula as a primary quality-assurance tool will no longer be necessary, as individual TVET providers will have the option to develop their own curricula for the occupations they wish to be accredited for delivering to their specific target groups. Each TVET provider may develop its own curricula based on the specific needs of its target groups and in compliance with the respective NOSS approved by the TVET Board.

It is acknowledged, however, that many of the existing TVET providers are not yet in a position to transform the occupational standards into appropriate modular and outcome-based curricula. The same applies to the development of new training, teaching and learning materials.

To capacitate TVET providers and to ensure that TVET curricula, programmes, courses, and teaching and learning materials are of high standards, the TVET Board should provide support. This support should include substantial capacity building and national tools for curricula harmonization, a curriculum development framework, curriculum development guides, model curricula, and related teaching, training and learning materials. The TVET Board will supervise the rollout of new curricula in both public and private TVET institutes in the country.

## 5.8 Teaching and learning materials

The TVET strategy recognizes that teaching and learning materials will need to be revised to reflect the new competency based approach. Revision can include the adaptation of reliable internationally available materials on competency based training (CBT), competency based teacher education (CBTE), and competency based assessment (CBA).

This will require research to be conducted and presented to decision-makers indicating the most appropriate sources before the selection of materials is finalized. The materials are to be translated into the national languages and into local languages when necessary. Adequate resources should be available to print sufficient copies to meet the country's requirements.

## 5.9 Modularization as a principle of TVET delivery

TVET programmes will be organized in a modular fashion to meet the requirements as defined in the NOSS. In this way, each module or combination of modules will lead to an employable set of competencies. Successful completion of each training module shall be dependent on assessment and certification in conjunction with the assessment specifications stipulated in the NOSS. The modularization of TVET is the mechanism for making TVET delivery flexible and for providing for flexible entry and exit points.

Different TVET modules can be combined into long-term programmes representing the entire teaching, training and learning necessary to achieve an occupational qualification. Through this modularization, a trainee may, for personal reasons, exit a long-term programme at any time while having acquired competencies that would allow her/him to successfully perform certain jobs in the labour market and may re-enter the TVET programme at a later stage, continue with the missing modules and thus complete her/his qualification.

Individual modules or a number of modules may also be delivered in short programmes. In this case, trainees either acquire an important set of competencies (equivalent to a partial qualification) recognized in the labour market, and/or achieve the first steps of a potentially longer TVET career that may eventually lead to a comprehensive occupational qualification.

In the course of their individual career, trainees may complete different TVET modules over time, offered by different providers, to finally master a comprehensive set of competencies required for an occupational qualification.

Modular TVET organization is a new concept for the TVET system in Afghanistan. TVET providers need new skills to develop modularized curricula, manage modular TVET, and re-organise training plans accordingly. The TVET Board and the concerned Ministries will therefore provide the necessary support to TVET institutes by developing curriculum guides, training technical teachers, and building institutional capacity to organise modular training.

## 5.10 Learning methodologies

The TVET system will also facilitate the emergence of modern teaching and learning methodologies, which are learner-centred and geared towards empowering trainees to assume responsibility for their own learning. The main benchmark stipulated by the TVET system will be outcomes-based, i.e. the desired competencies defined in the NOSS.

However, the NTVETS promotes learner-centred, inclusive, and active learning methodologies and supportive pedagogies to help learners obtain the desired competencies effectively and efficiently. The TVET authorities will provide necessary support to TVET providers to develop programmes and curricula in accordance with the needs of their target groups.

## 5.11 Building capacities in TVET institutions

Effective, efficient and dedicated TVET providers capable of developing and delivering flexible, demand-driven, CBT TVET programmes are key to an effective TVET system. Building the capacity of such providers, both public and non-public, is therefore a core task of the TVET authorities.

### *Public TVET institutions*

The preceding years were characterized by a massive expansion of TVET supply by public institutions. However, this expansion focused more on quantity than on quality. The public sector will now concentrate on consolidating its TVET institutions,

improving labour market orientation, relevance and quality, and increasing accessibility of programmes for disadvantaged groups.

