

# **Gender Equality in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Viet Nam**

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## List of acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DVET	Directorate of Vocational Education and Training
GSO	General Statistics Office
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labor Organization
LFS	Labour Force Surveys
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
NSGE	National Strategy for Gender Equality
NTPGE	National Targeted Program on Gender Equality
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VTC	TVET centers
VWU	Viet Nam Women's Union

## Executive Summary

This report reviews existing analyses of gender equality in TVET in Viet Nam, provides examples of initiatives promoting gender equality in TVET around the world and provides recommendations for Viet Nam. The findings in chapter 1 have shown that there is initial data and a set of indicators related to participation of women in TVET and the labour market. Ratio of female students increased from about 25% to 31.6% of the total number of enrolled trainees in the period 2011-2020 (MOLISA 2021b). Women accounted for 47.27% of the labour force of the whole country in 2020 (GSO, LFS data 2020). In the area of policy development there has been a move to integrate gender equality considerations. Nevertheless, there is a lack of specific guidelines on gender mainstreaming in TVET policy development. Gender impact assessments are not yet comprehensive enough. There is a need for further capacity development and guidance for policy makers. Furthermore, data gaps were identified. There is for example, not enough data on gendered choice of TVET occupations and levels, gender-specific enrolment strategies, reasons for dropping out of TVET, discriminatory behaviour and gendered barriers in TVET. Moreover, there is a lack of information on gender-differentiated labour market transition, barriers to finding decent work as well as on career guidance, counselling, and job placement for female and male workers after graduation. Information about gender discrimination and sexual harassment as well as responses to these at work is also insufficient. There is a lack of data on other gendered barriers in accessing TVET and the labour market, among them financial barriers and extensive family responsibilities.

In chapter 2, different examples for international good practices to promote gender equality in the areas of enrolment, retention, labour market transition, gender sensitive TVET institutions, recognition of prior learning, and gender impact assessments were introduced.

Based on the findings and international experiences in the Chapter 2, we proposed recommendations on promoting gender equality in the Vietnamese TVET system below:

### (1) Solid base of TVET data collection and use:

- Developing a set of national TVET statistical indicators with main disaggregation of sex, ethnicity, religion etc.
- Improve collection of relevant information: Gather and analyse data and information to understand the causes and status quo of girls' and women's low representation in male dominated TVET fields, reasons for dropping out and data on labour market transition (kind of jobs taken, salary, needed skill sets etc.), as well as data on TVET teachers and administrators. The data collection should be disaggregated by gender, wherever possible, along with age group, geographical area, (dis)ability status, religions, and other relevant factors to be able to analyse and draw conclusions for each gender separately.
- A section on inclusion and gender equality could be added in the annual TVET report.
- Strengthening TVET M&E system with main disaggregation of sex, ethnicity, religion etc.

- Developing and publishing annual/5-year report of TVET statistics with main disaggregation of sex, ethnicity, religion etc.

## (2) Mainstreaming gender in TVET policy development, procedures, and follow-up

- Anchor gender sensitivity and mainstream gender equality in policy development through institutional quality assurance – for example with support of a Gender Focal Point/Gender Officer (with sufficient time, capacity, and budget) in each unit that is mandated to develop national, regional, or own policies related to TVET and be part of impact assessments.
- Developing a technical guideline on gender mainstreaming in TVET policy development process which should be aligned with government's regulations on gender mainstreaming in the development of legal normative documents.
- Capacity development and awareness raising for policymakers on gender equality and gender responsive policy is necessary.
- Specific gender targets need to be defined and sufficient funding provided.
- The implementation of policy needs to be monitored regarding gender equality and gender impact.
- Conduct a gender analysis at the national regulating body for TVET (DVET). Then, set up a framework (with guidelines) to carry out a gender analysis in TVET institutions that are willing to identify gaps and potential to promote gender equality within their procedures and trainings (for example like the ILO Participative Gender Audit). The results can be used in policy and decision-making if comparability and quality are ensured. Offer technical and financial support and set up a specialists' team to enable and support such analyses.
- Strengthening the network of policy makers in different departments of TVET system for sharing and learning on good practices of gender mainstreaming in policy development, implementation and M&E.

## (3) TVET personnel and HR policy:

- Base specific support on results of gender analyses at TVET institutes (see recommendation under 2.). Supporting some TVET institutes to develop and implement a gender action plan which include a HR section with specific targets and indicators.
- Consider offering incentives for women who choose to teach in TVET institutes trades usually assigned to men (e.g., by offering free room and board, gender responsive facilities, equitable remuneration and advancement opportunities, flexible working hours to balance family and professional life, access to childcare facilities etc.).
- Encourage female TVET teachers, career counsellors and administrators to participate in training courses to improve professional capacity, management skills, and foreign languages. Set a minimum criteria for female employees to participate in capacity building activities.

- Review policies for teacher qualification and review possibilities for integrating gender more prominently in initial teacher qualification or further training for teachers and TVET staff/managers.

#### (4) Enrolment and retention:

- Integrate gender considerations into a circular stipulating career counselling, employment, and start-up support for students of vocational education.
- Set up a special framework (with guidelines) for TVET institutes on how to support students to select and complete programmes in the trades that are non-stereotypical. Provide financial and technical support for TVET institutes to implement gender equality initiatives (from attracting more female students in enrolment to technical trades via Girls' Days to providing incentives for good gender equality performance to TVET institutes). Training for TVET institutes on applying innovative communication approaches for recruitment with a gender perspective. Supporting TVET institutes to develop an enrolment and retention action plan with a gender perspective, which specify a road map for increasing number of female students with specific indicators.
- Promote career guidance activities at TVET institutes, develop career guidance materials with attention to attracting women in TVET. Providing small grants for some TVET institutes to take initiatives of attracting more female students in enrolment to technical majors. Supporting girls in technical majors to participating in enrolment activities as role models to inspire their peers.
- Support students in the choice and completion of a training programme by offering incentives for students to select and complete vocational education and training in sectors and occupations that are dominated by the other gender - also based on market needs. Moreover, provide dormitories, with 50% of spaces reserved for girls, and a stipend for living costs. Providing incentives for female students to study in technical majors through scholarship, mentoring program, networking activities.
- Cooperate with education state agencies, industry and business chambers and private sector representatives to improve career counselling also in lower and upper secondary general education based on actual skills needs and trends on the market: this could include increased possibilities for orientation days, internships, or preparatory vocational education measures, offering secondary school students the possibility to get practical experience in an enterprise. Offer support by gender sensitive supervisors/mentors from the respective trade.
- Develop and carry out country-wide communication and awareness-raising campaigns for potential trainees and their families/communities on the one hand, and for employers on the other hand, to inform about the measures to promote gender equality in TVET and access to more professions, beyond the ones traditionally assigned to women or to men. Develop guidelines for other actors to conduct such communication campaigns and encourage localized social marketing/advocacy campaigns to reach out to community members and families.

- Consider setting up mentoring programmes or networks for female students, to be consistently supported and advised by women professionals in their chosen fields.

(5) Teaching and learning; examination and recognition of professional qualifications:

- Review and promote policies for flexible training times and means, so that women can also participate in trainings in the evenings or weekends, as many have (another) job or domestic and caretakers' roles that limit their time and availability.
- Promote modular training programmes, so that people who are forced to interrupt the training due to adverse life situations, illness, parenthood, or other impediments can continue it later without losing (much of) the progress reached.
- Integrate gender equality in learning materials, pedagogical approaches, and teaching processes (mainstreamed or as a separate module).
- Review general education requirements for access to TVET (for example having to have graduated upper secondary to be able to be trained on college level). Review permanent residence requirements for being eligible for TVET support programmes (especially regarding female migrant workers).
- Support TVET institutes to adapt training programmes and activities in line with international labour standards related to gender equality<sup>1</sup> and ensure that a gender focal point of the TVET institute participates in the training programme, the drafting of standards, follow up of compliance and, in general, in appraisal committees.
- Set up flexible mechanisms to recognize prior learning or of a part of a qualification and/or experience (to then take further training) or a full qualification (see also Chapter II, examples of India, Germany). A large number of female workers without degrees/certificates are working in specialized skilled jobs in the textile, garment, footwear, and electronics industries in Vietnam.
- Strengthen the development of leadership, communication, and mentoring skills of female students participating in TVET programmes.

(6) A culture of gender equality

- Develop/specify an anti-sexual-harassment and anti-gender-based-violence policy and specific regulations – in lines with the requirements to set up or revise (where already in place) codes of conducts via the national regulating body – along with setting up clear, confidential, and safe complaint mechanisms, both in TVET institutes as well as at higher levels. Regularly follow up on its effectiveness and take improvement measures.
- When logistically planning, developing, and managing facilities, include, wherever possible, gender-responsive spaces and spaces reserved for girls and women, e.g., dormitories, women-only showers, and toilets, lit up alleys, door guardians etc.
- Support/design interventions and activities on gender equality that effectively engage men, particularly the ones in leadership positions. Gender equality is often wrongly

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendation taken over from the GIZ project's Gender Analysis

seen as women's empowerment issue and women's responsibility. By working together with men, they can co-create "win-win" solutions and be change agents in promoting gender equality and women's rights, instead of feeling excluded.

- Supporting students to establish and run gender equality & diversity clubs within TVET institutes. Supporting TVET institutes to organising competitions on promoting gender equality within school for students. Supporting students to organise debates on gender equality topics via online and offline formats. Promoting boys as agents of changes in promoting gender equality and women's rights.

(7) Cooperation with the private sector and labour market transition:

- Set up incentives for the private sector to offer 3-6 months long, paid internships to support people entering trades untypical to their gender (tax reductions, childcare support, wage subsidies etc.). Support enterprises to hire women graduates from TVET schools, especially in "traditionally male" fields, while offering them equitable remuneration and professional development opportunities.
- Support gender responsiveness and awareness in councils for cooperation between the state, private sector, and civil society.
- Award a yearly prize for companies with gender responsive employment and training policies and practices and/or setting up a gender and diversity quality label initiative to recognise the performance of employers.
- Promoting the learning and sharing among enterprises to implement gender equality measures.

## Introduction

Viet Nam has committed to transitioning toward a modern and industrialized nation by 2035. For this, the country will require a diverse workforce that is technically qualified, adaptable, flexible, and innovative. However, there currently is a shortage of skilled workers and technicians with practical training in Viet Nam. This reinforces the importance of having the government actively support the technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

Most recently, the Government of Vietnam has approved the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Development Strategy for the period 2021 - 2030, with a vision to 2045 (Decision 2239 /QD-TTg dated December 30, 2021, of the Prime Minister). This decision affirmed that TVET development is the most important task in human resource development. This will enable Vietnam to take advantage of the golden population structure opportunity, develop human resources of high quality, efficiency, and skills. In particular, the strategy sets a target that by 2025, TVET must attract 40-45 % of students graduating from lower secondary and high school education. By 2030, the rate of students graduating from lower secondary and high schools who enrol in TVET should increase to 50-55%, and at the same time, there should be 90 high-quality TVET institutes and 10- 20 professions with outstanding competitiveness in the ASEAN region and the world. The strategy also pays attention to the gender balance in TVET, which is a completely new point. Specifically, the goal is that by 2025, female students will reach more than 30% of the total number of newly enrolled trainees and by 2030 more than 40% of newly enrolled trainees will be women (Vietnam Government, 2021).

Gender equality in TVET has not been studied much in Vietnam. However, some issues of gender equality in TVET have been pointed out such as: (1) Social and cultural norms influence access and participation: Women's participation in TVET in Viet Nam continues to be greatly affected by gender norms and values that direct women towards unpaid caregiving roles over productive employment. Gender-based stereotypes permeate society and ascribe specific roles and responsibilities to individuals based on their sex, not their aptitudes, interests, or skills. Even where women have successfully completed TVET courses, this assessment found that pervasive stereotypes held by employers and families limited the likelihood that female graduates would pursue careers in their chosen field or trade; (2) Barriers to participation: The assessment observed a general lack of understanding of the differential opportunities and choices available to women when exploring educational programs due to deeply entrenched sex-based norms and values. Sexual harassment, considered a taboo subject, is also not considered when assessing the barriers to women's participation or continuation in TVET programs. Some groups were struggling to access TVET; (3) Ineffective legislative, policy, and strategic frameworks: While gender-responsive laws, policies, and strategies do exist in some areas of TVET, the challenge lies in their consistent implementation; (4) Preparedness for school-to-work transition: women be hired was limited due to the low number of female trainees enrolled in TVET programs (ADB, 2020b).

Gender equality in the labour market in Viet Nam have been pointed out. A high level of female economic activity may be mistaken as an indicator of relatively limited gender inequality in the country. However, women in Viet Nam carry a disproportionate double burden, and they face multiple and persistent inequalities. Women are on average found in lower-quality employment than men. Female workers are overrepresented in vulnerable employment, particularly in contributing family work. They tend to earn less than men, despite comparable working hours and the progressive elimination of gender gaps in educational achievement. They are also underrepresented in decision-making jobs. While being highly economically active, women also discharge a disproportionate amount of family responsibilities. They spend twice as many hours as men producing services for their own household, such as cleaning, cooking, or caring for family members and children. Almost all women are involved in these activities on a weekly basis. A lower share of men is found to be involved in each of these activities, and close to 20 per cent of men report they do not spend any time in these activities at all. COVID-19 pandemic might have made women's double burden heavier than before the crisis hit has not only exacerbated existing labour market inequalities, but it has created new ones. Women faced an especially severe reduction in working hours, they left the labour market in larger shares than men, especially younger and older women, typically holding the most unstable employment arrangements, are particularly likely to have left the labour force. A gender-based gap appeared in the unemployment rate (ILO, 2021)<sup>2</sup>.

Gender equality in vocational education is regulated in the Law on Vocational Education (Vietnam Government 2014), which includes provisions to support women to take part in elementary vocational courses and courses of up to three months' duration.<sup>3</sup> However, this has not been translated into specific programs and strategies until 2021. For instance, women's and men's TVETTVET coverage and needs are not considered in the TVETTVET Development Strategy 2010-2020, nor the Youth Development Policy and Strategy 2010-2020. More recently, Viet Nam launched the National Program on Vocational Education and Career-Oriented for Pupils in the period of 2018 – 2025. This program aims to promote policies that encourage the pupils to enter TVETTVET, a mechanism to coordinate education establishments and vocational education, and classification of pupils after the completion of lower and upper secondary schools. However, it too does not include an analysis of gender issues, barriers or stereotypes affecting vocational education uptake and outcomes upon completion.

