With the business sector – for the business sector
Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Viet Nam

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
GDVT
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Viet Nam has set its sights on joining the club of modern industrialised nations by 2020. To make that happen and ensure that Vietnamese products are competitive in the international marketplace, its industry needs a skilled workforce. Around 70% of vocational institute graduates are currently able to find work. Most of the jobs however are poorly paid, because the skill levels are not up to the standards that companies need. Too much emphasis is placed on theoretical instruction, and training content is not calibrated with occupational standards. Many teachers lack practical experience. Most TVET institutes do not have adequate tools and machines, or what they have is not functional. Director General Dr. Nguyen Tien Dung, head of the General Department of Vocational Training, is determined to change that. “We are currently implementing a new vocational training strategy 2011-2020. Improving the standard of vocational training will give school graduates the skills they need to take on more demanding work in industry. One key factor will be to enhance the practical expertise of vocational teaching staff, so that they are able to teach the techniques which are actually used in the production. We also want the TVET institutes to have equipment which mirrors the industrial world. Trainees will only be able to transition into technically demanding jobs if they have trained on machines that they will be using later on.”

The existing curricula do not adequately reflect real-world occupational skill requirements. That is set to change. Creation of initial occupational standards by the business sector is a major step forward. Vocational training profiles can be derived from those standards. Dr. Dung has a vision: “Our goal is to work with industry to define occupational standards for each course of training. In the future, an independent examination board will ratify the standards”. The country intends to apply international standards for some occupations so that workers will be able to compete in the world market. National or regional standards and examinations will set the norm in other occupations. Bringing companies on board is one of the key objectives. If that happens, training content will reflect the world at work, and it will also be easier to convince companies...
to take on some of the training responsibilities. “We need to make it very clear to companies what the advantages are but also what level of responsibility they have for vocational training. If we succeed, young people will have the opportunity to complete part of their training inside the company’s four walls. Less of a burden is placed on school resources, and students gain an insight into what really goes on in industry,” added Dr. Dung.

Viet Nam has created a long-to-do list. The country plans to expand its network of TVET institutions which will operate to international, national and regional standards. Instructors will receive further training which will enable them to deliver relevant course content.

“In the period up to 2015, we will make an effort to create the basic framework for occupational skill standards in every occupation. That will be completed by a training plan generated by the training institutions and instructional material which is tailored to each occupational profile,” explained Dr. Dung.

At the end of the day, what really counts from the trainee perspective is a recognized certificate. The young people will only have a chance of finding a good job if companies in Viet Nam and the rest of the world recognize and value the qualifications. Dr. Dung is very aware of this aspect as well. “We plan to set up three regional accreditation centres which will oversee the standards and processes at the TVET institutions. To provide tangible evidence of training outcomes, examination centres will be set up to assess the occupational qualifications of school leavers.”

The country has ambitious plans, and there are huge challenges on the road ahead. Nevertheless, Viet Nam has already taken the initial steps with the support of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), GIZ has been working hand in hand with its partners to realize their vision of technical and vocational education and training in Viet Nam a reality.
Mutual dependencies
The symbiosis between the TVET and business community

The true purpose of TVET is to train people for their future careers and provide the source of skilled labour which industry needs. Since the business sector offers the greatest growth and employment potential, collaboration between the individuals who have responsibility for TVET and their counterparts in the business community is absolutely essential. Horst Sommer, director of the Programme Reform of TVET in Viet Nam, talks about the interrelationships and mutual dependencies which exist not only in Germany but in Viet Nam and the rest of the world as well.

You say that collaboration with industry is absolutely essential. What forms of collaboration do you have in mind?

Sommer: We are talking here about a number of different dimensions. To start with, the business community in Viet Nam has to already be on board when Government officials formulate policies and strategies. Industry should define the occupational standards which outline a worker’s quality requirements profile because as future employers, only companies really understand the expectations which will be placed on employees at work every day. It is important that businesses provide in-company
Vocational Training at WiHa, Thai Nguyen
practical training opportunities and make a financial contribution to vocational training. Companies should also participate in the examination and certification process. Once they have set the standards, companies should be actively involved in the examinations. That is crucial to ensuring a high acceptance level for vocational training. Private in-country training providers are another facet of collaboration with the business world in the field of vocational training. International vocational training and further training service providers, which market their expertise more or less tailored to local needs, also have a role to play.