At the central and provincial levels, TVET authorities must facilitate this process by ensuring that:

- Public TVET institutions are encouraged and empowered to develop close working relationships with employers and large, medium, small and micro-enterprises in their districts;
- Public TVET institutions' programmes are based on local skills needs;
- Public investment in TVET programmes is based on the needs of the labour market;
- Relevant non-formal TVET programmes are developed to increase TVET opportunities for target groups in rural areas and to provide skills upgrading for workers in the micro- and small-business sector;
- Attention is given to all public TVET institutions, especially to those which are capable of accumulating and transferring technology;
- Public facilities are improved to ensure that TVET provision meets the NOSS;
- High-quality and learner-centred training, teaching and learning materials are available;
- Particular attention is given to the development and proper management of human resources within TVET institutions, including managers, administrators and TVET teachers;
- Access to public TVET institutions is inclusive and institutions receive assistance to adapt facilities to meet the needs of learners with disabilities;
- Equal access for female trainees is ensured;
- Public TVET provision balances quality and sustainability of existing institutes and programmes and expands access; and
- All public investment in TVET institutions and programmes is made at the central and local levels on the basis of comprehensive TVET planning and skills forecasting.

#### *Private TVET institutions*

Partnerships between public and private actors based on trust, cooperation and mutual recognition are pre-requisites for the sustainable development of the TVET system. Therefore, one of the core responsibilities of central TVET authorities is to promote and provide incentives for investment in private TVET provision in all provinces.

Central TVET authorities, which may delegate some of their responsibilities to lower level TVET authorities, will promote private investment in TVET through all suitable means, in particular through:

- Implementing registration, licensing and accreditation of private TVET institutions in a transparent and timely manner in accordance with rules and regulations;
- Facilitating access to appropriate land and buildings for new TVET institutions;
- Maintaining continuous consultation processes with representatives of private TVET providers in order to identify area-specific private training provision;
- Harmonizing the planning of public TVET provision with private TVET suppliers in order to avoid duplication and increase complementarities;

- Making labour market information, occupational standards, TVET-specific regulations, research outcomes and other relevant information available to the non-public TVET sector;
- Ensuring that capacity building initiatives for public TVET institutions (e.g. further training of teachers; management courses for administration staff and management boards, etc.) are available to private TVET institutions;
- Ensuring that private providers have access to curriculum guides and training and teaching materials; and
- Promoting the responsible and efficient use of resources available to all TVET institutions.

## 5.12 Accreditation of TVET institutions

The system of accreditation of TVET institutions will be reorganized in order to establish an effective and efficient accreditation system ensuring the quality of TVET institutions.

Accreditation serves two purposes. Firstly, accreditation sets quality benchmarks for TVET institutions. As the accrediting TVET authorities, the TVET Board identifies areas where institutions fall short of quality standards and offers support to help them upgrade and meet the standards. Secondly, accreditation promotes transparent TVET markets, thereby preventing learners and trainees from accessing low quality TVET provision.

Accreditation is based on quality indicators defining the physical and human resources necessary for the provision of quality TVET and is derived from the national curricula. A set of indicators may include the availability of classrooms and workshops and the number and qualifications of teachers. The new quality indicators for accreditation will focus on internal quality management of TVET institutions, such as capacities for curriculum development, learner-centred teaching, links with the labour market, personnel management and human resource development, and financial management.

Accreditation will be awarded to both public and private institutions that will be given access to support services offered by the TVET Board. Accreditation will allow TVET institutions to realistically assess their own capabilities (and weaknesses), to develop targets for quality improvement and to access development support available within the TVET system. Accreditation will be a 'stamp of quality,' helping TVET institutions to market what they offer to potential learners.

Accreditation will progressively become compulsory to ensure that trainees receive quality training. In the long run, however, quality of training will be regulated mainly through occupational assessment.