Annual reports on TVETTVET have limited sex-disaggregated data and tend to lack gender analysis information.<sup>4</sup> This impedes the formulation and development of targeted strategies.

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<sup>2</sup> ILO (2021), Gender and the labour market in Viet Nam, An analysis based on the Labour Force Survey

<sup>3</sup> Law on Vocational Education (2014): -Article 62 -Policies for learners of vocational education programs: Learners who are women and rural workers when participating in elementary level training programs and training programs for less than 3 months are supported with training costs according to regulations of the Prime Minister

<sup>4</sup> See the reports for 2016, 2017, 2018. The National Institute for Vocation Training, General Department of Vocational Education.

Routine sex-disaggregated data collection and in-depth gender analysis is needed to bring gender disparities and issues to light, and to address them as a priority.

Within the framework of the Programme Reform of TVET in Viet Nam, GIZ and DVET cooperate to promote women's advancement and gender equality in TVET. Based on the Leave no One Behind principle, everyone should have equally the right to access high quality education and training. Moreover, gender equality in teaching, administration and management structures is of great importance to promote. Thus, policies and frameworks for training, management, administration, and human resource must be gender sensitive and gender responsive. Moreover, stakeholders must have necessary knowledge and competencies for the promotion of gender equality and creating inclusive learning environments. Finally, gender sensitive image and enrollment promotion activities can increase the interest of women to participate in TVET. To meet these goals, DVET has developed an action plan for the advancement of women and gender equality in TVET for the period 2021-2030. The objective of the plan is to work on closing the gender gap, create conditions and opportunities to realize the legitimate rights of female civil servants, officials, students, and trainees, ensuring equal rights in work, study and social life and contributing to the sustainable development of the vocational education system.

This report reviews existing analyses of gender equality in TVET in Vietnam and identifies data gaps. These will be reflected against the background of international experiences. Based on these experiences, recommendations on promoting gender equality for the Vietnamese TVET system are developed. The analysis and recommendations will support the implementation of the action plan on gender equality and the advancement of women as well as the development of future strategies and policies for the TVET system.

## **Chapter 1: Gender Equality in technical and vocational education and training in Viet Nam**

### **1. Linkage of gender equality and TVET in the Vietnam's legal framework**

#### **National Policy Framework on Gender Equality**

In 2006, the first-ever Law on Gender Equality of Vietnam was enacted with a view to mandating governmental agencies to fulfil their responsibilities for gender equality and laying a legal foundation for the handling of violations in the field of gender equality. Since then, the country has also adopted several other policies and measures, including the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-20, the Action Plans on Gender Equality 2011-15 and 2016-20, and other legislation defining the responsibilities for the implementation of the Law.

By enacting the gender equality law, Vietnam has developed the sound legal framework to promote gender equality, along with the approval of other key documents such as Decrees, Circulars, the National Strategy on Gender Equality for the 2010-20 period, and other sectoral programmes. These documents have paved the way for and leveraged gender equality work and created an enabling environment for all interested stakeholders to join the efforts to promote gender equality in various sectors and in a multi-sectoral manner.

Viet Nam is commended in several forums for its improved legislative framework for gender equality. In 2015, the CEDAW Committee recognised several Viet Nam's recent law reforms as a positive aspect of the State Report, including pro-gender equality amendments to the Constitution (2013), Land Law (2013) and Law on Vietnamese Nationality (2014). In the five years since, the imperative for gender analysis to inform gender mainstreaming in law making has also been given prominence. The Law on Promulgation of Legal Normative Documents (2015) introduced a requirement that agencies drafting codes, laws and decrees are to comply with gender mainstreaming requirements in their formulation. While implementation challenges exist and are discussed below, MOLISA reported that of 111 legal documents passed since 2015, 40 have satisfied the gender equality requirement. This is not an insignificant number in a five-year period of law making, even if there is scope for further regulation. Efforts to mainstream gender in legal documents were highlighted as an unequivocal achievement by the independent team reviewing the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-2020.

By global benchmarks, in 2019, Viet Nam was rated as having a 'low' level of discrimination against women including in its formal laws by the OECD's Social Institutions and Gender Index. This was an improvement from a 'medium' ranking in 2014. In the World Bank's Women, Business, and the Law report for 2021 measuring women's legal rights in the economy, Viet Nam scored 81.9 out of 100, above the global average of 76.1 per cent. This was an increase on its 2020 score due to reforms towards gender equality in the Labour Code, specifically the removal of the list of jobs deemed dangerous for women. Viet Nam has had a dedicated Gender Equality Law since 2006, and a review of the last 10 years of implementation was completed in 2020. To date, the legal definition of gender equality is binary, pertaining only

to men and women, and there is no reference to gender identity and sexual orientation within the definition and scope of gender equality provision (UN women, 2021)<sup>5</sup>.

The Law on Gender Equality establishes the principles of gender equality in several fields, including measures ensuring gender equality, social and family life, and the responsibilities of agencies, organizations, families, and individuals to exercise gender equality. Regarding education and training, the Law states that: (i) Men and women are equal in terms of age for schooling, training and fostering courses; (ii) Men and women are equal in choosing professions and occupations for learning and training; (iii) Men and women are equal in accessing and benefiting from the policies on education, training, fostering of professional knowledge and skills; (iv) Measures to promote gender equality in the field of education and training include: to ensure that the proportion of man and females participating in the study and training is equal; and to assist female workers in rural areas to have access to TVET.

The Law on Gender Equality highlights the importance of mainstreaming gender equality into all spheres of the Vietnamese government, including into the various organs of the administration and into the formulation and implementation of legislation. Labour and social policies bear an elevated significance for the equal participation of women in the TVET and economic sectors in Vietnam. As such, the Law outlines the five key areas for the achievement of gender equality: TVET; labour and employment; labour relations, labour safety and social protection and poverty reduction (in line with the National Targeted Program on Poverty Reduction 2006-2010 and the National Program on Promotion of Employment).

It shows that there is still gender inequality between man and women in the Law on Gender Equality (GEL). Indirect discrimination, where general rules or policies appear to be neutral but have a negative impact on women, men, girls, or boys, needs to be recognized in the GEL. Individuals facing multiple forms of discrimination, especially women and girls with disabilities and those from ethnic minority groups or living in remote regions should be prioritized in legislation, policies, and programmes (MoLISA, 2021a)<sup>6</sup>.

On March 3, 2021, the Government promulgated the National Strategy on Gender Equality (NSGE) for the 2021 - 2030 period (attached to Resolution No. 28/NQ-CP)<sup>7</sup> with the overall objective to Continue to narrow gender gaps, create conditions, opportunities for women and men to participate, equally enjoy achievement in all spheres of society and life, and contribute to the sustainable development of the country". The NSGE encompasses 6 objectives and 20 specific targets to further narrow gender gaps in the following spheres: politics; economy, labour; family life and gender-based violence prevention and response; health; education, training; information, communications.

Specific objectives 5 on gender equality in the field of education and training is specified by the following targets: (i) content on gender and gender equality is included in the curriculum in the national education system and taught. officially in pedagogical schools from 2025

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<sup>5</sup> UN Women, Country gender equality profile Vietnam, 2021

<sup>6</sup> MoLISA (2021). Policy Brief: The Law on Gender Equality

<sup>7</sup> Vietnam Government (2021). National Strategy on Gender Equality (NSGE) for the 2021 - 2030 period

onwards; (ii) The percentage of boys and girls of ethnic minorities who complete primary education will reach over 90% by 2025 and about 99% by 2030; the lower secondary completion rate will reach about 85% by 2025 and 90% by 2030; (iii) The percentage of newly recruited female students in the vocational education system will reach over 30% by 2025 and 40% by 2030; (iv) The percentage of women with master's degrees among the total number of people with master's degrees will reach not less than 50% from 2025 onward. The proportion of female doctorates in the total number of people with doctoral degrees will reach 30% by 2025 and 35% by 2030. Specific objective 2 in the field of economy, labour is specified by the following targets: (i) Increase the proportion of female wage workers to 50% by 2025 and about 60% by 2030; (ii) Reduce the proportion of female employees working in the agricultural sector in the total number of female employees in employment to less than 30% by 2025 and less than 25% by 2030; (iii) The ratio of female directors/owners of enterprises and cooperatives will reach at least 27% by 2025 and 30% by 2030.

### **Policy framework on TVET in Vietnam**

TVET in Vietnam is known as vocational education and training (VET) and it aims to develop a skilled workforce that contributes to making the country economically competitive, both regionally and globally. There is currently a shortage of skilled workers and technicians with practical training, and the Government of Vietnam has put vocational skills training and boosting employment at the heart of its development goals. The Law on Vocational Education and Training, approved on 27/11/2014 at the 13th National Assembly, came into effect on 01/07/2015. Thereby, a restructuring process of Viet Nam's national education system was initiated, eventually leading to a comprehensive change in the vocational education and training system. The new vocational education and training system is expected to comprise of vocational education and training centres (the merger of centres for general technical education – career guidance and TVET centres at the district level), vocational education and training secondary schools (no longer called “professional secondary schools” and “vocational secondary schools”). To ensure the immediate applicability of the Law, from the beginning of 2015, the government, MoLISA and related authorities promulgated several decrees, circulars, and decisions, guiding and regulating the reform of the vocational education and training system.

The Law on Vocational Education (TVET) has supplemented and integrated two new groups of gender issues. Specifically, the TVET law ensures equal rights, regardless of gender in vocational education, focuses on formulating policies for TVET development, policies for learners and vocational teachers. In Clause 7, Article 6, the law has supplemented regulations related to gender equality with the statement "implementing gender equality in vocational education". The Law also stipulates general conditions for men and women to participate in TVET at different levels (elementary, intermediate, college and continuing training). Men and women enjoy equal rights in the process of study, examination, and graduation recognition. Similarly, male and female teachers have the same standards, are entitled to the same regulations on recruitment, assessment, and professional training, and enjoy the same

policies. According to the Law, the State develops policies to attract learners to participate in TVET, especially giving priority to female learners. Thereby a gender balance for apprentices and teachers and in training occupations is supposed to be created. The Law has added Clause 3, Article 61: “Students who are women and rural workers when participating in elementary level training programs and training programs for less than 3 months are supported with training costs according to regulations (The Prime Minister issued Decision No: 46/2015/QĐ-TTg dated September 28, 2015, on Regulations on policies to support training at primary level, training under 03 months).

The new provisions of the revised Education Law 2019 allowing secondary school graduates to study general education content at TVET institutions according to the regulations of the Minister of Education and Training are an open direction for VET to implement the policy of streamlining students after junior high school and to provide linkages and permeability between training levels. The revised Education Law in 2019 has created conditions for more and more secondary school graduates to be interested in TVET and general education at TVET institutes (both learning general knowledge and TVET). According to these regulations, the implementation of the policy of streamlining after secondary school will attract more and more students to study VET to meet the demand for direct human resources for production, business, and services. This is also the current view of TVET innovation, creating many possibilities and paths for learners to improve their professional qualifications and skills; contribute to achieving the goals of the Project on Vocational Education and Orientation for Student Streaming in General Education in the period of 2018 – 2025.

A further Decision No. 1956 approving the project ‘TVET for Rural Labor to 2020’ was issued to specifically address the gender imbalances often encountered for vulnerable women in rural areas (Viet Nam Government, 2009)<sup>8</sup>. There are over 9 million rural workers supported with vocational training from this policy, including rural women (MOLISA, 2021b).

MOLISA is the agency in charge of activities, including related to vocational education: Bringing gender equality into the official curriculum of the vocational education system, fostering gender knowledge and gender equality for workers working abroad. Organizing training, coaching, and fostering for teachers and students in vocational education institutions, for staff of enterprises providing services to send workers to work abroad and staff of the local labour management agency.

From 2017, according to the Government's assignment, MOLISA unified the management of vocational education and received the management of the system of colleges and intermediate schools from the Ministry of Education and Training. To implement the Law on Vocational Education, by the end of 2020, 104 legal documents have been issued in the field of TVET (06 decrees, 01 directive of the Prime Minister, 08 decisions of the Prime Minister, 85 Circulars and 04 Joint Circulars) with policies on organizational renewal, training activities, mechanisms and policies that give priority to teachers and priority to learners. Accordingly,

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<sup>8</sup> Government of Vietnam (2009), Decision on TVET for Rural Labor to 2020, No. 1956 (Hanoi, 27th November 2009).

everyone has equal access to appropriate, quality, and affordable vocational education. In the period 2011-2020, female students and apprentices accounted for about 25.5% (MOLISA 2021b).

Decision No. 2239/QĐ-TTg approving Strategic project on development of TVET in the period of 2021 - 2030 with a vision to 2045 has proposed indicators related to gender equality, including:

- By 2025, to attract 40-45% of lower secondary and higher secondary (high school) graduates into the vocational education system; female students and students achieve over 30% of the total new enrolment target.

By 2030, attract 50-55% of lower secondary and higher secondary (high school) graduates into the vocational education system; Students and female students achieve over 40% of the total new enrolment target. And also set the tasks:

- Innovating mechanisms and policies to attract and recruit state management staffs and professional staffs in TVET institutions, focusing on developing a contingent of management staffs on TVET in particularly difficult areas, ethnic minority areas, border and islands simultaneously ensure gender equality factor.
- Perfecting mechanisms and policies on recruitment, employment, treatment and honour for teachers, artisans, experts, and vocational trainees in vocational education, ensuring gender equality.
- Comprehensive education, focusing on quality development, gender equality, formation of core skills, soft skills, digital skills, foreign language proficiency and individualization of learners.