Why does they have to define occupational standards? What exactly does that mean?

Sommer: Until recently, professors and employees of respective public agencies defined the vocational training curricula. Not enough consideration was given to what companies actually expect from their workers. The vocational training regulatory authority is now working with companies to define the tasks which qualified workers are expected to carry out in a specific occupation as well as the skills and expertise they should have. That is called an skill standard here, and it is similar to an occupational profile in Germany. As I have already mentioned, the business sector which “acquires” vocational school graduates is playing a vital role in the process. The new curriculum lays out a roadmap for goal achievement. Instructors will find it to be a useful tool as they provide the guidance which trainees
Further Training of TVET teachers
European Association for Vocational and Social Education (EBG), Magdeburg (r.)

TVET Institute
Vietnamese-German Industrial College, Thai Nguyen
need to fulfil the occupational standard. TVET institutions will only be able to provide training which meets employment market needs if companies have the opportunity to clearly articulate and communicate what they expect from qualified workers as defined in the occupational standards. Only then will industry appreciate the value of this type of training.

**Speaking of recognition, How can TVET institutions convince companies that graduates are really ready for the daily tasks at work?**

Sommer: This brings us to the major issue of examinations and certification. Around one and a half million people enter the job market for the first time every year in Viet Nam. Among other things, the Government advocates efforts by 100,000 of these graduates to find more highly qualified work outside the country. For that to be feasible, we need an internationally recognised examination and certification system. There is currently no entity which could take responsibility for this, so we are working with other Chambers including the Chamber of Foreign Trade. Based on the occupational standards mentioned above and using German examination standards as the model, the plan is for the Chambers to organise the examinations. A certificate from German industry would remove many of the doubts surrounding the quality of vocational training which the graduates have received.

That presumably cannot be the solution for all vocational training occupations in Viet Nam.

Sommer: No, it is only a medium-term fix which is intended to give domestic and foreign companies confidence in the skill levels which they can expect from graduates. A Chamber examination system will also exert an influence on the training institutions. Students who complete training at their schools are only good if they pass the examination. Vietnamese officials also
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find out how Chamber examinations are organised. They see that the examination body consists of members from the Chambers and the business sector, in other words from industry. The intention is to gradually build up a comprehensive Vietnamese examination and certification system for the entire vocational training sector.

Is Viet Nam interested in this type of internationalisation?

Sommer: Oh yes indeed! The Government has decided to introduce international skill and examination standards for some selected core occupations. For other occupations, there will be standards which meet regional needs, so that people will have the competencies to compete throughout the Asian region. ASEAN recognition of school certificates is a long-term goal, and it is hoped that this will increase labour mobility in the Asian region.
internships. It may not sound like much, but it is a promising start, not only for the “apprentices”. Most instructors also lack hands-on experience. You can talk all you want about this and publish nice studies. Examples however are most convincing, so we have entered into a development partnership here in Viet Nam with the subsidiary of the German-based company WIHA. The company hosted teachers from the local TVET institutes for a few days, giving them live experience of what their trainees will be expected to do later on and the environment they will be working in. Some qualified workers have also received pedagogical training at WIHA, making it easier for them to share their expertise with trainees and new colleagues. Some TVET institutes are already working very closely with international companies. The companies provide training material, and the schools send their trainees to the companies for three-month internships. Some companies even pay the trainees during the internship programmes, something which is not usual in every internship programme in Viet Nam. Normally, students pay a training fee in Viet Nam and do not receive any compensation. We are working on creating some examples and providing a generalized model to show how companies can contribute to hands-on training and how schools themselves can benefit.

Do you also see opportunities for collaboration with German or other international companies?

