International Experiences in Occupational Standards Development and Implementation

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GIZ
Perspective of the presentation.....

is through a German lens......

embedded in the German attitude to TVET

and based on experiences of development cooperation with many partner countries in the field of TVET

Đạt hiệu Chất lượng Đào tạo nghề TVET Quality Breakthrough.
Occupational Standards (OS) – a definition

- Occupational Standards set out measurable performance outcomes to which an individual is expected to work in a given occupation.
- OS describe the skills, knowledge and understanding required to perform competently in the workplace.
- The term “OS” came up during the late 1980’s with the emergence of NQFs in Anglo-Saxon countries.
- OS = interface between the world of work and the TVET system and shall guide the teaching-learning process.
Occupational Standards (OS) – and the difference to TVET delivery standards

**Occupational Standards**: defining the expected TVET outcome from an employers’ perspective (outcome standard),

**TVET (delivery) standards**: facilitating achievement of the expected TVET outcome through demand-oriented TVET delivery (input / process oriented standards).
Variety of formats and development methods

Wide spectrum of OS-formats:

- (A) concise “duties-tasks matrix” developed by job practitioners from work life
- (B) very detailed “unit standards” as part of vocational qualifications in Anglo-Saxon NQF
- (C) contextualised into “training plans” or “training ordinances” regulating and guiding Dual Training e.g. in Germany
Since 10-15 years the development of OS (mostly in the frame of NQF development) is a worldwide trend

The colourful picture shows:

- 142 countries (according ETF) are in different stages of development and implementation
- Different models of NQF
- Different experiences and therefore different judgements
Thesis 1: The very common strategy of “borrow-adapt-adopt” is faster, easier and cheaper at the first glance ....

but the development based on the countries specifics

- Encourages buy-in of actors in companies and training institutions
- Ensures that OS reflect the country’s job delineations and work patterns
- Builds up national capacity/expertise on development and regular updating of OS
- Implicit costs of importing (e.g. royalties, fees) can be higher than expected
Thesis 2: The whole issue is more than the sum of its parts

- Many OS tend to be fragmented into too many pieces
- This might have advantages regarding RPL (lower barriers)
- But the attitude, the pride, the responsibility and the overview can get lost
Thesis 3: The level of unitisation has to be in line with the way of work-organisation and division of labour

- The understanding of a profound occupation, which enables to fulfil a certain number of concrete jobs asks for a broader understanding of OS
- Whereas in “tayloristic” working processes a disaggregation on skills level might be more suitable
- The question is: How should modern societies organize their work processes? Can innovative, knowledge-based economies and integrative problem solving benefit from a narrow division of labour?
Thesis 4: The development of OS is not the end of the story, but the beginning

- Although OS shall determine the outcomes of training/learning, OS as such are NOT (yet) curricula.
- If OS are used directly for training/instruction it results into a low quality type “taylorised drill”.
- OS need to be translated into curricula (contextualised plans for training/learning)
- Implementation of OS via contextualised curricula requires competent teachers/instructors and an appropriate infrastructure (e.g. equipment, learning materials).
Thesis 5: OS may be the interface to the labour market, but should not be the only one

A Quality breakthrough needs attention to all these topics and their linkages

- Action- and workprocess-oriented learning
- Cooperation with companies
- Qualified TVET Staff in Schools and Enterprises
- TVET and LM Research
- Recognized standards, certificates and valid assessment
Final Remarks

**Occupational Standards – Magic Bullet or overrated?**

- Availability of OS is indispensable for employment-oriented TVET – but is not THE solution.
- (Over-) detailing of OS runs the risk of diverting attention / resources from other areas of TVET reform.
- Learn from other countries, but make sure, that OS fit to YOUR country.
- Try to apply the ‘Pareto Principle’: Achieve 80 % of possible results with 20 % of resources/inputs.
- Better have a less perfect, but “living” system with ownership of all stakeholders.