### **Gender impact assessment on developing TVET policy**

The process of developing policy documents related to vocational education must comply with the provisions of the Law on Promulgation of Legal Normative Documents 2015. When making a request to develop a legal normative document, agencies, organizations, and individuals making requests must develop the content of the policy and evaluate its impact. Decree 34/2016/ND-CP stipulates 05 types of impacts to be assessed for each policy, including gender impact assessment. Legal documents that must go through the stage of making a request for formulation of legal documents include laws, ordinances, decrees (except for decrees detailing articles assigned by laws and ordinances), resolutions of the People's Councils of provinces (except for the decrees detailing the articles assigned by laws and ordinances) resolutions of the People's Council detailing documents of superiors). In addition, there are several detailed guidance documents for legislators who can refer to carry out gender impact assessment when developing policy documents such as: Handbook of Social and Gender Assessments and Reference List to serve Service for the social and gender impact assessment process of the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (These two documents were compiled and published by GIZ support)<sup>9</sup>. Discussions with a few legal officials showed that

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<sup>9</sup><https://solasa.edu.vn/thu-vien-so>

most of the proposed policy documents (Decrees, Laws, except for guiding circulars) include gender impact assessments; however, such reports do not yet fully consider gender issues. Gender impact assessment of policies is to analyse and forecast economic and social impacts related to opportunities, conditions, capacity to exercise and enjoy rights and benefits of each gender. In fact, in terms of form, there may be a gender impact assessment section, however, the content of the analysis is sketchy and of low quality, not meeting the target requirements of gender impact assessment.

**Box 1.** Evaluation of VET legislation, policies, employment for migrant workers and female workers in the Project on developing a Vocational Education Strategy for the period 2021-2030, with a vision to 2045

The Vietnamese government has a fairly comprehensive system of laws and policies on education, vocational education and labour - employment. These policies, legally, provide equal opportunities for migrant workers and female workers to access TVET and employment support. The Education Law of 2019, the Vocational Education Law of 2014 as well as many documents, programs and schemes show equality for all subjects in accessing education and TVET. However, in practice, accessing state-supported training programs for female migrant workers, is very difficult because some TVET policies are often only communicated and for people with permanent residence according to regulations. As a result, migrant workers could not access these policies where they come to work. Example: Decision No. 1956/2009/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister dated November 27, 2009, approving the TVET scheme for rural workers to be applied to rural workers who are still pregnant, living in the area where they permanently reside, excluding the group of migrant workers without household registration.

Results of the assessment of the status of access to TVET by female migrant workers working in the informal sector:

- Legal documents on retraining and TVET for migrant women have not been mentioned yet; The implementation of these documents in practice is still limited and has not achieved the expected results.
- Migrant women working in the informal sector want to participate in TVET courses to stabilize their lives, improve their income, and seek better and stable jobs. However, they face difficulties in accessing vocational education and training services in their destination; their children also have difficulty in accessing public education services in the destination (having to attend private school due to lack of household registration in the destination). As a result, integration in the destination will be difficult.
- Female migrant workers face many limitations when they want to find better jobs and higher incomes because most of them lack information on recruitment and do not have plans to improve vocational skills and qualifications to improve employment status.
- The awareness and qualifications of female migrant workers are still limited. Most workers in the informal sector receives no TVET or learns a job through work-study.
- Due to unstable jobs, low incomes and long working hours, workers have few opportunities to learn jobs, improve their qualifications and receive very little support from employers in this regard.
- -A part of migrant workers has had a certain level of work experience and skill level, but due to lack of diplomas/certificates, that skill level has not been officially recognized in the

labour market. Therefore, if they are facilitated to participate in vocational courses, female workers will be standardized in terms of vocational knowledge and skills and officially recognized, they will find better jobs.

*Source: MOLISA (2021). Project report on Vocational Education and Training Development Strategy for the period 2021 - 2030, with a vision to 2045.*

## TVET and the SDGs

The SDG agenda envisages a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social, and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed. Gender equality cuts across all the goals and their targets. TVET is included under three targets of SDG 4 and contributes directly to targets under other SDGs, such as Goal 8 on growth and employment. There is a National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Viet Nam (Decision No. 622/QĐ-TTg dated May 10, 2017, of the Prime Minister). MOLISA issued an implementation of the Action Plan of the sector with 17 groups of goals, tasks and 53 specific targets (Decision No. 935/QĐ-LĐTBXH dated July 19, 2018, of the MOLISA), including objectives related to vocational education and gender equality. Specifically: Objective 4: Ensure quality, equitable, and inclusive education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; Target 4.3.b: By 2030, ensure equitable access for all men and women to affordable and quality vocational education

## 2. Status of gender equality in TVET

### TVET enrolment

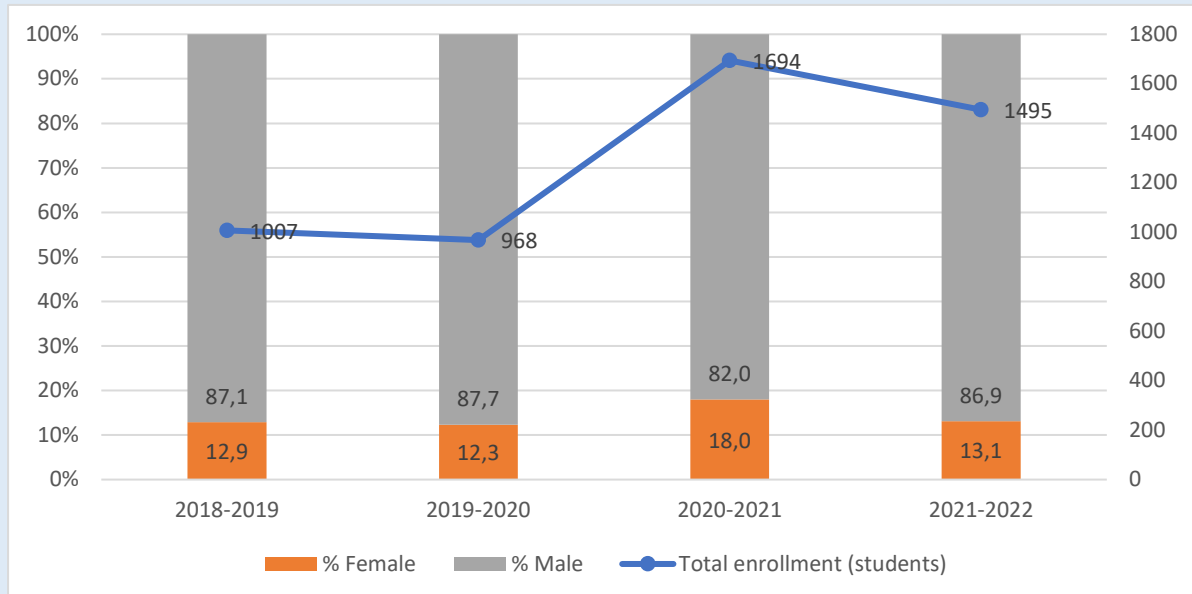
In terms of TVET enrolment, the total number of enrolled trainees in the period 2011-2020 reached 19.67 million people. In which, the vocational college level is 1.95 million people (10%), the intermediate vocational level is 2.33 (12%) and the elementary and continuing training level is 15.39 million people (78%). Particularly in the 2016-2020 period, implementing the Law on Vocational Education, after unifying the state management of vocational education and training, the enrolment results were 11.18 million people, of which colleges 1.02million people, intermediate 1.45million people, elementary and continuing training 8.71million people (MOLISA 2021b).

Although the ratio of female students increased from about 25% to 31.6% of total for the period 2011 to 2020, it remained lower than that of male students. Women around a quarter of the students enrolled over the period 2011 to 2020 (tab.1). Ethnic minority women and men accounted about 10% of the total number of vocational students (As a result of GSO's 2019 Population and Housing Census, 53 ethnic minorities account for 14.6% of the country's population (GSO,2020b).). Available data does not support the analysis of gender difference in vocational education and by ethnicity, or within ethnic minority groups

#### Box 2.

Hue Industrial College has mission create working environment and friendly learning environment, human culture; provide high quality training services to meet the increasing demand of high skilled

labor force in society. Training and technical and economic field of the college level and lower level. The gender structure of enrolments in recent years of Hue Industrial College shows that female proportions make up less than 20% of the total number of students enrolled annually.



Source: Hue Industrial College

Female students increased

In the 2011-2016 period, each year, about 400,000 female students were enrolments for TVET. From 2017-2020, the number of professional secondary school students and professional college students is counted into the vocational education system, the number of female students enrolling increases to over 700 thousand people by 2020. It is found that the number of female students tend to increase, partly due to changing social stereotypes and more diverse and suitable professions for women.

Source: In-depth interview with DVET staff

Increases in women's enrolment are mostly accounted for by women workers participating in elementary training and or training in 3-month programs, not of longer duration. Training is mostly concentrated in the 'feminised' fields of garment making, footwear, electronic assembling, tourism, services, and seafood processing in agricultural production.<sup>10</sup> This is also the case for women migrant workers whose access to training opportunities is confined to certain jobs within the labour market. This in turn limits the range of jobs or work that they can migrate for.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Paper on Situation, Solutions on TVET and Job Creation for Women to Improve Quality of Human Resource, available at [http://hoilhpn.org.vn/images\\_upload/files\\_693.pdf](http://hoilhpn.org.vn/images_upload/files_693.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> See CGEP section on International Labour Migration.

Table 1: Number of new TVET students enrolled and graduate in 2020

	Total	<3 months training	Elementary	Intermediate	College
Number of new students enrolled (persons)	2260470	69.9220	98.1250	330.000	250.000
Women (%)	31.66	39.68	26.06	30.97	32.08
Ethnic minority (%)	9.87	15.18	6.78	11.65	4.77
Number of students graduating (persons)	2190000	692.996	987.004	280.453	229.547
Women (%)	29.68	35.43	24.15	29.47	36.29
Ethnic minority (%)	10.02	15.93	6.32	13.16	4.27

Source: Authors' calculations from DVET's Overview Report on Vocational Education 2016-2020.

### Box 3.

#### Challenges of women in TVET

Barriers include traditional views that underestimate women's abilities and potential, gender stereotypes and discrimination against women. In addition, limitations in training opportunities, qualifications, knowledge, capacity, motherhood, family care, financial capacity limitations due to lack of property ownership... of female workers also greatly affects the participation and quality of work.

TVET for rural workers (prioritize training for rural women, poor women, women with special difficulties, ethnic minority women, disabled women and women reintegrated into the community) focus on selected primary training and under 3 months such as: garment (industrial sewing, civil sewing, fashion design); hotel and restaurant operations, business skills; traditional crafts (rattan and bamboo weaving, brocade weaving, lace embroidery, etc.); female housekeeper (cooking, baking, flower arrangement, pruning ...); cosmetology (perm, makeup, gymnastics).

Regarding TVET for women, although the number of female workers participating in TVET increases every year, it mainly only increases in primary training and under 3 months and mainly in the fields of garment, footwear and leather, electronic assembly, tourism, services, seafood processing and in agricultural production. The percentage of women participating in TVET did not meet the set targets; the percentage of trained workers of female workers is lower than that of men. TVET institutions of all levels of the Women Association are very small in scale, with limited facilities, equipment, and teachers.

*Source: In-depth interview with DVET staff*

#### Differences in career choices of men and women

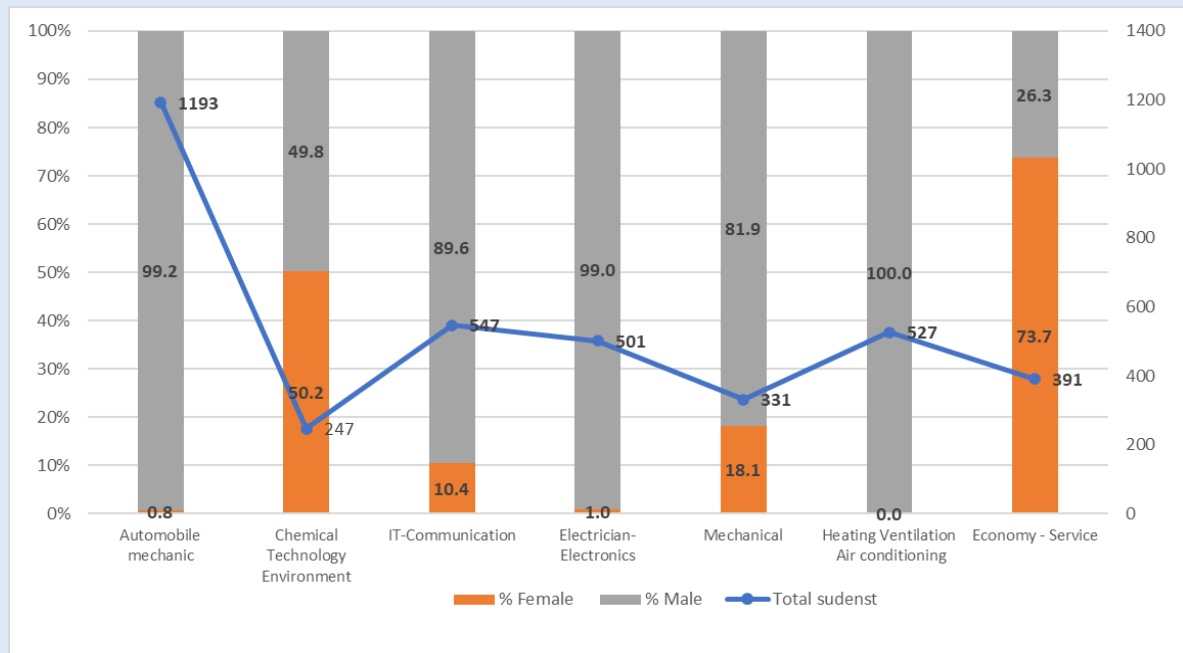
In specific occupations, the gender divide remains deeply rooted, drilling the wall, chiselling - heavy work that is considered to be men's work, while makeup, teaching or taking care of others are women's jobs. However, these stereotypes are changing when men and women can do similar things.

"For a long time, the percentage of women going to TVET is very low compared to that of men, especially in technical fields, where men dominate. In the automotive industry, only around 2% are

female. In fact, many big technology enterprises really want to recruit women to work in the technical field at the positions need the ingenuity, meticulousness. Therefore, in recent years, the demand for female TVET has increased.

*Source: In-depth interview with vocational education institution staff*

School year 2021-2022, Hue Industrial College: Female students focus on a few subjects such as: Economy - Service (73.7%), chemical Technology Environment (50%); In contrast, female students did not attend or studied very little such as: Heating ventilation air conditioning (0%), Automobile mechanic (0.8%).



