

Masterclass Series  
The SKILLS Bridge  
EP1: Succeeding at dual VET – A Swiss case study

Remaining questions from the Q&A, kindly answered by our panellists:

- Any chance you can point us to an entity for funding, we in construction industry and we struggle with funding, as most of the funding goes to stakeholders that have no stake in our industry.

*The answer to that question depends heavily on the national context. A generalized answer is therefore not possible. From an international perspective, you might want to check for opportunities for support from multilateral organisations such as ILO, development agencies, foundations etc. for initiatives and programmes to modernise VET.*

- How can you plan your intervention to address challenging issues that hindering tapping opportunities approach for Public Private sector partnership?

*Unfortunately, the question is somewhat non-specific. Generally speaking, support for public-private-partnership approaches should be rooted in the joint identification of common interests and an institutionalized commitment of both sides to cooperate. The dimension of mutual trust between public and private stakeholders is most likely essential – trust which must be built in long-term partnerships.*

- In terms of apprenticeship training in your countries, how is the response of private sectors in contribution to programmes that are implemented by the public sectors?

*The VET programmes / qualifications are not differentiated by public or private sector. Institutions from both sectors act as host companies for apprentices and contribute therefore.*

- Mergim freedom of choice to change occupations is attractive as opposed to be stuck in one occupation only

*Similarly to the regular labor market, the apprenticeship market also involves disparities amongst companies and occupation when it comes to attracting candidates. However, companies and apprentices go through a recruitment process to make sure the matching is favourable for both.*

- Many of the private companies here where I am do finds it difficult to host apprentices due to cheap labor. How can we solve this problem as a education system? Can you share us if you have some mechanisms? Thanks

*Apprenticeship must be an economically feasible – and even attractive – option for both employers and the apprentices. It is therefore worthwhile to carefully analyse the economic situation for SMEs and strive to implement measures which make apprenticeship training financially attractive – or at least neutral in comparison to hiring cheap labour. The added value of employing an apprentice who increases productivity over time for the company must be taken into account. Furthermore,*

*adapted mechanisms to avoid dysfunctionalities due to poaching should be investigated.*

- In Sub sahara Africa, we have very limited number of companies and this is limiting apprenticeship training opportunities. In addition, most companies would not accept apprentices because of the burden ( finance or time spent training apprentices) SMEs carried out informal apprenticeship training but efforts are being made by the government to formalised these apprenticeship training. We need a framework that will work.

*How to foster and promote apprenticeships and private sector engagement in economies which are dominated by the informal economy is a key challenge indeed. One-size-fits-all frameworks to support this probably do not exist. But you might want to check out the work of multilateral development organisations such as the ILO, UNEVOC and the World Bank on this topic.*

- Mergim, have there been any major changes in the share between workplace learning, vocational theory and general education in the last 10 to 20 years?

*The share between the three learning locations is decided for each occupation and might vary from one year of the programme to the next. As each training plan has to be revised at least every 5 years, this balance is also re-evaluate each time.*

- Is the programme for apprenticeships sometimes not to 'loaded'? In Flanders, schools state that they do not have enough time to treat all the needed competences in the 'school part' of the training plan. Do you have the same challenges in Swiss?

*How to cope with ever-increasing demands to include additional relevant content into VET programmes is of course also an issue in Switzerland. One way to cope with this is to increasingly teach and train competences in a transversal fashion – for instance through project work which covers several topics and promotes technical and transversal competences.*

- What is the incentive for partner companies to take on the internship, especially when the skill to be learned represents a smaller amount of time in the partner company? Is this not a big burden for the partner company? Who helps them?

*It is important to distinguish an apprentice to an intern. In case of apprenticeships, the company can gain from the productive work of the apprentices, especially in the last year. IN general, there are always companies that provide training even though they cannot cover all their costs by the end of the apprenticeship. However, studies have shown that within one year after the apprenticeship, companies can recover their costs if they hire their graduate apprentice.*

- Are you all acting on behalf of the Swiss Government? I.e. you are funded by national government? Hence the corresponding body (in SouthAfrica) would be the Construction Educational Training Authority).

*SFUVET is indeed part of the swiss federal Department for Economic affairs, education and research and is a federal university focusing on vocation pedagogy with 85% federal funding.*

- Who finances the partner companies? Does the host company pay the partner companies for their support?

*It depends on the who does what: in the case of the training company network, the companies pay a fee to the host company as they ultimately benefit from the apprentice's work while the network has to manage the admin aspects. In case of case of partner companies, it is a agreement between the two or more companies and takes into account the kind of tasks to be training (productive vs unproductive).*