Sommer: We are already doing that. I have already mentioned WIHA. Beyond that, EBG (European Association for Vocational and Social Education) in Magdeburg has endeavoured to enter into a development partnership with GIZ here in Viet Nam, and that partnership is now in place. There is increasing demand in industry for highly skilled workers for CNC machines. However due to a lack of expertise, the TVET institutes have not been able to adequately meet the needs. EBG initially provided training for Vietnamese teachers on conventional machine tools, and building on that knowledge, training was expanded to CNC machines. With German experts acting as coaches, the instructors then held remedial training for other instructors and qualified workers from industry. The TVET institutes now offer further training courses for companies. This generates income and immensely enhances their image. Trainees also benefit because the instructors have better skills. An increasing number of TVET institutes and companies are now asking EBG to provide further training here in Viet Nam. The model developed and piloted in cooperation with GIZ has proven to be viable.
With the business sector – for the business sector TVET institute Vietnamese-German Industrial College, Thai Nguyen
“Trained in Viet Nam” is synonymous with high-standard, demand-oriented vocational training in Viet Nam. The goal of the bilateral development cooperation between Germany and Viet Nam is to improve technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in the country.

In order to realise this goal, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) supports the reform efforts by the Vietnamese Government at many levels. In a Vietnamese-German TVET reform programme vocational training advisory services are provided and TVET institutions in their efforts to improve the quality of vocational training are supported.

Vietnamese and German experts are working closely together on reforming the TVET system. With the support of the business community, they jointly develop and implement strategies for the design and delivery of vocational training, placing major emphasis on practical training. The strategic roadmap also includes an examination system and sustainable financing for vocational training.

In an interlinked technical and financial cooperation, support for the TVET institutions is focused on occupations in the more dynamic sectors of the economy. The programme creates an environment for lifelong learning where teachers and instructors obtain the practical skills they need. It also provides a management consultancy to TVET institutes, adaptation of vocational and continuing training programmes and modernisation of training equipment, creating the basis for demand-oriented vocational and continuing training in close collaboration with industry.
Comfortable with the highly technical side

Skilled Vietnamese workers with German expertise

Cutting fluid flows in torrents over a metal workpiece. A milling head emerges in the midst of the swirl, relentlessly removing material micrometre by micrometre as the metal mould gradually takes shape. Vu Cuong, Production Engineer at Van Xuan Co, Ltd in Thai Nguyen, looks diminutive next to the massive CNC machine. Nevertheless, he and his fellow workers are in full control of the high-tech machine. They have an even better understanding of the machine since Cuong and nine of his co-workers attended an advanced CNC training course offered by a local TVET institute a year ago.
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Vu Cuong,
Production Engineer
Thai Nguyen
TVET institute
Vietnamese-German Industrial College, Thai Nguyen

Further Training of TVET teachers, European Association for Vocational and Social Education (EBG), Magdeburg

Vu Cuong,
Production Engineer
Van Xuan Co. Ltd., Thai Nguyen
Cuong has been working at the company for eight years. CNC equipment was first introduced about five years ago. The CNC manufacturer provided a one-month familiarisation but that was it. Cuong explained the scenario: “In the past, we could only press buttons to operate the machine. Our ability to program, maintain and troubleshoot the machine or understand the underlying production process was very limited.” The workers attended advanced training classes at the TVET institute on weekends for eight months. They learned how to correctly interpret international technical drawings, program the CNC machine using this information, select the right tools and perform troubleshooting during ongoing operation. In the final analysis, what counted was the product that each course participant made during the advanced training. Cuong recalls: “We had to learn how to properly measure our mould, document the results and compare them with the specifications on the drawing. In this way, we learned how to ensure the quality of our products.”

For Tran Van Huong, Vice-Director of Van Xuan, the advanced training was worth its weight in gold. There has been significant improvement in the quality of the tools and moulds and the reject rate has fallen by nearly 25%. As a result, the company has been able to substantially increase production volumes. “I would never have thought that training could improve employee performance so much and that I would see such positive results. If more courses are available in the future, I will send other employees for training,” said Xuan enthusiastically.

**Vocational School as Training Centre**

Just three years ago, Nguyen Duc Sinh who is the Vice director of Vietnamese – German Industrial College in Thai Nguyen would never have dreamed that his instructors would ever turn into genuine CNC experts. The reason for the influx of knowledge was the partnership with EBG (European Association of Vocational and Social Education) in Magdeburg. GIZ and EBG joined forces to develop advanced training courses which give instructors in Viet Nam the opportunity to gain hands-on experience at and with CNC machines. German CNC experts shared their expertise with instructors in Viet Nam over a period of several months.