*Source: Hue Industrial College*

The participation of female and male students in the TVET fields in showed a high level of gender-segregated according to the study fields and occupational areas. The reason for the segregation lies in the social constructionism of gender prescribing the 'suitability' of training according to the gender. The social constructionism of this suitability includes gendered perceptions of the students' learning behaviour, in other words, how girls/ boys (GIZ, 2014). Up to now, TVET institutions have been looking at the issue of gender segregation. There are solutions to attract female students such as providing scholarships for girls. The gender difference by training has decreased, but still exists.

**Box 4.** Solutions to attract and retain female students in vocational schools

"There are businesses that also offer scholarships to female college students in electrical, electronic, automation and electromechanical fields. In recent years, the TVET school has also encouraged female students to study engineering by providing support 50% of the tuition fee, but the number is still low"- In-depth interview with vocational education institution staff

Can Tho Vocational College is a key quality school of the whole country that trains technical and professional human resources at College and Intermediate level. Each school year, the school has many scholarships to support study and talent promotion, especially female students participating in TVET can participate in the Intel Corporation Head Scholarship.

<https://ctvc.edu.vn/page/thong-bao-tuyen-sinh-cao-dang-trung-cap-chinh-quy-nam-2020/>

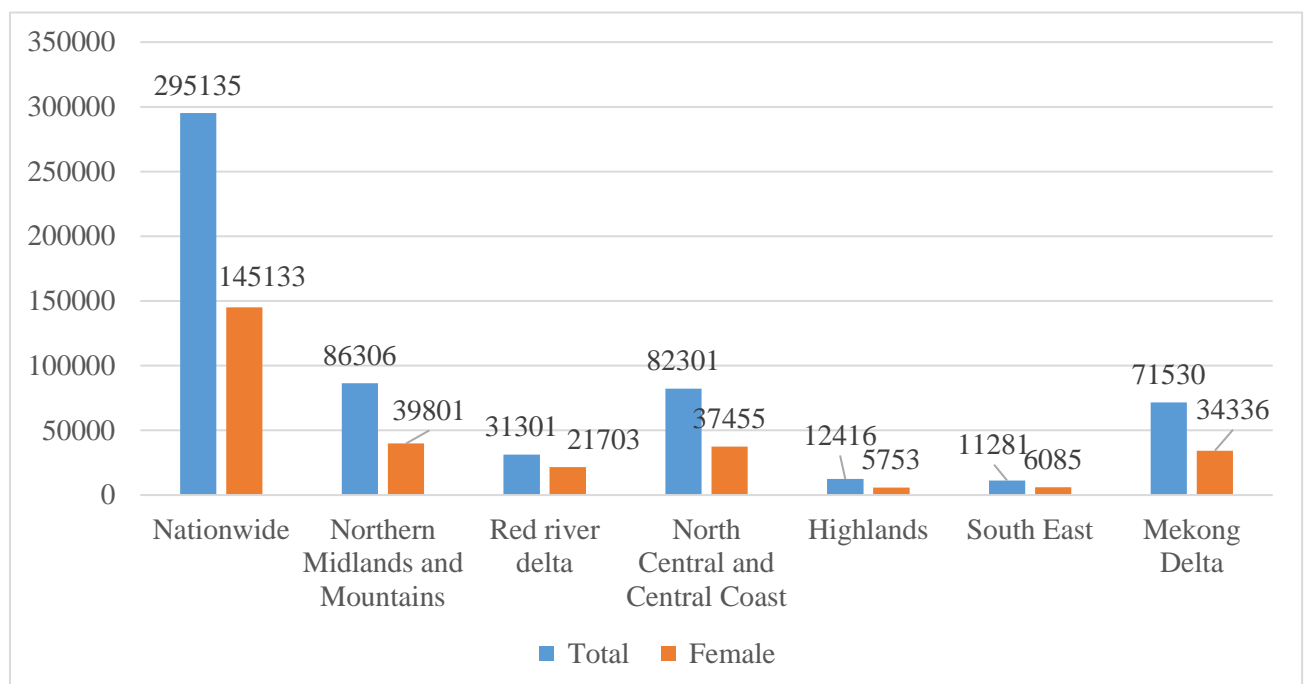
Hue Industrial College has implemented gender equality solutions:

- Aim to achieve the minimum percentage of female participation (e.g. scholarships, structure of positions, participation in game/Robocon teams, ...)
- Create more fun activities, skills contests associated with the profession so that students can participate, encourage students with passion to develop professional skills. Create conditions, opportunities and motivation for women to participate in activities (for example: sports, arts, scholarships for girls only, jobs for women...)
- Create special opportunities for female students to study professions that are mainly male-dominated by increasing the number of scholarships for girls and disadvantaged groups to encourage them to study engineering. Robocon and STEM activities:



Source: Hue Industrial College

Figure 1. Number of people trained under the TVET programme for rural workers, 2020 (people)



Source: Authors' calculations from DVET's Overview Report on Vocational Education 2016-2020.

### TVET teachers

By 2020, the whole country had 83,959 teachers in vocational education institutions, including: 37,235 teachers in colleges (44.3%), 13,295 teachers in intermediate schools (15.8%), 23,086 teachers in TVET centres (27.4%) and there were nearly 10,343 teachers in other institutions participating in TVET activities (12.3%). By gender, female teachers accounted for 33.9% of the total number of teachers in TVET institutions. The percentage of female teachers was highest in colleges (44.4%) and lowest in TVET centers (17.7%).

Table 2. TVET teachers by gender, 2020

	Total of TVET teachers (persons)	Female	
		Amount (persons)	% In total
Overall	83959	28472	33.9
Colleges	37235	16518	44.4
Secondary schools	13295	4998	37.6
Vocational Education Center	23086	4079	17.7
Other institutions with TVET registration	10343	2877	27.8

Source: Authors' calculations from 2020 DVET's Overview Report on Vocational Education 2016-2020.

### *Gender inequality in leadership and management in TVET*

TVET management staff include state managers of TVET at all levels (in central ministries, branches and DOLISAs of provinces and cities) and managers at TVET institutions. By 2020, the whole country had 16,455 TVET managers, including: 1,192 TVET management staffs in agency in charge of vocational education management (7.24%) and 15,263 TVET management staffs in TVET institutions (92.76%).

The structure of management staff is relatively disparate in terms of gender. The data shows that only 34, 42% of TVET managers are women. Compared with TVET institutions, the percentage of female TVET managers in agency in charge of vocational education management is higher (37.08%). The percentage of female TVET managers who graduated from university was highest (29.68) and lowest in the intermediate TVET (15.65%).

Table 3. TVET management staff by gender, 2020

	Total of TVET staffs (persons)	Female	
		Amount (persons)	% In total
Overall	16,455	5,663	34.42
<i>By work unit</i>			
Agency in charge of vocational education management	1,192	442	37.08
TVET institutions (vocational education institutions, TVET establishments)	15,263	5,221	34.21
<i>By technical qualification</i>			
Master, PhD	7,399	1,948	26.33
University	7,853	2,331	29.68
College	579	124	21.42
Intermediate TVET	313	49	15.65
Other	189	44	23.28

Source: Authors' calculations from 2020 DVET's Overview Report on Vocational Education 2016-2020.

Gender inequality in leadership and management in the colleges: From the leadership positions down to the support staff, the hierarchies of human resources in the analysed TVET schools showed a gender-unbalanced picture characterized by male leadership and female support staff. Women were found to be working only in the lower positions. In terms of gender balance, both staff profiles of two TVET schools (DVT and NIVT were randomly collect sex-disaggregated general data as well as according to the M&E system of the Programme Reform of TVET supported by GIZ) appear to have an underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, while most women are working in administration and accounting – a common reality in patriarchal societies (GIZ, 2014).

### **Support women in finding decent employment after graduation**

According to MOLISA's SDGs Implementation Plan (Decision 935/QD-BLDTBXH) setting a roadmap for the proportion of gender in the total number of workers in the newly created jobs: by 2020 women will reach 48% or more, by 2025:  $\geq 48\%$ , in 2030:  $\geq 48.5\%$ .

In the period of 2015-2020, employment service centres have organised more than 6000 job fairs, more than 5 million people found job through the introduction and activities of the employment centres. On average, the number of employees consulted annually is 2.98 million people. By the end of 2019, 48% of consulted workers were presented with job opportunities and about 68.5% of them found a job successfully. However, there is no information regarding the proficiency to find new job by gender.

**Box 5. Supporting on Labor Market Services - Job Placement for women**

The Hanoi Employment Service Center conducts consulting - introducing various jobs with many forms from direct to indirect candidates and enterprises. Every year, hundreds of thousands of candidates and businesses are consulted. In the 2016-2021 period alone, 2,801,675 employees received job counselling; 318,920 employees were introduced to jobs and 114,175 employees were employed. In which, there is no gender discrimination in job placement support. To help women, find good jobs, we know that the Hanoi Women's Development Support Center is expected to launch job connections and job placement on [jobnow.phunuhanoi.today](http://jobnow.phunuhanoi.today).

*Source: In-depth interview with National Employment Service Center*

### 3. Gendered job performances in the labour market

#### Labor force by gender

In 2020, the labour force size of the whole country is 54.84 million people, of which women account for 45.25%. In terms of vocational education level: female accounted for the lowest percentage in the elementary TVET education level group (in 2011 it was 23.08%, decreasing to 7.40% in 2020); in the group of intermediate-level, female accounted for 43.69% in 2011 and slightly decreased to 42.24% in 2020; Among the three groups of vocational qualifications, women account for the highest proportion at college level, but there is a decreasing trend in the period 2011-2020: 57.9% in 2011 and 54.75% in 2020.

Table 4: Labor force by vocational education level and gender, 2011-2020

	2011			2020		
	Total (million)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (million)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Overall	51.72	51.50	48.50	54.84	52.63	47.37
Elementary TVET	1.07	76.92	23.08	2.58	92.60	7.40
Intermediate TVET	2.74	56.31	43.69	2.42	57.76	42.24
College	1.07	42.10	57.90	2.09	45.25	54.75
University and above	3.17	56.74	43.26	6.10	49.76	50.24
No degree certificate	43.66	50.42	49.58	41.65	50.65	49.35

Source: Authors' calculations from LFS data, GSO

**Box 6: The percentage of women tends to decrease in some majors and TVET levels**

The training majors with high enrollment results are concentrated in the fields of electrical engineering, electronics, mechanical engineering, service sectors, and tourism and information technology. Besides, there are several professions and professions that are difficult to recruit, even unable to recruit, for example, the Business Accounting major, in 2011 it enrolled 16,095 people, by

2020, it will enrol 1,950 people, a decrease of 87%. The reason is due to the reduced demand of the labour market for this group of occupations. These training majors previously attracted women to study quite a lot, leading to a decrease in the percentage of women attending college in 2020.

*Source: In-depth interview with DVET staff*

### Gender differences after graduation and entering the labour market

The proportion of employees that have degrees/certificates has increased slightly in recent years. However, the share of women with degrees/certificates has consistently been lower than that of men. This has been the case irrespective of age, training level and geographic region.<sup>12</sup> The data for the 2015- 2018 period for urban and rural women shows the same gender gap. Rural women have the lowest rates of degrees/certificates, compared with both rural men and urban women and men. This is of particular concern in terms of rural restructuring, which will increase the imperative for rural women to have access to vocational education to enter new forms of agricultural work or shift to other income generating sectors.

Table 5a: Rate of employed persons with technical qualifications, by sex, 2015-2019

Years	Male	Female
2015	22.4	17.3
2016	23.0	18.0
2017	24.0	18.7
2018	24.4	19.3
2019	25.5	20.5

Source: GSO Labour Force Surveys from 2015 to 2019, Population Census, 2019

Table 5b: Rate of employed persons with technical qualifications, by urban/rural and sex, 2020

	Total	Urban	Rural
Male	26.72	42.67	19.04
Female	20.14	35.50	12.62

Source: GSO 2020, Labour Force Survey

The Labor Force Survey (2020) also confirms a gender gap in obtaining vocational education qualifications. A reported 9.1 per cent of female workers, as compared to 16 per cent of male workers, have a degree or formal certificate in vocational education.<sup>13</sup>

### Employment by gender

For employees who are working, women account for 47.17%. In terms of vocational education level: female accounted for the lowest percentage in the group of people with elementary level qualification (in 2011 it was 23.07%, decreasing to 7.28% in 2020); in the group of intermediate-level graduates, female accounted for 43.42% in 2011 and slightly decreased to 41.06% in 2020; In the group of college degree holders, women account for a higher proportion: 59.03% in 2011 and 53.87% in 2020.

Table 6: Employment by vocational education level and gender, 2011-2020

<sup>12</sup> UN Women and Institute of Labor Science and Social Affair. 2015

<sup>13</sup> GSO.2020. Labor Force Survey

	2011			2020		
	Total (million people)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (million people)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Overall	50.68	51.69	48.31	53.61	52.83	47.17
Elementary	1.05	76.93	23.07	2.53	92.72	7.28
Intermediate	2.66	56.58	43.42	2.32	58.94	41.06
College	1.01	41.97	58.03	1.97	46.13	53.87
University and above	3.09	57.10	42.90	5.84	50.47	49.53
No degree certificate	42.86	50.60	49.40	40.95	50.69	49.31

Source: Authors' calculations from LFS data, GSO

Viet Nam has one of the highest labour force participation rates of females in the region. On average, women represent 47.71% of those employed. Gender-related disparities are still salient when comparing different age groups in formal employment, yet disproportionalities are significantly decreasing among younger workers. More striking are disproportionate shares of women in particular occupations. While female workers are well represented in white-collar professions, with a significant higher proportion in service-related occupations, they are still remarkably underrepresented in leadership positions. In addition, there are some peculiarities regarding female jobs in particular industry sectors. While the classic disproportion of women employed in the social sector (i.e., health and education) versus those working in heavy industries (e.g., mining, construction, transportation) does not really surprise, the relative high employment rate of women in the manufacturing sector is still because of Viet Nam's prevailingly huge textile and garment industry employing large numbers of (mostly low skilled) female workers. A still unsolved issue seems to persist in the low shares of women working in the science and technology and the information and communication technology (ICT) sectors (ADB, 2020).<sup>14</sup>

Table 7. Proportion of employees are working by industry and gender, 2020 (%)

	Male				Female			
Industries	Overall	Elementary	Intermediate	College	Overall	Elementary	Intermediate	College
Agriculture; forestry and fisheries	32.0	8.4	13.8	7.5	34.2	16.8	12.7	5.4
Mining and quarrying	0.5	1.3	1.5	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.1
Manufacturing	18.3	12.8	24.0	28.9	24.2	22.0	18.9	18.2

<sup>14</sup> VIET NAM Technical and Vocational Education and Training Sector Assessment, ADB, 2020.

