



Skills 21 Bulletin

Issue 1
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Skills 21 project is a joint initiative of the Government of Bangladesh and the International Labour Organization (ILO), funded by the European Union. The project seeks to increase productivity and employment opportunities through an environmentally conscious, inclusive, demand-driven, and interlinked skills development system, responding to the needs of the country's labour market.

Online Class: The 'new normal' in TVET

The world of work has been profoundly affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Not only is the health of millions at risk; also at stake are their long-term livelihoods and job security. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a unique set of challenges to all types and all levels of education, including schooling, TVET, apprenticeships and skills development.

The Skills 21 Project with the Government of Bangladesh set-up an e-campus for TVET. The e-campus is a platform to host and run distance learning courses/training to both TVET students and teachers. It is operated by an online learning management system (an app for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of educational, training, learning and development programmes).

There are number of e-learning materials developed by the trainers. Teachers are piloting these courses in the classroom. The e-learning materials are based on four skills qualifications - welding, machinist, electrical installation & maintenance and graphic design. In addition to that, there are number of e-learning materials available for trainers and assessors programmes.

Currently most of the e-learning materials are available for anyone. Interested users can visit <https://ecampusvtti.itcilo.org/> to create an account and do self-enrolment for each course.



Skills 21 training update

The institutes have already started rolling out NTVQF programmes and during 2019 were able to:



What are 'Model TVET Institutes'?

The Skills 21 project is supporting the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) and Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) to transform seven TVET institutes into Model TVET Institutes. Each institute will be inclusive, environment friendly TVET institute and integrated with local businesses/industry.

In the past, TVET institutes would follow a traditional training system where the courses were time consuming and not job focused. However, following the National Skills Development Policy (2011), many government and non-government TVET institutes have now introduced industry responsive, competency based training and assessment (CBT&A).

The revamped model institutes now include improved governance via an institutional management advisory board; quality training following CBT&A; certification through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL); a more inclusive training system; better market linkages; industry involvement; career guidance and job placement cells, business incubation centres, entrepreneurship development skills, and 'green' campuses.

Skills 21 partner TVET institutes

- 01 - Bangladesh Sweden Polytechnic Institute, Kaptai
- 02 - Feni Polytechnic Institute
- 03 - Gaibandha Technical Training Centre
- 04 - Institute of Marine Technology, Bagerhat
- 05 - Jamalpur Technical School and College
- 06 - Khulna Mahila Polytechnic Institute
- 07 - Sylhet Technical School and College

Demand-driven skills training courses

 Care-giving	 Driving	 Electrical Installation and Maintenance
 Graphic Design	 Plumbing	 Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
 Sewing Machine Operation	 Welding	 Wood Working Machine Operation

Change maker

Principal's interview



How is the Skill 21 project helping your institution to address the challenges of ongoing TVET system?

The main challenge in Bangladesh TVET is the lack of a job-focused training delivery system. The institutes are delivering training in a very traditional way, which is not linked with the modern day job market. Therefore, the students remain unemployed after completing their training.

The Skills 21 project emphasizes the importance of competency-based training and assessment, which can ensure employment. The project is not only focusing on skills training but also quality training with possible employment opportunities.

Skills 21 is trying to make the institution inclusive in all aspects. The project has given clear and actionable directions of how each campus should become gender-friendly and more inclusive.



How can TVET institutions proactively take on the role of driving innovation, and contribute to the promotion of competitiveness, employability and social cohesion?

The TVET institutes can bring changes in the teaching technique. It should be interactive rather than the traditional method. The more conversations regarding the career path and job opportunity among the students and teachers will also be helpful.

The institutes should always be in touch with the local industries for the work attachments of the students. Sometimes motivational speeches to the students can also help to boost their interest. In Gaibanda, we organized an industry visit for our students and invited



Engr. Md. Atiqur Rahman

Principal, Gaibandha Technical Training Centre

industry leaders to motivate the students. This also allowed us to show them how we are preparing the students for the world of work.

Our role is not simply to train the students but to help them find a decent job or help them with self-employment guidance and support. Preparing each and every student - male and female - for today's job market is the most important task an institute can do.



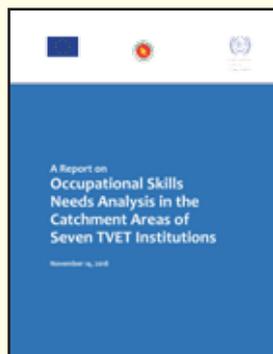
What is the difference between the Skills 21 project and other projects in this sector?

The Skills 21 project has a clear emphasis on employment AFTER the training. This is the real change-maker in the TVET system. If we cannot create pathways for the students to get jobs then the training is simply useless. The difference this project has made is to sell the jobs, not the courses. To do so, the management advisory board has representatives from the industry, to get expertise direction from them. In addition, the jobs placement cells, with trained job placement officers, is a good, sustainable way to deliver job-focused skills training.