The eight best instructors then attended intensive advanced training in Germany, where they had the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of the occupational responsibilities of a machinist and learn more about CNC production. They also used the teaching and learning materials developed by EBG to provide advanced training to other instructors.

Demand from the business sector for vocational school graduates who are familiar with state-of-the-art machine technology continues to increase. “For the future of these graduates, it is important that they are able to handle these machines. Word of our good reputation has now spread to the business sector. 70% of our graduates find work immediately, while others have to wait a bit longer. In addition, companies send qualified workers to our courses on a fee-paying basis,” said Sinh.
Duong Dinh Trinh (teacher at Vietnamese – German Industrial College, Thai Nguyen)
Vu Tien Vuong (student at Vietnamese – German Industrial College, Thai Nguyen)
Companies particularly appreciate the fact that their qualified workers and the vocational school graduates who pass the examination receive a recognised CNC certificate issued by EBG. This provides the necessary level of confidence in the students and people who take courses. In total, the School Vice director has sent five of his teachers for further training. One of them is Duong Dinh Trinh who subsequently completely revamped the instruction he provides to students. “We used to teach theory and little time was dedicated to work at the machine. Now the entire class sits in the workshop and students can immediately try out everything they have learned in theory on the CNC machine. It starts with the ability to correctly read the drawing and continues on to machine programming and operation. Quality control is the final step. Students learn at and with the machine, have to correct errors and must thoroughly understand the entire process.

Besides the technical content, in the year since Trinh took part in EBG further training he has been able to enhance his teaching skills. “Interactive instruction which provided opportunities for self-learning was part of our training. Particular emphasis however was placed on learning directly with the machine.” Both qualified workers from the private sector and vocational school students benefit from the outcome of further training, Trinh said.

Vu Tien Vuong has just entered his third year at vocational school and is learning the secrets of CNC production. He used to work with conventional machine tools, and he is now moving on to computer numerical control. “We are allowed to work a lot at the machine and try things out. Programming is the most complicated aspect. To do it, I have to really understand the drawing and the process. However I don’t find it at all that difficult.” The youngster would definitely like to work at a company that makes highly complex parts. He would like to program the machine, produce as many parts per hour as possible, and earn a lot of money in the process.
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The European Association of Vocational and Social Education in Magdeburg provides vocational training for the SME sector. In addition, the company’s private vocational school is an educational resource which has been available to trainees and businesses for the past three years. Managing Director Bernhard Beckmann has now begun exporting German vocational training expertise to other countries. He shares information about market entry in Viet Nam.

Editorial team: What motivated you to enter into a development partnership with GIZ and become actively involved in TVET in Viet Nam?

Beckmann: We already have a presence in China where we are introducing further education and vocational training modules in partnership with vocational schools. The Chamber of Foreign Trade organises the examinations there. We have created a similar model in Viet Nam. In the future, the German Chamber of Foreign Trade (AHK) will be involved here as well. Students and skilled workers already received a recognised certificate for CNC training, making it much easier for them to find work that is well-paid. GIZ has made it easier for us to set up operations in Viet Nam.

Editorial team: In what sense?

Beckmann: GIZ has introduced us to the key political decision makers in Viet Nam and opened doors at partner TVET institutes. We have been able to use existing contacts without having to start from scratch. GIZ has significantly reduced the time it will take us to generate a financial return from our involvement in Viet Nam.

Editorial team: Initially, you had to invest money in the development partnership. How will you generate a return on your activities in Viet Nam?