Electricity; gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	0.5	0.5	2.3	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.5
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.2
Construction	14.9	7.0	7.7	7.6	1.8	1.1	1.2	1.0
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11.5	19.0	13.3	16.1	16.0	23.7	22.2	20.4
Transportation and storage	6.3	39.4	7.4	6.2	0.7	4.3	2.4	1.4
Accommodation and food service activities	3.3	2.9	3.8	4.2	7.2	9.7	6.9	5.3
Information and communication	0.8	0.3	1.3	2.5	0.5	0.1	0.9	1.0
Financial, banking and insurance activities	0.7	0.5	0.9	1.6	1.0	0.6	1.2	1.3
Real estate activities	0.7	0.9	0.6	1.7	0.5	1.7	0.6	0.8
Professional, scientific, and technical activities	0.8	0.4	1.2	1.8	0.5	1.2	0.8	1.1
Administrative and support service activities	0.8	1.4	1.0	1.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	1.0
Activities of the Communist Party and socio-political organizations; State management, security, and defence; compulsory social security	3.5	1.5	11.3	5.1	1.7	3.3	4.2	2.4
Education and training	1.8	0.5	2.0	5.4	5.9	3.8	13.7	27.9
Human health and social work activities	0.8	0.4	3.0	3.0	1.5	1.7	9.4	9.5
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.4
Other service activities	1.8	1.8	3.4	2.9	2.0	7.6	2.1	1.7
Activities of households as employers; goods-producing and services-producing activities of households for own use	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Authors' calculations from LFS data, GSO

## Gender pay gap

The gender pay gap is the difference in average gross monthly earning<sup>15</sup> between women and men.

According to the labour and employment survey data for the period 2011-2020, the average wage of employees increased relatively quickly with an average annual growth rate of 7.51%/year (average salary increased from 3.76 million VND/month in 2012 to 6.6 million VND/month in 2020). In the period 2011-2020, although the salary of female workers tends to increase, the average monthly salary of female employees is always lower than that of male workers and the average wage growth rate of female employees is also slower than that of male employees with male workers. Specifically, in the period 2011-2020, the salary of female employees is only 0.88-0.91 times the height of that of male workers. The average wage growth rate for men and women in the period 2012-2020 is 7.35%, while this rate for men is 7.67%.

Table 8: Average monthly wage by gender in the 2011-2020

*Unit: Thousand VND/month*

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Overall	3,119	3,757	4,099	4,471	4,637	4,979	5,372	5,776	6,610	6,597
Male	3,291	3,923	4,260	4,642	4,840	5,209	5,622	6,074	6,962	6,922
Female	2,862	3,515	3,869	4,233	4,360	4,664	5,032	5,377	6,141	6,171
Gender disparity (male -female) Thousand VND	429	408	391	409	480	545	590	697	821	751
Gender gap <sup>16</sup> (%)	13.04	10.40	9.18	8.81	9.92	10.46	10.49	11.48	11.79	10.85

Source: Authors' calculations from GSO's time-series LFS data during 2011-2020

The average monthly salary of female workers is always lower average 10% than male workers in period 2011-2020. Some of the reasons for the gender pay gap are structural and are related to differences in employment, level of education and work experience.

<sup>15</sup> include salary, wages, including overtime pay, bonuses, occupational allowances, and benefits. other benefits for the main job of the group of paid workers.

<sup>16</sup> ILO Measuring The Gender 4 Wage Gap-Tunkey case: The Gender wage gap measures the gap between the average wage level of all women and all men working in the labour market for a salary, hourly or daily wage. This gap is not the wage gap between a man and a woman with the same observable characteristics, doing the same work; it is the difference between the average wage levels of all working women and men. In its simplest form, gender wage gaps are calculated by subtracting the average wage level for women from that of men, and then dividing the remainder by the average wage level of men.

In the group of elementary vocational qualifications, the wage gap of female and male workers tends to expand in the period 2011-2020 (gender gap index in 2011 was 16.24% in 2011 and 34.76% on 2020).

In the intermediate education group, the wage gap of female and male workers tends to expand in the same period 2011-2020 (gender gap index in 2011 was 10.97% in 2011 and 22.44% on 2020).

In the group of college degrees, the wage gap between female and male workers in the period 2012-2020 tends to widen with a gender gap index of 3.7% in 2011 and gradually increasing, by 2020 has increased to 20.19%. Female workers are concentrated in this group of qualifications; the salary is still lower than that of male workers of the same level. This fact shows that wage inequality persists and has not improved in the period 2011-2020.

Table 9: Average monthly wage by gender and technical expertise in the 2011-2020

Unit: Thousand VND/month

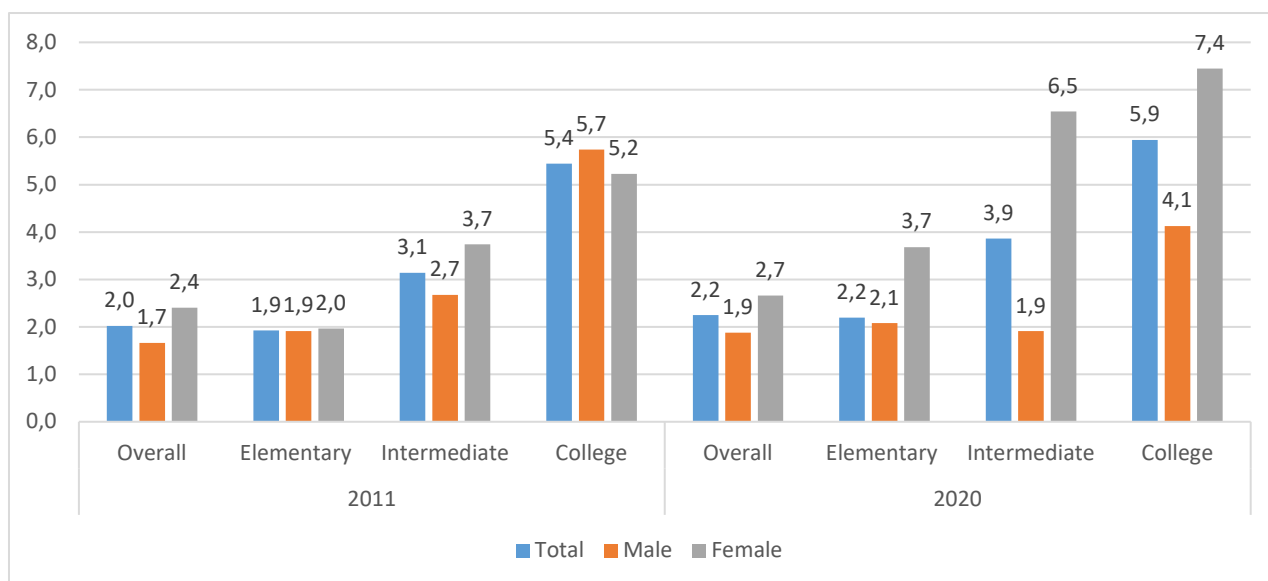
	2011				2020			
	Total	Male	Female	Gender gap index (%)	Total	Male	Female	Gender gap index (%)
Elementary	2152	2236	1873	16.24	8255	8469	5526	34.76
Intermediate	2319	2435	2168	10.97	6283	6921	5368	22.44
College	2923	2987	2876	3.70	6777	7604	6069	20.19

Source: Authors' calculations from GSO's time-series LFS data during 2012, 2020

### Higher Unemployment

Female unemployment rates are also generally higher than men's. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it more difficult for female workers to find jobs, the unemployment rate of female workers tended to increase, from 2.4 per cent in 2011 to 2.7 per cent in 2020; especially the unemployment rate of the persons with higher TVET qualifications (with elementary, intermediate and college diplomas) increased. The third outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic reduced the recovery momentum of the labour market achieved in the last two quarters of 2020 and caused many workers, especially women, to lose their jobs.

Figure 2: Unemployment rate by vocational education level and gender, 2011-2020 (%)



Source: Authors' calculations from LFS data, GSO

#### 4. Data gaps

Currently, there are initial data and a set of indicators related to participation of women in TVET and labour market. However, there are still many data gaps to be able to assess gender inequality in TVET in Vietnam as well as experience and solutions to this. The following data gaps in TVET in Vietnam can be identified:

- There is a lack of specific guidelines on gender mainstreaming in TVET policy development. Gender impact assessments are still in the form of sufficient documents to be submitted and have not yet gone deep into addressing gender issues. Need more strengthening in capacity building on measures and regulations on gender equality for policy makers and implement policy on the micro level.
- Lack of information and data for women on labour market transition: data on career guidance, counselling, and job placement for female workers after TVET graduation and barriers to their employment in the labour market.
- Lack of information about Gender discrimination at work. There is not enough up-to-date information, evidence for gender discrimination in employment, experience dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace. There is a lack of data on women's barriers to decent work such as financial barriers, skills, family responsibilities and reasons for pay gap.
- Lack of information related to discriminatory behaviour, barriers of women in TVET as well as on solutions for enrolment and keeping women in TVET.

## Chapter II: International experience in promoting gender equality in TVET

Gender gaps persist globally in women's access to skills development and participation in the labour market. The main challenges women face include gender biases in occupational choices, barriers to education and training, especially in rural and informal economies, and sociocultural and economic constraints. To address these challenges, countries worldwide use TVET and employment promotion projects to further strengthen women's participation in the labour market. Despite these efforts, gender equality challenges in TVET continue. They concern the enrolment of women in TVET, the retention of women in TVET institutions, the transition of women to the labour market, and the representation of women in TVET institutions. There are several international project examples how state actors and international development cooperation try to tackle these challenges.

### 1. Gender impact assessment of policies

Ensuring gender equality in TVET on micro and meso level can only be fully effective if supporting policy is in place. Gender impact assessments of policy before adoption are essential to ensuring that gender is considered in all policies, and no adverse impacts are expected from a policy. As the European Institute for Gender Equality points out

“Even if laws treats [sic!] women and men as equals, women still do not have equal access to and control over material and non-material resources and assets. That is why addressing people suffering inequalities in an equal way causes, in practice, the perpetuation of these inequalities. That is actually what happens when existing gender inequalities in women's and men's economic, political, and social position are not taken into consideration. That is why policies focused on target groups defined in broad terms (no distinguishing between women and men) are usually not neutral, but gender blind. Although it may not be intentional, these policies often impact women and men differently and they may even strengthen social, cultural, or economic gender inequalities. If these different gender impacts are not considered at the design stage, the policy in question will actually be gender blind. To avoid this, it is necessary to put people at the centre of the intervention, to meet the different needs and interests of women and men, to identify gender inequalities in terms of access to and control of resources, to consider the impact of roles and gender-based stereotypes, to anticipate the possible differential effects on women and men and to ensure that the outcomes of policies will support gender equality. In this context, gender impact assessment is the first step toward avoiding such unintended effects, as it allows policymakers to foresee

the impact of a new regulation, policy, or programme on the lives of women and men and the impact on gender equality.”<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, budget for gender responsive measures needs to be available and allocated in time. In 2018 the OECD published a Toolkit for Mainstreaming and Implementing Gender Equality. In the toolkit some good practices are documented:

### **“Austria**

Since 1 January 2013, all new or amended laws and regulations as well as major investment or procurement contracts at the federal level must include a mandatory ex-ante impact assessment on gender equality along with other assessments of potential socioeconomic and environmental impacts. Quantitative and qualitative thresholds ensure the proportionality of these efforts in relation to the respective law or regulation. The Ministry of Finance and the Federal Chancellery therefore provide content related and technical assistance. The impact assessments are disclosed for consultation and parliamentary discussions. Ex-post evaluations of the impacts are to be performed by Ministries within 5 years and reported to Parliament in the Annual Report on Impact Assessment submitted in May.

### **Sweden**

In Sweden, binding regulations stipulate that GIAs must be conducted on policy proposals potentially affecting gender equality; bills require a separate section assessing whether proposals and expected outcomes contribute to the achievement of gender equality goals or potentially hinder fulfilment of the goals. Trainings and workshops are provided by experts at the Division for Gender Equality to support GIA related work in other departments and line ministries. The Division for Gender Equality also provides general training sessions on gender equality, gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting for all ministries within the Government Offices of Sweden. Line ministries can also take in external consultants or experts for support and trainings related to specific gender equality challenges (e.g., how to work with sex disaggregated data).

### **Spain**

Spain’s Gender Equality Law of 2007 institutionalised gender mainstreaming across all public bodies, requiring its adoption and implementation of their legislative provisions and in the formulation and budgeting of all policies. This includes conducting “ex ante” gender impact assessments reports of legislative and regulatory proposals, which analyse and assess the results of their adoption from the perspective of elimination of inequalities and contribution to achieve equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, based on indicators on the current situation, results foreseen and

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<sup>17</sup> [Why use Gender Impact Assessment | European Institute for Gender Equality \(europa.eu\)](#). Last accessed: 26.04.2022.

their impact. This is considered particularly important for legislation not typically considered as gender-related, such as traffic.”<sup>18</sup>

The European Commission has introduced a centralized system of impact assessment for policies which includes assessment of economic, environmental, and social consequences. There is a detailed quality assurance system with guidelines, support, and helpdesk function, trainings, and a review system. All assessments are published online for transparency.

More information on gender impact assessments in several European countries can be found here: <https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/mh0416171enn.pdf>. Information on Gender impact assessments for public bodies in Australia as stipulated in the Gender Equality Act 2020 can be found here <https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/about-gender-equality-act-2020>.

Moreover, it is highly important to introduce specific targets and indicators for gender equality goals in policy, provide adequate guidance for implementation and monitor the implementation and impact of policy. Implementation and impact monitoring should prominently consider gender equality and gender impact.