The TVET Board will coordinate the accreditation process and may delegate this function to lower level TVET authorities when such authorities have developed the required capacities in the future. Accreditation by TVET authorities will be based on national accreditation rules and procedures that adhere to the set of indicators and draw on experiences from other countries. The TVET Board will set these accreditation rules, with the involvement of public and private providers and relevant stakeholders.

Accreditation bodies will be established with the responsibility to assess and grade TVET institutions and award accreditation. Accreditation bodies will be established by the TVET Board and will be comprised of technical experts from the government, representatives from TVET institutions, employers and other stakeholders from the private sector.

The TVET Board will set up a database of accredited TVET institutions as part of its management information system (MIS) and will publish an annual list of accredited TVET institutions.

### **5.13 Creating conducive work environments for TVET staff**

The difficulty of attracting high calibre and motivated professionals to work in the TVET sector is attributed to the low reputation of TVET and the unattractive working conditions. This strategy aims to create a conducive, motivating, and attractive work environment for TVET professionals as an important part of TVET reform.

The TVET system will undertake all necessary efforts to revise salary packages and conditions of work offered to TVET staff. Appropriate motivational incentives will be offered to TVET bodies' members at different levels, members of TVET institutions' management boards, and members of standard setting panels.

### **5.14 Pre-service and in-service training of TVET teachers and instructors**

Highly competent, qualified, motivated, flexible and creative TVET teachers are the backbone of the TVET system. Instructors should be able to adjust to changing technological environments and create conducive learning environments for different target groups. The Government of Afghanistan has started TVET teacher training programmes at technical teacher training institutes. The aim of these programmes is to build the capacity of TVET teachers to prepare trainees to successfully pass occupational assessment. Pre-service and in-service education and training opportunities will be provided for teachers and instructors from all levels of the formal TVET system.

Access to pre-service TVET teacher training will be open to people from different educational and professional backgrounds. The future corps of teachers will attract professionals with technical competencies and work experience. After completing practical work experience, TVET graduates or skilled practitioners from the world of work will be encouraged to become TVET instructors. Graduates from TVET programmes and skilled practitioners from the world of work will undergo an occupational assessment as a precondition to entering TVET teachers' training programmes.

Priority will be placed on developing training programmes for continuously upgrading the competencies of existing TVET teachers and to facilitate life-long learning and the pursuit of advanced qualifications. The modularization of pre-service and in-service teacher training course curricula will allow for flexible entry and exit into TVET teacher training courses.

The TVET Board is responsible for liaising with higher education institutions, companies, TVET institutions and other appropriate organizations to define a national qualification for TVET teachers and to support the implementation of training schemes for TVET teachers in the country.

### 5.15 Human resource development for TVET management

Resources will also be invested into human resource development (HRD) for TVET management and administrative staff, including stakeholders involved as council and board members at different levels of TVET governance.

Specific target groups for this HRD programme will include:

- Members of TVET bodies at central and provincial levels
- Administrative staff and TVET executive bodies at central, provincial and district levels
- Assessors in the occupational assessment system
- Heads of TVET institutions
- Members of TVET institution management boards

### 5.16 Introducing ICT to the TVET system

The introduction of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) to TVET delivery and assessment is an important step for enhancing access to quality TVET and for developing life-long learning opportunities. Through ICT, training, teaching, learning, and assessment materials can be provided at a lower cost. ICT supports learner-centred TVET delivery, improves access to information, and allows for self- and self-paced learning and assessment.

The government and other public TVET providers are responsible for appropriately equipping institutions with ICT, making sure that TVET teachers are able to integrate ICT in TVET delivery, and encouraging and guiding trainees in the use of the new learning technologies. Non-public TVET providers are encouraged to introduce e-learning and blended learning methodologies.

TVET institutions are also expected to replicate new technologies and transfer these technologies to relevant industries in order to increase the competitiveness of the sector according to international standards. Replicating technologies will be made through referring to international best practice.

New technologies can be used in curriculum development and teaching and learning processes aimed at helping students meet occupational standards. Once TVET institutions have accumulated technology capabilities, used these capabilities in their TVET programmes, and passed these capabilities on to their trainees, trainees will then go out into industries and promote technology transfer. This will contribute to the enhancement of productivity and the competitiveness of industries. The TVET Board will ensure coordination in technology transfer.