Beckmann: During the course of the development partnership, the General Department of Vocational Training in Viet Nam approached us with a request for training courses for additional TVET institutes. We also plan to work with our growing network of partner institutes to market further vocational training courses which are aimed at skilled workers from the business sector. The advertising factor should also not be underestimated. We have built up a good reputation in Germany and that now extends to Asia. In the medium term, that will generate additional business.
Christian Russ, Director of Wiha in Vietnam (above) with Nguyen Duc Sinh, Vice Director of Vietnamese-German Industrial College, Thai Nguyen (below)
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A rewarding reversal of roles

Skilled workers in the classroom – teachers at the workbench

Pliers, bits and tools as far as the eye can see. Whether you are a genuine pro or a home fixit man, what you see here is a joy to behold. Wiha Viet Nam Co., Ltd in Thai Nguyen is not in the business of making run-of-the-mill tools. Instead, what comes off the line is Rolls Royce standard. 320 employees work at the Vietnamese subsidiary of the German parent company, and they need dexterity and manual metalworking skills. Many of them are graduates of the vocational institute located nearby. It is not unusual for the company to hire young people as soon as they finish their internship there. The students are very keen, as the company has a long-standing reputation for providing a good learning environment. One of the reasons for that is a joint project which Wiha and the school launched
three years ago as a development project with GIZ.

Duong Van Cuong dressed in overalls is standing at his workbench checking the quality of products which his fellow workers have produced. He confidently inspects the bores, ground surfaces and edges. He has been working at the company for two years, and his eyes light up when he is asked about his internship prior to being hired: “It was really great. For the first time, I had the opportunity to make a real product. When I finished it, I had a wonderful feeling.” The former student is not the only one who believes that the internships are second to none.

The fact that Wiha has sent some of its highly experienced workers to the TVET institute for a pedagogical training is the reason why the internships are so highly valued. These are the skilled workers who act as tutors and look after the students while they are at the company. Nguyen Quy My, a trainer at Wiha, explained: “Although we have the work experience and expertise, in the past we did not really know how to share that information with the novices.” Now that they have “been to school”, the old hands take a different approach when they look after the interns. The first thing they do is familiarize the new arrivals with the occupational safety rules. They then accompany their fledglings through the entire sequence of production steps, explain what happens when and why, discuss the tools that are needed, and explain how everything in production fits together. The interns then get down to work, each making their own products. The youngsters are given a drawing which they have to read. They then have to select the right tools for the job and at the end make a critical assessment of their work. A tutor is right at their side during each step along the way. Van Cuong knows that he made the right choice. “A lot of the other students have had bad experience at their companies. They had to perform dull, repetitive work and did not really learn anything.”

An internship at Wiha is naturally not a purely philanthropic exercise. Nevertheless, Production Manager Trinh Duc Cuong is satisfied that the novices enjoy the work and are fully dedicated. “The students learn and understand the production flows much faster. That motivates them, reduces the level of frustration and enhances productivity and quality here at the plant.” This level of support costs the company time and money. It is, however, well worth the investment, as the company often hires the students when they have completed their
Michael Ketterer, Managing Director at Wiha until the end of 2010, was one of the catalysts behind the development partnership between the company, the TVET institute in Thai Nguyen and GIZ. His involvement in the project was based on a number of different motives. He tells us about it and answers our questions.

Editorial team: Why did you invest time and money into training for vocational school students and advanced pedagogical training for your skilled workers?

Ketterer: I wanted to improve the training which vocational school students receive, because the school cannot do that alone. Our subsidiary is part of Viet Nam, and economic development in the country will stagnate if vocational training standards are not raised. We have to make a contribution and invest German expertise in Viet Nam.

Editorial team: Many companies complain about high staff turnover. Your skilled workers move on to other companies. What is your view on that?

Ketterer: Despite staff turnover, we cannot phase out vocational training. Otherwise economic development will come to a standstill. We have the same phenomenon in Germany, but no one is suggesting that we eliminate vocational training.

Editorial team: Does this level of commitment have advantages for the company as well?

Ketterer: We have to provide at least an additional three to four months of training to graduates anyway, before they can really work productively at the company. One obvious approach is to provide internship training which is modelled on German standards. We can then pick out the best and make them a job offer.

Editorial team: Do you get anything else out of the partnership with the school?

Ketterer: Definitely. It gives us access to the school and the teaching staff. Once this type of partnership is up and running, we can use unofficial channels to have our needs included in the training programme at the school. The teaching staff can adapt the curriculum, instruction and training to our operational needs.
internships. They can begin working right away, and there is something else to consider. “We have a good opportunity to see what the people are capable of. We can then recruit the best students,” explained Duc Cuong.