Skills 21 publications for the institutes



Quality Improvement
Plan for Institutes



Occupational Need Analysis
for TVET institutes



IMAB establishment
Guideline



Guidelines for Model TVET
Institutions (MTIs)

Skills 21 project highlights



100 TVET managers trained – To ensure meaningful grassroots-level buy-in and implementation of National Skills Development Policy 2011, the project trained 100 TVET teachers on organizing policy dialogue for TEVT and Skills development.



802 youths enrolled on certificate courses – Youths skills training is ongoing in partner institutes in nine occupations. Among them, 204 assessed and certified.



240 officials better aware of the National Skills Development Policy 2011 – Skills 21 project provided

skills policy orientation – highlighting the role of TVET and the role of private industries - to 240 TVET officials through eight, regional workshops.



770 trainers trained and certified – The Technical Teachers Training Institute, Dhaka, Vocational Teachers' Training College, Bogura and Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) authorized institutes trained 770 newly Level IV certified trainers and assessors (576 M and 194 F), who are now qualified to conduct Competency-Based Training and Assessments (CBT&A).



675 industry workers assessed and certified through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) – 880 industry workers (721 Male, 159 Female) took part in RPL assessments of which 675 (546 Male, 129 Female) obtained BTEB certificate.



e-campus for IMDC established with 14 interactive learning materials – The project in order to develop high quality TVET learning materials, make them available and accessible to a much broader audience the Instructional Materials Development Center (IMDC) team had developed 14 e-learning materials, and conducted training sessions for more than 100 participants.

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Eight Institutional Management Advisory Board (IMAB) functional – To better governance of TVET institutes and increase private sector participation eight IMABs have been established in partner institutes.



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Seven partner TVET institutes are now registered and accredited to deliver NTVQF programmes – Seven institutes are now offering NTVQF programmes, entrepreneurship development skills and RPL programmes.



Skills training transformed Taslima's life

Taslima Khanam is a 19-year-old teenager who grew up in Sunamganj, Sylhet. After completing her SSC in Vocational Education in 2015, like many young girls, she was forced to end her education due to her family's financial hardship. Taslima's father is a small farmer and earns very little to survive and to feed her and her two younger siblings.

In 2015, at the age of 15 to ease the burden on her parents and younger siblings, Taslima moved to live with her eldest sister in Sylhet.

In 2019, she received a leaflet from the local Sylhet Technical School and College and found out about the skills' training courses. She quickly decided to enrol onto a welding course. Since the course was European Union Skills 21 project funded, it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for her to pursue a certified training course and – hopefully - get a job.

The other thing that really appealed to her was the fact that after the training, the Sylhet institute promised to connect all the trainees with local companies to help them secure a job.

"The job placement cell organized an interview session with PRAN-RFL group, one of the largest conglomerates in Bangladesh, for all the graduates who had completed their courses in a different number of occupations," recalls Taslima. "I was interviewed and selected for a job as a quality checker of welding in a department that makes refrigerators."

Sylhet is a conservative area in Bangladesh and, at first, Taslima's family were not willing to

let her work in another district. The PRAN factory was in Narshingdi, around 200km away from her home in Sylhet.

"I had to overcome this hurdle and to convince my family to let me live and work independently. I earned USD100/BDT8500 during my probationary period and would spend a small amount for my accommodation and food in the dormitory. Nowadays, I send around USD50 to my parents each month and keep the rest for myself."

The Human Resource Manager of PRAN-RFL Md. Mahmud said; "We are continuously in need of well-trained and certified skilled workers. As the Sylhet Technical School and College runs a range of competency-based training - that fits our commercial needs - we work closely to recruit their graduates. We recruit from there as we know that the graduates all have NTVQF level 1 qualifications and good skills".

Taslima joined the factory in January 2020 and worked until March, when the factory was forced to close due to the COVID-19 outbreak. However, Taslima has employment protection and hopes to return to her workplace once the government declares a safe return to work.

Taslima is enjoying the work and now is keen to raise her skill level further and wants to do the level 2 welding course. She is happy that she found the opportunity to get the training and secure a job with PRAN-RFL. "I really do feel blessed. I was able to take a course and now have a job that pays me well and allows me to support my parents and siblings," she said. "It has literally changed my life and that of my family."



Photo contest

Skills training in action

Skills 21 partner TVET institutes can participate in the photo contest by sending skills training photos from the institutes. Send the photos to alamf@ilo.org by 15 July, 2020 with an appropriate caption. Make sure the photo has good resolution, framing and must be training focused.

Gender, accessibility, occupational safety & health, and environment should be taken into account while submitting the photo.

One person can send more than one photo. Winners will get Skills 21 project souvenir. The winner's name will be announced in the next newsletter.



Stay in touch

The bulletin aims to inform the wider public about the activities undertaken by the Skills 21 project for Technical and Vocational Education and Training on a certain thematic issues. It also presents selected news from the partner TVET institutes of the project is working.

The readers can find out more about these and other activities on our website.

The bulletin will be published twice a year. This issue is available in English and Bangla.

For more information, or if you have any feedback on this bulletin, please contact Farhana Alam, Communication Officer, Skills 21 project at alamf@ilo.org