### 5.17 Efficiency in the TVET system

To make the best use of available resources, efforts will be undertaken to increase efficiency in the TVET system. This applies to the management of TVET at all levels, the method of TVET delivery, and the possibilities of recognizing previous learning achievements.

Efficiency will be raised at all levels of TVET management through appropriate organizational development, human resource development policies, and clear definitions of functions and responsibilities. The gradual delegation of increased management responsibilities to TVET institutions, including responsibilities in the recruitment of teachers, is expected to improve internal efficiency.

Strengthening cost-effective modes of TVET delivery is another important means of improving efficiency in the TVET system. Accordingly, cooperative TVET schemes will be promoted and TVET institutions will be encouraged to develop flexible and better solutions for cost-effective TVET delivery. The responsibility for increasing the efficiency of TVET institutions will remain with the concerned Ministries.

### 5.18 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

The integration of non-formal and informal TVET with formal TVET through recognition of prior learning will eventually add significantly to the overall efficiency of the system, avoiding unnecessary learning duplications. This will be achieved through the modularization of TVET, through the introduction of occupational standards guiding the recognition of formally, non-formally and informally acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes, and through opening access to occupational assessment and certification to anyone who wishes to pursue certification, regardless of their acquired level of formal education. The TVET Board will be responsible for the development and implementation of the RPL system.

## **Strategic Objective 4: Sustainable Financing**



## VI Strategic objective 4: Sustainable financing

### 6.1 A new TVET funding system

The Government of Afghanistan invests in TVET as a means for achieving national social and economic objectives. This strategy aims at laying down the groundwork for the development of a TVET funding system that is efficient, effective and equitable to help the government meet its goals.

A new funding system needs to be designed to support the goals of the TVET system. The TVET system should produce skills for the labour market, respond to skills shortages, provide equal access across the country to vulnerable groups, ensure that TVET infrastructure is properly run and maintained, Support TVET providers to remain financially viable, and offer incentives for innovation and entrepreneurship in TVET institutions.

Alternative TVET funding mechanisms (input and output based, bottom-up or top-down, incremental or zero-based) will be analysed. Funding options should be prioritized based on the provision of information about and control of services “purchased” from training institutions. This will allow business development and financial planning, ensure national consistency in funding allocation, and guarantee a fair and equitable financing formula.

The main sources of finance to support TVET operations in Afghanistan are public funding allocated to line ministries, private funding (fees) paid to private TVET providers, some revenue-based funding (mostly in private institutions), and funding from the international donor community.

### 6.2 New sources of financing

New sources of financing TVET are needed to diversify and solidify its base of support. The system will need to generate sufficient resources for expanding public training delivery, reinforcing governance and management structures, and developing necessary support services.

Diversification can be pursued whereby government budgetary allocations and funds provided by foreign donors are gradually integrated with contributions from direct beneficiaries of TVET (fee-charging policies), while ensuring that fees do not represent significant barriers to access or put too much burden on trainees.

Furthermore, the core ministries involved in TVET may devise budgetary procedures and/or incentive schemes to encourage institutions to increase their income generating activities to secure supplementary financial resources, in line with public financial accounting rules.

Existing income-generating activities (e.g. the sale of products produced by students, commercial activities, or renting out facilities) can be increased by strengthening management and marketing skills of TVET institutions and adopting new regulations on the use of generated funds.

The TVET institutions' management boards will have to supervise, support and monitor income generating activities. This applies to the nature and implementation of activities, as well as to the use of funds. As a general rule, income-generating activities should not distract TVET institutions from their core business of providing high-quality TVET to trainees.

The TVET system will also encourage private investment in TVET institutions and enhanced involvement of companies in TVET. Tools to facilitate private investment include financial incentives, scholarships, schemes to promote the donation of equipment, and other means.