The production routine live

In return, 8 vocational school instructors visited the company to finally take a first-hand look at the workflows and production techniques and work with their own hands. Most vocational school instructors go directly from university to the school without any real knowledge of the actual production routine at a company. The machines and tools available at the school are often not state-of-the-art, and as a result both the instructors and the students lack genuine practical experience. According to Mr. Nguyen Duc Sinh Vice director of Vietnamesme – German Industrial College, it is lucky for his teachers had a look around at Wiha. “My fellow colleagues now know what life is like at a manufacturing company. They have seen state-of-the-art machines and techniques. We can only reflect the real world of work at our TVET institute to a limited extent, as our financial resources are limited.” As a result, he would like to build beneficial partnerships with other companies that are similar to the relationship with Wiha. Training the students costs a lot of money. The school and the companies work closely together and share the costs. Christian Russ, who took over as CEO at Wiha in Viet Nam last year, believes that this is basically a fair arrangement. “We cannot complain about the inadequate standard of training at the vocational schools if we do not make a contribution ourselves. I would like to see an improvement in the skill level of the graduates. However we are in this together and companies also have a contribution to make to the training process.”

Nguyen Thi Anh Tuyet has been a TVET teacher for many years. However, the weeks she spent at Wiha were her first opportunity to immerse herself into the daily production routine. It was interesting for Tuyet to see the entire sequence of workflows. She was able to find out how many steps it takes to make the end product, how the workshop is organised and how the different production units are sequentially arranged. Tuyet’s interest extended beyond the actual production process. “For me it was also important to see how well all of the equipment and tools were organised at the production facility. Even though the workers perform drilling, filing and lathe operations, everything was clean and orderly.” The teacher now plans to include these aspects into her practical instruction. Now Tuyet and the other instructors have been able to watch production of a concrete product from A to Z, they can add many practical elements to their own teaching plans. Tuyet would definitely like to repeat this experience at other companies. “I would like to take a look at other companies that make totally different products such as motors, gears, etc. This would give the teachers an insight into what our students will later be confronted with and what will be expected of them. We will then be in a much better position to calibrate instruction with the actual needs.”
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Dinh Quang Trinh, graduate of Lilama 2 Technical & Technology college, now employee at PTSC.

Dinh Quang Trinh is enthused of his job at PTSC and is daily applying the knowledge and trained skills.
Dinh Quang Trinh is from the north of Viet Nam. He left friends and family behind nearly four years ago in the hope of getting good vocational training and then finding an interesting job. His destination was the LILAMA2 Technical & Technology College near Ho Chi Minh City in South Viet Nam. He chose that school to train as a mechanic because of the training institution’s fine reputation which had already spread to the north. Trinh’s fortitude paid dividends. “The training at Lilama2 College was excellent. I did my internship at Petroleum Technical Services Company (PTSC) where I subsequently got a well-paid job which offers plenty of challenges. It was exactly what I had always wanted.”

Well-paid work and satisfied expressions of the faces of employers when they assess the skills of new hires is not necessarily the norm in Viet Nam. In a labour market where prospective employers commonly criticise the lack of qualified graduates, PTSC HR Manager Tran Cong Chieu has a different perspective. “The students from Lilama2 are absolutely second to none. You see right away that they have both practical skills and a good theoretical foundation. They quickly grasp what is going on here and are immediately ready to get to work. That is why we are prepared to offer them challenging, well-paid work.”
The company has had a close working relationship with the school for five years. PTSC selects interns from a list which the college sends to the company. The youngsters spend three months at the company and are paid at the same wage scale as an unskilled worker. The company assesses and tests their knowledge, commitment and practical skills. At the end of the internships, the company sends the college a detailed report on each student. Chieu is very keen to continue the partnership. “Of course internships cost us money. However in return, we can recruit the best of the best, and we have access to very well trained skilled workers. That is a good investment for any company.”