The reform programme for TVET in Bangladesh mentioned in subchapter 2.4 for example focused on the following targets and indicators:

- “Increase female participation in formal TVET institutions from 24 per cent to 40 per cent by 2020;
- increase the quota for female teachers in TVET from 13 per cent to 30 per cent;
- establish quotas for women in TVET management at a minimum of 10 per cent;
- ensure female-friendly environments in both training centers and workplaces;
- create linkages between industry demands and TVET institutions to improve supply of required skills;
- establish extensive gender-responsive support systems and counselling services;
- include skills training for workers in the informal economy;
- and establish an adequate data management system to capture sex-disaggregated data on TVET”

Incentives for successful policy implementation and rigorous, high-quality monitoring can be implemented to reduce the gap between policy and implementation.

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<sup>18</sup> OECD (2018): OECD Toolkit for Mainstreaming and Implementing Gender Equality. Link: [toolkit-for-mainstreaming-and-implementing-gender-equality.pdf \(oecd.org\)](https://www.oecd.org/gender/publications/toolkit-for-mainstreaming-and-implementing-gender-equality.pdf) p. 26. Last accessed: 26.04.2022.

## 2. Enrolment

The analysis on Viet Nam in Chapter 1 showed that the enrolment of female students in TVET institutions is lower than that of male students. And while female participation increased, it was mostly concentrated on elementary training or three-month training courses. Furthermore, the training courses chosen by female students were mostly in the more feminised fields, like garment making or tourism. Internationally, there are several approaches used to improve the enrolment of female students, especially in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

### **Bangladesh**

In Bangladesh, the “[Skills for change](#)” project was developed under the “Government of Bangladesh TVET Reform Project”. It showed that the rate of women in traditionally male occupations can be raised and that women can be successful in these occupations. It was funded by the European Union, executed by the International Labour Organization (ILO), and implemented by a partnership between a national NGO training organisation, a government training organisation, and employers. The project’s aim was to address women’s very low participation rate in TVET and specially to encourage women to participate in male-dominated areas. The programme was based on extensive industry consultations that identified a sector with potential for growth and a strong interest to recruit women. In this sense, a motorcycle servicing programme with strong industry links was developed which connected to nationally recognised competencies. The project included pre-vocational basic skills training (which included, for example mathematics, English and technical skills for motorcycle servicing) and offered four months off-the-job and six months on-the-job trainings. The programme targeted women and men older than 17 years, who were personally motivated and had limited formal education level, to reach out to the most marginalized students. After the training, the students received an official formal qualification to enter the Bangladeshi job market. Women were actively encouraged to join, for example by also approaching their families to ensure their consent and participation in the girls training.

The programme demonstrated that women could succeed in non-traditional trades, that female mechanics can help to fill skills gaps and that their ‘motivation and attentiveness’ offer complementary skills. Due to the skills training, female apprentices gained confidence, became economically more independent and gained social acceptance. They became advocates for gender equality in skills development in their TVET schools. Industry partners reported that they would continue to employ women and the national NGO training organisation is continuing to replicate the model in all their training institutes.

To make a programme like this successful, it is essential to select a sector with potential for growth, which needs skilled workers, which is open to employing women and will offer employment after graduation. Extensive industry consultations led to a focus on motorcycle servicing. Another aspect is to include community representatives or NGOs in selection to ensure that trainees meet criteria of low education levels and income. It is moreover important to involve families in recruitment to ensure that trainees have a strong support

network, by approaching them early on and explaining procedures and content of the training to them. (Women, whose families were not aware that higher incomes would not be immediate, were more likely to drop out.) It is also helpful to attract more women, by enabling potential trainees to visit the centre, meet students and trainers and fully understand the programme. It is also important to work with partners with experience of training women in non-traditional trades and with the capacity to deliver generic schooling, like English and mathematics, as well as technical training. It is useful to offer gender equality training and support to partners, instructors, and managers.

## **Chile**

As in Viet Nam, the information and communications technology (ICT) sector has grown rapidly in recent decades. In light of a forecast for continued expansion, it is an area of high employability and opportunity. In Chile, TVET institutions recognized this trend and realized that there is a large gender gap. Just 5% of those working in ICT in Chile are female (compared to 24% globally) and only 10% of those currently in training are female. Therefore, the ICT “School of Duoc UC” has focused its efforts on increasing the number of girls and women in ICT in the project “More Women in ICT”. The project aims to break down gender stereotypes and barriers and to encourage more women into the profession. It is co-funded by UNESCO, UNEVOC and Duoc UC and seeks to increase the participation of women in ICT, to promote their role in the ICT industry, and to strengthen the development of leadership, communication, and mentoring skills for future female students.

The overarching, long-term aim of the project is to change the culture of the ICT industry in terms of gender equality and opportunities for women in this field. With that in mind, its core objectives are to increase the reach of the “More Women in ICT” project within the Duoc UC community, promote the talent and leadership of women in ICT, and increase the interest of young women in technological careers and to work collaboratively with other institutions with similar objectives to achieve greater impact. In addition, the initiative will provide training in leadership skills to enable women to become agents of change in their future work environments and to lead new opportunities for women in the ICT industry. They will also be encouraged to promote interest in ICT-based careers to female students by providing practical experience and becoming role models that challenge current, male-dominated, stereotypes. This is done, for example, by training participating students in leadership, communication, and mentoring skills in order to transform them into leaders and role models for the next generation.

The programme has contributed to an increase in the number of women participating within the “More Women in ICT” community. In the last 5 years, Duoc UC has managed to increase the number of women entering its programmes by 49%. Annually, approximately 400 women are enrolling in ICT programmes at Duoc UC; this represents 27% of national enrolment. In the last year, the “More Women in ICT” programme has increased the number of participating students six-fold from 40 students in 2019 to 247 at the end of 2020. The expansion of the community leads to an increase in the number of women empowered to become agents for

change among their peers. By revealing their skills and competences in the field, they change gender stereotypes. The programme has facilitated improved alliances with organizations for the development of joint activities aimed at eliminating the gender gap in ICT.

### **The Netherlands**

While the initiatives above address the students, there are also initiatives and programmes that address TVET institutions to become more attractive. For example, the Platform Talent voor Technologie in the Netherlands organized a knowledge conference in 2018 on “More Girls in TVET”, together with the National Expert Organization on Girls/Women and Science/Technology of the Netherlands (VHTO). This conference developed into a “learning ambassadors’ network”, of which the MBO Raad (Council of TVET colleges), VHTO and 17 TVET institutes are part. “[More girls in TVET](#)” is active in lowering the threshold for girls within their own educational institute. This happens through implementing modern curricula, gender-inclusive career guidance, female role models and teachers that are aware of unwanted behaviour. To do this, room is made in the curriculum for “hybrid educational experiences” by having (female) professionals give presentations and project assignments. Moreover, the presence of female professionals in the training programme is increased and the experience of professionals is given a structural place in the curriculum. They also place female students together in groups as much as possible. If not possible, activities and projects to bring them into contact with each other are organised: horizontally between year-mates and vertically between the various learning years. Regarding career guidance, the schools offer female students the possibility to call on female study-career counsellors. Also personalised career guidance from lecturers with gender knowledge is provided and men are prepared to work with female colleagues in engineering and ICT. The MBO Raad developed a ‘[gender scan](#)’ that provides TVET institutes with tips for increasing gender equality. The gender scan consists of a quantitative analysis of the intake and qualified outflow of female students. The “learning ambassadors’ network” is still successful. They achieved this by ensuring that a prominent place is given to the perspectives of girls when setting up a continuous learning line between different schools. In new partnerships, it is a focus to formulate goals together in gender diversity. Furthermore, they build up a database of female technical specialists and former students who want to play a role in the curriculum and in supervising female students and they encourage the introduction of gender knowledge into the regional networks, for example by having a guest speaker or by presenting a good practice.

### **3. Retention**

The throughput rate of students, especially female students, is of great concern for TVET institutions that often face challenges to handle this issue. The dropout or low retention rates of female students indicate a key problem that needs to be solved. Problems associated with withdrawing from TVET institutions are manifold. The social costs of dropping out of TVET education include increased demand for social services, increased unemployment, and poor

levels of health. Individual costs include lower earnings, unemployment prospects, greater likelihood of health problems and social marginalisation. This is especially relevant for female students, which are often faced with the fact, that the labour market is biased against women in terms of giving equal employment opportunities and equal wages. Without a degree or formal education, women face little formal employment opportunities. TVET institutions worldwide are faced with this issue and offer different solutions.

### **Costa Rica**

The national TVET institute (INA, Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje) in Costa Rica, states that TVET institutions can promote the participation of women and men in non-traditional programmes through active policies and guarantee that these women succeed in completing their studies without experiencing gender discrimination. To this effect, the INA carried out a comprehensive in-house gender analysis, with the objective of improving the retention and employability of women in Costa Rica. The study included a gender analysis of the institution's structure and procedures, as well as a gender diagnosis of the Costa Rican labour market and of training services provided to the public. The findings of the analysis showed that, drop-out rates for women were higher in programmes where women were underrepresented, due to missing role models and curricula that were not adapted to include women. Following the analysis, INA and other national institutions developed a gender policy for INA (see chapter 3). The policy is aimed at addressing discriminatory practices both at the INA and in the transition process to the labour market. The plan aimed at raising the retention and graduation rates of female and male students in the INA under conditions of gender equality, which was achieved. As a result of the success of this reform in Costa Rica, the approach was shared with other national training institutions in Central America that collaborate in a network of training institutions (the so-called Red de Institutos de Formación Profesional (RedIFP) de Centroamérica, Panamá, República Dominicana y Haití). Seven countries of Central America (Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama) subsequently conducted similar diagnostic studies and formulated recommendations to enhance gender equality in TVET institutions in their respective countries.

### **Mozambique**

In Mozambique, the Skills Training for Employment Programme (STEM) is working to enhance the quality and delivery of gender-sensitive training programmes in Tete and Cabo Delgado provinces. In partnership with the Government of Mozambique and the Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan), its member colleges are implementing the project and are providing technical assistance in gender-sensitive teacher training and management training, and the development of new and renewed training programmes. The project also supports the establishment of student support services to support the well-being of students, particularly of girls and women, during their training.

STEM has increased girls' and women's' participation in training programmes and changed their attitudes about their participation in professional and technological streams. 3,200 students, parents and other members of the communities were provided with trainings on gender equality. In the training institutions in Tete and Cabo Delgado, STEM has supported girls and women through activities in three categories: recruitment, retention, and insertion into the labour market. On the issue of retention, Supertécnica, the TVET institute associated with the project, has contributed to a culture of zero-tolerance behaviour towards sexual assault, which primarily affects girls and women, and pay-for-grades corruption, which affects girls and boys. Directors, trainers, and students have been sensitised on anti-sexual harassment and pay-for-grades corruption through workshops and training activities, and STEM successfully advocated for the development of a ministerial decree defining a sector-wide complaint mechanism for victims of sexual harassment in schools. Furthermore, the project has worked with Mozambican TVET partners to integrate gender equality into the content of curriculum and the pedagogical approach of the training programmes, to make it more accessible for women and girls. The outcome (see above) showed that girls' enrolment had increased at the STEM partner institutions and female teachers and students have gained more self-confidence. For example, they have been emboldened to speak out about sexual harassment and assault which has contributed to improving the retention rates.

The results of the project show that it is a key factor to design TVET courses as well as the environment of TVET institutions in a gender-sensible manner, which supports girls and women and positively influences their retention in TVET institutes. The programme has also highlighted the importance of female role models for young women.

#### 4. Labour Market Transition

Beyond the access to and completion of TVET programmes, the labour market transition and access to decent work opportunities remains a serious challenge for women in Viet Nam. Chapter 1 showed that the number of women entering the labour market after participating in TVET programmes remains low: This is also caused by the low number of female trainees enrolled. To address these challenges, some TVET institutes in Viet Nam have cooperated with the Centre for Employment Services (ESC) and enterprises to provide job counselling and to establish interlinkages with the labour market. International programme examples can provide suggestions for further interventions in the Vietnamese context.

#### Laos

In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) supported the government in the framework of the "Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project" ([Link](#), 2010-2017) to improve the TVET system in order to attain a highly skilled and diverse workforce. At the outset, girls made up nearly 40% of total enrolment in the TVET sector. They were, however, overrepresented in traditionally "female" occupations, such as tailoring and hospitality, and underrepresented in traditionally "male" occupations,

such as construction and mechanics. Besides activities to strengthen the quality of the TVET system through teacher training, new curricula and management trainings, the project aimed at breaking down gender stereotypes and at promoting women's involvement through outreach, incentives to sign up for unconventional training options and role models. Looking at the implemented activities, several lessons learned can be drawn. Regarding breaking down access constraints, the project targeted a greater participation of women in TVET programmes in non-traditional priority skills areas, in which women so far had not taken part. This was done by providing free-tuition vouchers. Moreover, the project included the construction of dormitories, with 50% of spaces reserved for girls, and a stipend for living costs. This deemed necessary as distance and the lack of suitable accommodations remained major constraints for girls and boys in remote areas to access TVET programmes. These initiatives were reinforced by a homestay outreach campaign (social marketing campaign) by TVET colleges in rural communities where family and cultural pressures had prevented girls from considering traditionally male vocational courses. In the end, even though the envisioned target of 20% women's participation in TVET programmes could not be reached, the project made some significant improvements, reaching around 6% of women's participation in TVET programmes in the skills area of construction, furniture making, and automotive and mechanical repair. The extremely low enrolment rate at the onset and the influence of the socio-cultural factors significantly constrained the enrolment of female students in the non-traditional skill areas.

Lessons learnt in facilitating a labour market transition can be seen in the fact that the project provided career guidance counselling to female students in the TVET programmes in the three non-traditional priority skills areas, including a mentoring programme for female students with female faculty and/or with women in related fields. These women met regularly with the female students to discuss job possibilities and workplace issues. This was aimed at reducing and preventing female isolation in male-dominated training classes. Moreover, the project strengthened ties between TVET institutions and the private sector and made a difference in the quality and relevance of courses, by shifting the focus to a blend of theory and hands-on-training to build students' competency. The project provided a 6-month wage subsidy to employers hiring women trained in the TVET programmes through the free-tuition voucher programme. This was aimed at encouraging the private sector to hire young women in non-traditional skill areas. In the end, about 75% of graduates of the TVET programmes in the non-traditional priority skills areas readily find work. Yet, no disaggregated data exists regarding the longer-term improvements made by the project for women in the field of labour market transition.