Efficient, effective and equitable use of funds and cost-effective management of TVET institutions and programme delivery, without compromising quality, is a prerequisite for the realisation of this strategic objective. Public TVET providers with increased financial autonomy will be accountable for the use of the public funds received by the government.

Government ministries will have to develop a reporting system based on standard financial statements and conduct an internal audit of their training institutions before proceeding with the identification and adoption of cost-saving mechanisms and new financing arrangements.

### **6.3 A standard set of financial statements**

In accordance with the generally accepted accounting practices in the Government of Afghanistan, a standard set of financial statements for all training institutions will be prepared. Training institutions will have to put in place effective financial management procedures and a system of internal audits of their financial transactions.

Capacity building of public training institutions' management staff will enable managers to comply with the adopted financial system according to standardized rules on the management of their assets and revenues and the utilization of surpluses. Increased competencies will also be required to increase institutions' financial accountability and to establish the internal financial audit function.

The legal framework for the implementation of the new TVET funding mechanism and of cost-recovery measures and cost-saving schemes will be defined and existing legislation amended to align with the adopted TVET funding system.

## VII NTVETS implementation – Action plan, monitoring and evaluation, and communications

### 7.1 Action plan overview

The action plan is the tool that supports the systemic and continued implementation of the strategy. It incorporates all the strategy components and outlines specific objectives, breaking them down into planned activities, performance indicators, costs, implementation terms, and responsible institutions.

The plan includes medium-term activities, and is best conceptualized as a flexible, working document, allowing for updating and modification if the implementing context changes in the course of the strategy implementation process.

### 7.2 Implementation: monitoring and evaluation

The institutional framework for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategy will include the HRDB, the TVET WG, and the TVET Board. National stakeholders and development partners will independently monitor strategy implementation and will intervene with proposals aimed at improving the implementation process when necessary.

Monitoring could entail the following:

- Annual monitoring reports;
- Bi-annual monitoring reports;
- Final evaluation reports on the achievement of strategy objectives during the whole implementation period.

The bi-annual, annual, and final monitoring and evaluation reports on strategy implementation will be submitted to the HRDB for review and approval by the TVET Board. The monitoring and evaluation reports will be made publically available and will be posted on relevant government websites. The TVET stakeholders will inform civil society about the progress of strategy implementation, encouraging opportunities for public engagement and ensuring a transparent and participatory process of implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

### 7.3 Communications

Communications and information are necessary activities to increase the visibility of the reforms initiated as part of the strategy implementation process. Communications raises awareness and informs the public about the purpose, scope and expected impact of strategy implementation.

Two integrated actions could be implemented as part of an NTVETS communications strategy:

- An awareness campaign, to inform target groups on the strategy and its benefits; and

- A promotional campaign involving individual TVET institutions, local authorities and social partners to reinforce the effects of the awareness campaign, increase the attractiveness of TVET and keep the target audience of learners and their families as well as the public engaged and interested in TVET system development and reform.

## VIII Conclusion

Through the four pillars of governance, access, quality, and sustainable financing, the NTVETS lays out a road map for TVET system development in Afghanistan over the next five years. The strategy promotes a coordinated approach to TVET policy, planning, and delivery to strengthen synergies between providers and avoid duplications. The TVET Board will play a large role in governing the TVET system, and will be mandated to focus on quality assurance through overseeing occupational skills standards, assessment, certification, and recognition, as well as accreditation of TVET institutions and training providers. Under the umbrella of the ANQF, a focus on outcomes-based, modular TVET curricula and programme delivery will enhance quality and access by providing flexible pathways within the TVET subsystems and between TVET and general education and higher education. Finally, a new system of financing will ensure sustainability and promote efficiency.

A strong TVET system, as set out in this strategy, is crucial for the economic and social development of Afghanistan in the future. Expanding the quantity and quality of TVET opportunities will empower individuals with the skills they need to compete in the labour market and enhance the wellbeing of themselves, their families, and their communities. Together, these skilled labourers will form a productive, efficient, and skilled workforce to strengthen the economy, alleviate poverty, and contribute to the overall development of Afghanistan in the years to come.