On first name terms with industry

The advantages of maintaining contacts and partnerships with companies like Siemens, ABB and Petrovietnam go beyond internships. These relationships mean far more for Lilama2 College. Visitors from the business world are welcome guests on campus. They look at the equipment, recommend investment in new technology and channel their needs into the curriculum. The college Director Dr. Le Van Hien explains how instruction is organised. “We adhere to the national curriculum which makes up around 65% of course content. The rest is based on what companies tell us the graduates need when they move into the world of work.” In return, companies provide original documentation for use during instruction. The classroom shelves are full of drawings, blueprints and technical handbooks provided by well-known international companies. They make up a substantial portion of the instructional material. The students work with those materials, make calculations based on actual engineering data and produce products. Quite naturally over time, they are able to overcome one obstacle which according to Hien hinders students from other institutions when they begin working in industry. “Our students are used to working with information in English and they are very familiar with international technical standards. They do not really get involved with anything else. In
addition, starting in the second school year, instruction in all courses is held in English, so that later on when they are working in industry the youngsters can understand and interpret documentation from anywhere in the world.

To compete in the labour market, young people need recognised graduation certificates. Some of the course content meets the standards of Sunderland College in the UK. Each year, people from the College come to Viet Nam to organise the local examinations. Demand for certified welders in the country is very strong. Lilama2 College has an answer for that as well. The college is a member of AWS (American Welding Society) and trains students as well as skilled workers from the private sector in line with that organisation’s criteria. Companies know that they can rely on the skills of anyone who has an AWS certificate. Hien is a firm believer in the value of internationally recognised certificates. “We would like to work together with the German Chambers of Commerce and Industry. For some courses, we want to base our instruction and final examinations on CCI criteria. This would give our students the freedom to look for work in the international market.”

Experiencing the world of work

In many areas, the technical equipment and machinery at Lilama2 College is comparable to European standards. The school management team updates the instructional material each year to reflect the latest technical and educational developments. However, to provide vocational training, you need good training and teaching staff. Lilama2 College takes its own special approach to this aspect as well. All teaching staff members have experience working in industry. Every teacher has spent at least several months in production at a company. Mr. Nguyen Anh Dung has been head of the Mechanical Training Department for five years. Prior to that, he worked in industry for seven years. Despite the opportunity to earn significantly more in the private sector, Dung is fully committed to what
he does. “During the seven years I worked in industry, it became obvious to me on repeated occasions that Vietnamese workers are less qualified than their counterparts from the Philippines and Malaysia. As a result, they earn less, have no opportunity for advancement, and work in unskilled jobs for their entire lives. That really bothered me and I wanted to do something about it.”

His own experience taught Dung that what Vietnamese workers lacked more than anything else were practical skills. That is why he views hands-on work at the school and in company as the top priority. “For some instruction modules, we need large industrial equipment such as cranes and turbines. Because our college has excellent relationships with hundreds of companies, we have no problem conducting the training there.”

Simply watching is not enough. It is important that students do things themselves. Every student makes products based on technical documentation provided by companies. They have to read drawings, select the right tools and material, think about the assembly sequence and check their work. As a result, the graduates acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills which are comparable to those of their foreign counterparts. They are no longer restricted to poorly-paid jobs, and they have access to the career ladder.

The plan is for Lilama2 College to become one of 15 competence centres nationwide by 2015. The other TVET institutes will benefit from this successful approach to good vocational training. The centres will act as a lifelong learning resource where head teachers and other teaching professionals can gain practical experience and stay in step with the latest technical expertise. Hien wants to share the facilities, company partnerships, educational materials and practical experience provided to teaching staff, in other words the entire Lilama2 concept, to help reform vocational training in Viet Nam. German development partnerships are part of the equation. On behalf of the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), GIZ and the KfW Development Bank working in partnership with Hien and his team will ensure that everything is in place at Lilama2 College.
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The develoPPP.de programme supports collaboration between the business world and development cooperation. These partnerships with industry combine the expertise and innovative strengths of the business community with the resources made available through development cooperation. The intention is to drive development in countries which work hand in hand with the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and achieve sustained improvement in the quality of life for people in those countries. The partners share the responsibilities, costs and risks on these joint projects.

Three organisations working on behalf of BMZ have operational responsibility for develoPPP.de: DEG (a German development finance institution), GIZ and sequa. They have carried out roughly 1,400 projects in more than 70 countries since the programme was launched in 1999.