In total, the project contributed to breaking down gender stereotypes and providing female students in the non-traditional priority skills areas with the infrastructure, labour market-related networks and female role models needed for entering the workforce. This was seen as the prerequisite for a greater women's involvement into TVET programmes and their transition to the labour market, as it reduces the tendency of women to self-selecting themselves into traditionally female occupations which, in turn, influences employers'

recruitment practices. The project developed a gender action plan which successfully facilitated the integration of women's empowerment throughout the project's activities.

### **Costa Rica**

In the area of labour market transition, the ILO supported the national TVET institute (INA, Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje) in Costa Rica to develop a comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategy with the objective of improving the employability of women.<sup>19</sup> In the framework of the Spanish-funded project FOIL ([Link](#), Fortalecimiento de Sistemas Integrados de Formación, Orientación e Inserción Laboral) the INA conducted, in a first step, a gender analysis of the structure and procedures of the Costa Rican labour market and the services provided to the public. It showed that even though 50% of trainees are women, most training programmes showed a clear gender segregation, with trainees on a few programmes comprising 90% of a single sex. The programmes with strong female participation corresponded more often to lower-productivity, lower-paid and lower-status jobs. The gender analysis was a success factor which allowed for developing an INA gender policy including a five-year action plan (2013-17) and e.g., targeting a better labour market transition of women.

As mentioned above, based on these experiences, Costa Rica shared its approach with other national training institutions in Central America that collaborate in a network of training institutions (RedIFP, Red de Institutos de Formación Profesional). As a result, e.g., the national TVET institute in Panama carried out an assessment of women's access to and participation in TVET programmes. Based on the finding, it developed a road map to make the national TVET system more gender inclusive. This road map included short-term measures, such as information campaigns to challenge and change gender stereotypes around technical occupations and pilot courses in technical areas specifically targeting women. Long-term measures aimed to increase the number of female TVET instructors, as well introduce pilot childcare facilities in selected training centres.

### **Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand**

In Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, the ILO implemented the "Women in STEM Workforce Readiness and Development Programme" ([Link](#), 2017-2020) to strengthen linkages between private sector firms, employers' and workers' organizations, and TVET centres in order to, among others, improve the enrolment and school-to-work transition of women from STEM-related TVET programmes to the labour market.<sup>20</sup> The programme worked in three industries which were identified as projecting skills gaps and opportunities for women in the next decade.<sup>21</sup> Women in those industries across Southeast Asia often face challenges of placement in contrast to their male counterparts, due to gender bias in the hiring processes of firms. Therefore, the programme developed the following approach and line of action

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<sup>19</sup> Strengthening of Integrated Training, Orientation and Labour Integration Systems.

<sup>20</sup> Funded by the JPMorgan Chase Foundation.

<sup>21</sup> These are: the automotive and information and communications and technology (ICT) industry in Indonesia, the information and technology and business process outsourcing industry in the Philippines and the electrical and electronics industry in Thailand.

which focuses on tailor-made skills assessment and continuous collaboration with private sector: In consultation with the private sector, the programme identified in a first step the industry-specific skills needs and developed action plans for improving the employability of women. In a second step, women received capacity trainings tailored to their specific needs. This included pre-employment technical and employability skills training for female TVET graduates. Moreover, the programme facilitated job placements for women in STEM-related positions through a continuous collaboration with private sector firms throughout the program. This was accompanied by a mentorship programme organized by and within participating firms which aimed at strengthening the advancement of women workers through a work-based learning programme on critical soft skills, such as critical thinking, teamwork, and self-organization. The “ILO In Business training methodology” used for these programmes offered private sector firms training modules that apply activity-based and peer learning designed to empower female employees and to connect them with role models and mentors. Since the project started in 2019, more information on the outcomes is still required. Expected outcomes include 1) successful transition of underprivileged female vocational school graduates into STEM-related employment with sustainable career and livelihood prospects; 2) successful transition of women in low-skilled jobs to quality STEM-related employment with sustainable career and livelihood prospects; and 3) successful transition of mid-skilled women in STEM fields into leadership and management positions to ensure that women not only enter but also remain and get promoted in STEM fields.

Despite the missing information on the achieved outcomes, the project’s approach seems to be applicable in different institutional contexts and an important contribution for facilitating the successful transition of female vocational school graduates into STEM-related employment with sustainable career prospects.

## 5. Gender-sensitive TVET institutions

TVET institutional-level factors are significant for girls’ and women’s participation and achievement in STEM-related education. If there is no or few female teaching staff in STEM-related TVET or low representation of women in decision-making positions in TVET institutions, women’s needs and voices are at risk of being ignored. It has been argued that female visibility within TVET institutions and labour market organizations in the STEM-field influences the career choices of girls and women, providing e.g., for potential role models and having a positive influence on the workplace culture. UNESCO/UNEVOC (2020) underscores the complexity of the factors which play into facilitating gender parity at an institutional level. A holistic approach is needed to ensure for gender-sensitive TVET institutions, which should encompass the representation of women in the leadership and teaching staff, integrating a gender perspective into institutional development by e.g., applying gender analyses and gender checks, engaging with parents and other stakeholders, initiatives to change the culture of the institution including tackling gender stereotyping and harassment, the recruitment and retention of female staff, setting up a gender focal point network and processes of staff development.

Most interventions aimed at gender sensitive TVET institutions tend to focus on one or two distinct areas, such as teachers' development and awareness raising. These awareness raising interventions often also aim to tackle sexist working cultures including gender stereotyping, discrimination, and sexual harassment in the context of TVET institutions. Referring to evidence from Australia, Chile, and the Netherlands, UNESCO/UNEVOC (2020) suggests that unsafe learning and workplace environments are influential factors challenging the participation of girls and women in STEM-related TVET and the representation of women in TVET institutions.

### **Mozambique**

In **Mozambique**, the Instituto Superior Dom Bosco integrated gender and social inclusion modules into their TVET teachers training, which is based at the national Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Technical Teacher Training to create a workplace of zero-tolerance of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. The modules are not available online, but at the centre. Thus, teachers learn to understand gender and gender equality issues in the TVET system and how to create safe and conducive learning and working environments. In 2019/2020 a specific module was developed for TVET teachers in the areas of engineering (mechanical and electrical) and ICT.

It has also been shown that career guidance or career counselling can play a key role for a better representation of women in TVET institutions.

### **Lebanon**

UNESCO/UNEVOC (2020) refer to experiences in Lebanon of establishing guidance and employment centres which seems to have contributed to decreasing gender gaps<sup>22</sup>. They for example developed a broader TVET strategy. The strategy addressed the legal, technical and infrastructure barriers that currently constrain the inclusion of marginalized groups and to actively promote the increased participation of women in non-traditional occupations, through awareness campaigns and reasonable accommodation of their needs. An action plan on inclusive education and enrolment in TVET was subsequently developed and implemented to this effect.

### **The Netherlands**

In the Netherlands, case studies underscore the role of student counselling for student success in general and for the success of girls and women in particular. In the TVET institution "Deltion College", they implemented a specific policy measure related to supervision and counselling and organized frequent gender awareness training sessions for its teachers of technical study

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<sup>22</sup> UNESCO/UNEVOC (2020): Boosting gender equality in science and technology - A challenge for TVET programmes and career.

programmes on issues such as ‘school climate’, didactics, pedagogics, information events - all approached from a gender perspective. The programme on gender awareness and career counselling is currently being evaluated. First observations indicate that the programme steers towards a change in attitudes of teaching staff. This could be argued to create better learning environments as well as workplaces for female students as well as female teaching staff in TVET institutions.<sup>23</sup>

Studies have indicated that allowing for flexibility of working options, e.g., the possibility of part-time-positions, family-friendly conditions, and contextual factors might make working in TVET institutions for women more attractive and increase their representation as faculty member in TVET institutions (UNESCO/UNEVOC 2020). Contextual factors comprise the remoteness of TVET institutions and e.g., technical/industrial plants, the availability of transportation as well as appropriate facilities, such as sanitary facilities. More research on these issues is needed.

### **Ethiopia**

In Ethiopia, a project financed by KfW focused on strengthening 17 TVET institutions and included an investment for Early Childcare Centres set up at these education institutes ([Link](#)). In a participatory approach, which included the Gender Focal Points of the TVET institutions as well as staff members and other parties involved, Early Childcare Centres initiatives were developed. This aims at improving the possibility of female TVET staff members to build professional careers and advance into leadership positions as well as at reducing gender stereotypes on motherhood impeding a professional career in the TVET sector. Focus is also put on further capacity development for the Gender Focal Points and receiving support from the TVET top management for the project as well as triggering further improvements in the working conditions at the TVET institutions for a better representation of women.

Applying a broader gender mainstreaming approach requires integrating a gender perspective into the institutional development, which can be facilitated by applying gender analyses and gender checks and setting up a gender focal point network. In general, more research is needed to better understand the long-term effectiveness of targeted as well as of institution-wide interventions for enhancing girls’ and women’s participation and achievement in STEM-related education and establishing gender-sensitive TVET institutions.

### **The Netherlands**

Gender analyses and gender checks can be valuable tools for TVET institutions to facilitate mapping and analysing - both quantitatively and qualitatively - and thus identifying gender gaps and inequalities in the current organisational and management structures and

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

concluding on appropriate measures to address the gender disparities. As laid down in part 1) Enrolment, in the Netherlands, a learning ambassadors' network was created which originated in collaboration of the Dutch Council of TVET colleges and 17 TVET institutions. The learning ambassadors' network aims at lowering the threshold for girls within TVET institutes by implementing modern curricula, gender-inclusive career guidance, female role models, awareness raising and teachers' development. Moreover, a "gender scan" tool was developed which provides TVET institutes with recommendations for increasing gender equality in their institutional set-up. The gender scan consists of a quantitative analysis of the intake and qualified outflow of female students. It proved to be a success factor for applying a more institution-wide approach and tackling gender challenges in TVET institutes.

### **Bangladesh**

Gender Focal Point Networks can play a key role as a recognised channel for integrating knowledge-sharing, capacity development and learning on gender equality into the functioning of TVET institutions as well as providing peer-support for leadership and teaching staff on gender equality in the TVET institution. In Bangladesh, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) supported the government to develop a National Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality in TVET with the explicit aim of increasing female participation in TVET through systemic transformational measures. In order to operationalise this national strategy within TVET institutions, a Resource Guide ([Link](#)) was developed to facilitate organizational transformation within TVET institutions in order to enhance their gender responsiveness in all dimensions. It recommends setting up a Gender Focal Point Network composed of staff responsible for gender equality in their respective work units. Also, a central gender mainstreaming unit could be established with policy and programme responsibility and the mandate of guiding the overall gender mainstreaming process. No information is available on the success of the Resource Guide and the status of the development of Gender Focal Point Networks.

## **6. Recognition of prior learning**

As laid down in Chapter 1, women in Viet Nam are above average employed in the informal economy and lacking the necessary formal qualification for accessing employment in the formal economy. The recognition of prior learning (RPL), i.e., recognising part of a qualification (to then study further) or a full qualification, could be a key point in improving gender equality in the TVET system. This requires flexible pathways to qualifications and particular support for women. Some international examples of different methods to reduce inequalities based on privileging certain forms of knowledge could serve as guiding tool for developing RPL systems for women.

### **India**

In **India**, RPL focuses mainly on individuals with prior learning experience or skills engaged in unregulated sectors. It aims at enhancing the employability and/or entrepreneurial opportunities of individuals by evaluating and recognising skills and knowledge acquired outside the classroom (informal learning or learning through work). If necessary, in-depth preparation, so-called “bridge courses”, and financial incentives are offered.

### **Germany**

In **Germany**, Bertelsmann, together with various partners from the field of migration counselling, developed a visualized system for people with lower educational qualification or migrant background to visualise valuable previous experiences and qualifications, the so-called Competence Cards and Career Cards ([Link](#)). These offer a flexible, low-threshold introduction to the topic of skills identification and documentation as they illustrate social and personal skills. They use simple language descriptions, a visualisation, and translations in eight foreign languages for each skill and can be used, beyond the direct purpose of skills identification, for professional orientation, writing applications and CVs or generally empowering clients in communicating their strengths. Surveys show that the Competence Cards facilitate the documentation of the competence assessments and a more practice-oriented and less time-consuming counselling. The Competence Cards have the potential to contribute toward the development of a more comprehensive validation system in Germany and have triggered further projects, both analogue and digital, regarding multilingual picture-based skills assessment. They are particularly suitable for counselling people with migrant background and refugees but are also used with other target groups, such as persons with disabilities, long-term unemployed and youth.

## Chapter III – Recommendations for Viet Nam

### 1. Introductory notes and overall recommendations

The internationally agreed upon norm, when formulating recommendations to reach desired positive changes within a system, is that there is a need for an in-depth understanding of what causes the status quo.

Usually gender-based stereotypes and social and cultural norms affect, among others, access to trainings, selection and participation, teaching contents and approaches, the learning and work environment. However, designing specific measures to promote a non-gender stereotypical participation in study programmes (and later in employment), with a focus on women and girls, requires a better understanding of obstacles to their access, admission, participation, retention, and employment opportunities in traditionally “male” occupation fields.

Within the scope and timeline of this analysis, such information was available only to a limited extent. Thus, like most other related studies, this analysis reiterates the need to strengthen the national and sector-specific information management system, to regularly gather relevant data disaggregated by gender, age, (dis)ability and region, along with other indicators impacting the matter at hand – see specific recommendations below – as well as to process this information and make it accessible to the actors working in this field.

When root causes are difficult to identify and/or it takes a long time to study these, gathering quantitative and qualitative data (surveys) about what are the *perceived causes* and/or carrying out *situational analysis* (e.g., within institutions) can be a good start and can serve as a provisional orientation for policy, decision-making and the design of measures, their follow-up and evaluation.