Because they have extensive experience in the partner countries, they are well qualified to act as a point of contact for business. DEG, GIZ and sequa provide consultancy to interested companies on potential development partnerships and support process management. Because they have a local presence which goes back many years, these organisations have excellent networks and enjoy the confidence of partners in developing and emerging countries. From the company perspective, this reduces market entry risks.

The following basic criteria apply to development partnerships:

- The company’s business status ensures that resources will be available to finance the project and ensure that it is sustainable, i.e. turnover is at least EUR 1 million, the company has more than 10 employees and it has been operating successfully in the market for at least 3 years.
- The proposal is basically in line with BMZ development policy goals.
- Public funding does not subsidise the company’s core business.
- Implementation of the proposal is not prescribed by law.
- Implementation of the proposal has not yet started.
- The proposal could not be carried out without public funding.
Several times a year, DEG, GIZ and Sequa encourage interested companies to submit ideas which are subjected to competitive review. The best project proposals may receive co-financing up to the value of EUR 193,000 (as of 2011). The competitions prioritise sector-specific themes which address problem areas in development policy. The business sector is also invited to provide its own impetus in non-subject-specific innovation competitions.

Outside of the idea submission competitions, partner companies can enter into strategic alliances. These alliances are ground-breaking development partnerships which involve several partners and countries as well as a significant level of investment. They aspire to bring structural improvements to the partner countries that go far beyond the horizon of an individual company.

Integrated development partnerships involve collaboration between multinational, regional or domestic companies and GIZ programmes in the partner country which help achieve programme goals. Public and private contributions must complement one another in such a way that both partners achieve their aims through cooperation more cost effectively, efficiently and quickly.

Further information is available at: www.developpp.de

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GIZ Profile

Broad-based expertise for sustainable development
The services delivered by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH draw on a wealth of regional and technical expertise and tried and tested management know-how. As a federal enterprise, we support the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. We are also engaged in international education work around the globe.

Tailored services
We offer demand-driven, tailor-made and effective services for sustainable development. To ensure the participation of all stakeholders, we apply a holistic approach based on the values and principles upheld in German society. This is how we facilitate change and empower people to take ownership of their own sustainable development processes. In doing this, we are always guided by the concept of sustainable development, and take account of political, economic, social and ecological factors. We support our partners at local, regional, national and international level in designing strategies and meeting their policy goals.

Developing solutions
GIZ operates in many fields: economic development and employment promotion; governance and democracy; security, reconstruction, peacebuilding and civil conflict transformation; food security, health and basic education; and environmental protection, resource conservation and climate change mitigation. We also support our partners with management and logistical services, and act as an intermediary, balancing diverse interests in sensitive contexts. In crises, we carry out refugee and emergency aid programmes. As part of our services, we also second development workers to partner countries.

Through programmes for integrated and returning experts, we place managers and specialist personnel in key positions in partner countries. We also promote networking and dialogue among actors in international cooperation. Capacity development for partner-country experts is a major component of our services, and we offer our programme participants diverse opportunities to benefit from the contacts they have made. We also give young people a chance to gain professional experience around the world – exchange programmes for young professionals lay the foundations for successful careers in national and international markets.

Who we work for
Most of our work is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. GIZ also operates on behalf of other German ministries – including the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the Federal Ministry of Defence, the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research – as well as German federal states and municipalities, and public and private sector clients in Germany and abroad. These include the governments of other countries, the European Commission, the United Nations and the World Bank. We work closely with the private sector and promote synergies between the development and foreign trade sectors. Our considerable experience with networks in partner countries and in Germany is a key factor for successful international cooperation, not only in the business, research and cultural spheres, but also in civil society.

Global reach – the company at a glance
GIZ operates in more than 130 countries worldwide. In Germany, we maintain a presence in nearly all the federal states. Our registered offices are in Bonn and Eschborn. GIZ has more than 17,000 staff members across the globe – some 70 % of whom are employed locally as national personnel. In addition, GIZ places or finances around 1,110 development workers, 700 integrated experts, 455 returning experts and 820 weltwärts volunteers. With a business volume of around EUR 1.85 billion, GIZ is well placed to meet the challenges of tomorrow.