Most studies on gender equality within technical and vocational education and training generally state or agree that a gender-sensitive and gender-responsive reform of the system, at the institutional, organisational, and cultural level and in relation to the skills demand on the labour market, is likely to reduce labour segmentation by gender. Having more inclusive working environments would, among others, increase the participation of women in non-gender stereotypical TVET programmes and occupations. Thus, this chapter touches upon possible gender-responsive measures for systematic change, linking it with relevant in-depth studies that have formulated concrete steps. However, it does not go into detail of how to perform every step, as this would be repetitive. Instead, this chapter focuses on specific recommendations to promote the sustainable participation of women and girls in technical fields of endeavour in which their participation is traditionally low.

As a note of caution, it needs to be mentioned that many recommendations for action formulated in this analysis were based on rather general information about barriers and challenges affecting gender (in)equality in TVET - some from the Chapter I of this analysis, others from studies carried out in other contexts. Furthermore, a part of the recommendations is sourced from the lessons learned and successful measures that have been implemented in other countries, as seen in Chapter II.

Although there are many similarities, the recommendations need to be critically re-assessed and discussed before being put into practice in Viet Nam, based on the local specificities and exchange with national and local institutions, organisations, experts, the private sector and, if possible, international partners. They may have another type of experience and information on the respective issues and/or some are possibly already implementing some of these measures and have gathered experience that can be discussed and shared.

To strengthen an enabling environment for girls and women to choose non-traditional vocational education and training and pursuing employment in their chosen fields, gender stereotypes need to be addressed through coordinated efforts between MoLISA and its relevant departments (especially DVET), TVET providers, civil society organisations and the private sector to enhance people's potential to contribute to the current and future skills needs for economic development.

From a wide range of possible recommendations, based on this analysis and gathered from various other studies, the following have been identified as having high importance and potential when it comes to promoting the participation of girls and women in non-gender stereotypical TVET.

## 2. Macro level – policies, regulations, and standards

### **Solid base of TVET data collection and use**

- When collecting TVET data and relevant labour transition and labour market data, including labour market skills demand<sup>24</sup>:
  - improve collection of relevant information (e.g., for employment: jobs, salary, situation of promotions and professional development opportunities, skills set etc. as well as for skills demand),
  - disaggregate by gender, wherever possible, along with age group, geographical area, (dis)ability status, religions, and other relevant factors to be able to analyse and draw

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<sup>24</sup> In Vietnam, gender disaggregated employment data is quite adequate and up to date. Labor force Survey are conducted monthly by the GSO and reported quarterly results. This dataset ensures legality and reliability with a scale of 16,880 households/month (50,640 households/quarter) but only provides a picture of labor-employment from the supply side. However, there is still a lack of information on labor market skills demand by gender, job vacancies by gender; data on career guidance, counseling, and job placement for female workers after TVET graduation and barriers to their employment in the labor market.

conclusions for each gender separately, thus being able to identify patterns specific to each gender and some information about occupational choices, progress, impact of the learning environment etc.,

- Develop mechanisms, tools, and capacity for enterprises to collect, share and provide gender-disaggregated information on labour and training needs in line with business development strategies.
- conduct gender analysis of effects of the digitalization for selected occupations, which results will be used to inform the TVET related policy advocacy.<sup>25</sup>
- Add in the annual TVET report a section on inclusion and gender equality, to cover among others, capacity development on the topic for research, data staff, information on measures to mainstream gender and so on.
- Gather and analyse data and information to understand the causes and status quo of girls' and women's low representation in male dominated TVET fields, in the main aspects listed below:

Regarding trainees:

- identify obstacles and determinants for women in TVET in general and in male dominated fields in particular when it comes to: choice of study programme - type, content and duration; access and enrolment, drop-out behaviour and decisive factors (to include personal preferences, families' and communities' roles, financial factors, distance to the training facility, timing of the classes, availability of gender-responsive, safe facilities in schools and residential homes, institutional factors and employment potential etc.),
- assess discriminatory behaviour and experience of sexual harassment/gender-based violence,
- gather quantitative data on enrolment and drop-out behaviour: to include number and percentage of male and female students by field of study, region of origin vs. location of study (rural vs. urban), (dis)ability status and other socio-economic factors deemed important and pertinent (e.g., civil status, a parent, ethnical minority ...).
- assess access to TVET programmes among both male and female workers, thus allowing the impact of policy solutions to be assessed, which support TVET for women. Such disaggregated data also allows for an assessment of which programmes women are more likely to enrol in, which programs they do not participate in, and the underlying reasons.
- collect gender disaggregated data to assess women's access to TVET institutions and see which training models and activities are more effective in supporting women making progress in their education and training. assess whether TVET programmes continue to orient women to female-dominated sectors and jobs, or whether progress

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<sup>25</sup> Taken over from the GIZ's project internal Gender Analysis.

has been made in advancement gender equality in decent work opportunities and women's access to more professions.

Regarding TVET personnel:

- assess gender segregation in employment: can be analysed from available information sources such as quarterly LFS (GSO), enterprise census (GSO), but also based on surveying perceptions (of female staff on own experience and of male staff on female employment and career development opportunities in TVET),
- assess work-related gender discrimination and experiences of sexual harassment and gender-based violence,
- identify reasons to choose a carrier as a TVET teacher, especially in non-stereotypical fields, and decisive factors to retention or change of employment.

Regarding transition to labour market and in employment (other than TVET staff):

- gather data on gender responsiveness of measures within the cooperation of TVET institutes, Centres for Employment Services, and enterprises to provide job counselling and connect with the labour market,
- gather data on women within the above-mentioned cooperation: training background and from which kind of VET programmes/institutions, percentage of successfully vs. unsuccessfully pursuing employment through this path, which kind of employment did they secure (in the field of study, related or unrelated; part-time vs. full time etc.), socio-economic factors. This can be linked to tracer studies as one of several quality assurance instruments in Viet Nam,
- analyse existing studies and data on employment practices, employers' gendered preferences and surveys of perceptions of people working or having worked in non-gender-stereotypical employment,
- assess work-related gender discrimination and experiences of sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

## **Developing policies, procedures, implementation frameworks and follow-up systems**

### *Mainstreaming gender in TVET policy development, procedures, and follow-up*

- Anchor gender sensitivity and mainstream gender equality in policy development through institutional quality assurance – through the Gender Equality Unit (in the case of MoLISA) and/or a Gender Focal Point/Gender Officer in each unit and institution that are mandated to develop national, regional, or own policies related to TVET and be part of impact assessments. This could be done, by 1) Developing a toolkit that allows MoLISA staff to check compliance of MoLISA legal documents to “TVET and gender responsiveness”. 2) Through training and communication projects/activities aimed to: Improve the capacity of DVET staff in compliance checking and skills to improve/ provide comments for

improvements of TVET legal documents towards gender responsiveness; 3) Raise awareness of DVET staff on the importance on gender equality objectives in TVET legal documents of DVET and awareness of other related stakeholders (at other Ministries) on the importance of this 4) Introduce gender budgeting (See also Chapter II - example of Spain for setting up a systematized commitment to gender equality)

- Introduce specific targets and indicators for gender equality goals in policy and institutional quality insurance, along with adequate guidance for implementation
- Monitor the implementation and impact of policy while always considering gender equality and gender impact
- Insure that the Gender Units and the Gender Focal Points are capacitated not only with knowledge, but also with sufficient time and, where relevant, financial means; insure that they are consulted and are enabled in a timely manner to give feedback on new policies, regulations, guidelines, social campaigns etc; enable them to represent their respective institutions in coordinating gender responsive approaches with other stakeholders such as actors from the private sector, international partners, other national and/or local institutions and participate in relevant coordination and assessment committees.
- To develop specific guidelines on gender mainstreaming in TVET policy development and tools and procedures for institutional quality assurance, gender impact assessments should address gender issues in depth. There is a need for strengthening capacities for gender impact assessment (see below recommendations of framework conditions and institutional gender mainstreaming/ Participatory Gender Audit) and regulations on gender equality for policy makers as well as for stakeholders who are implementing policies on the mesa and micro level.

### *Conduct Participatory Gender Audits*

To promote gender equality in TVET at a structural and organizational level, and a higher participation of women as teachers in technical fields, as well as their representation at various higher management levels (in male dominated sectors), this study proposes the use of the Participatory Gender Audit (PGA) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Since within the scope of this study no robust data and information was available on specific issues and systemic challenges faced by women in leadership roles and positions in TVET and their causes, nor do the available numbers show a particularly worrisome discrepancy between women and men in such positions, formulating specific recommendations at this point would be speculative. Carrying out Participatory Gender Audits, a tool that has been used successfully in various countries, fields and institutions can however deliver all the information needed to make decisions and design detailed, concrete approaches and strategies to promote desired positive change.

Unlike a financial audit, the Participatory Gender Audit (PGA) is not aimed at finding faults but is “a tool and a process based on a participatory methodology” and “it promotes

organizational learning on mainstreaming gender practically and effectively”<sup>26</sup>. The PGA analyses internal structures, strategies, practices (including HR practices) and related support systems for gender mainstreaming, their effectiveness and interrelatedness, “monitors and assesses the relative progress made in gender mainstreaming; establishes a baseline for the audited unit; identifies critical gaps and challenges” and “recommends ways of addressing them and suggests new and more effective strategies”, while “documenting good practices towards the achievement of gender equality”.

The information gathering consist of a desk study part, that considers the objective data and materials available and a part of carrying out interviews with staff at all levels, on their perceptions of the achievements and needs of gender equality in their organization.

It is recommended to carry out a PGA for each of a representative TVET institute (e.g., rural, and urban; those offering only short-term courses/elementary VET/secondary VET, national and regional level...), in order to be able to formulate recommendations and design approaches for various types of institutions that take into considerations their contextual or educational specificities.

The most effective approach would be to start by carrying out a Participatory Gender Audit at the highest state institution responsible with operationalising technical vocational education and training, namely DVET, while also carrying out such in depth analysis at least one the higher institution on a regional/province level. This has several advantages:

- provides valuable information on the needs and potential to mainstream gender and have a national institution that is highly gender responsive – thus, with time, the effects would spill over into the subsidiary institutions,
- offers DVET the opportunity to take over an exemplary role towards not only all the other TVET institutions, but also in relation to other national resorts and institutions,
- provides hands-on information to be used as the basis for decision, policies, and guidelines,
- provides DVET an experience on the process, to be able to set up guidelines for the local TVET institutions and anticipate challenges and support needs, among others.
- As an alternative or parallel approach, this analysis recommends another ILO study, regarding TVET reform in Bangladesh<sup>27</sup>. It contains a chapter on “*How to Initiate Gender Mainstreaming in TVET Institutions: A Practical Guide*” (P. 27 ff). Even though it was carried out in a different country, the recommendations and steps detailed in this chapter are pertinent to other contexts, in particularly the one of Viet Nam, as it shows a great number of similarities when it comes to TVET and gender challenges.
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<sup>26</sup> ILO (2012): A manual for gender audit facilitators: The ILO participatory gender audit methodology (2nd Edition), [https://www.ilo.org/gender/informationresources/WCMS\\_187411/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/gender/informationresources/WCMS_187411/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>27</sup>ILO (est. 2012), TVET Reform [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-dhaka/documents/publication/wcms\\_345696.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-dhaka/documents/publication/wcms_345696.pdf)

- Another, more accessible measure that could be undertaken with less means and time (although it may not be solid enough not reach a high effectivity) is to set up gender action plans in the institutions that carry out or manage TVET.

#### *Provide a framework for gender analyses at TVET institutes*

Set up a framework (with guidelines) to carry out gender analysis in TVET institutions that are willing to identify gaps and potential to promote gender equality within their procedures and trainings (related to attracting and enrolling students, developing courses and materials, creation of safe and gender responsive learning environments, HR, and career development policies etc.). This chosen framework or format (e.g. ILO's Participative Gender Audit or a simplified and adapted version of it, or a gender analysis like in Chile (see Chapter II.) should be developed/adapted and agreed upon in a consultative process with relevant actors (DVET, regional and local TVET institutions, NGOs and iNGOs, teachers and school managers' representatives, representatives of school staff, representatives of businesses and industries (the latter if the analysis will cover transition to the labour market, which is recommended). This framework should have a certain flexibility to be adapted to the specific local context and institution but contain unified procedures and topics to be covered whenever possible, as well as common tools for data collection (such as types of questionnaires, guidelines for interviews etc.), evaluation tools and so on. This way one can insure not only the quality of such analysis, but also comparable results, to be used in policy and decision-making.

- previously identify possible approaches that are already implemented in some regions/institution in Viet Nam, by local and or/international actors, to integrate these and/or gather feedback about the process,
- set up a specialist's team to support TVET institutes who want to carry out such analysis and have challenges or questions – to be easily accessible (e.g., per email) and effectively respond to requests for support,
- offer technical and financial support to enable such diagnostics and identification of potential processes to be carried out.

#### **Specific crosscutting policies and regulations**

- Develop/specify an anti-sexual-harassment and anti-gender-based-violence policy and specific regulations (it needs to be very clear what is sexual harassment and gender based violence and what is not) – in lines with the requirements to set up codes of conducts via the national regulating body – along with setting up clear, confidential and safe complaint mechanisms, both in TVET institutes as well as at higher levels (for cases when complaints cannot be solved within the institution, e.g. when the perpetrator is at the top of the hierarchy) – to be set up in coordination with decision makers, as well as representatives, of teachers, students and other school staff and, if possible, a local women's rights/gender

equality organisation; regularly check, update where needed and analyse these internal codes/policies regarding effectiveness

- Review policies for teacher qualification and review possibilities for integrating gender more prominently in initial teacher qualification or further training for teachers and TVET staff/ managers.

### 3. Practice oriented policies and procedures to support non-gender-stereotypical choice of TVET programme, career, and job options

#### **Support students in the choice and completion of a training programmes**

- Offer incentives for students to select and complete vocational education and training in sectors and occupations that are dominated by the other gender - also based on market needs (see below)
- Construction of dormitories, with 50% of spaces reserved for girls, and a stipend or subsidies for living costs. This is deemed necessary as distance and the lack of suitable accommodations remained major constraints for girls and boys in remote areas to access TVET programmes. In particular, a too large distance between homes and the training location has been shown in different studies to often cause dropouts of girls/young women (see also below, bullet points on facility management and institutional culture).

#### **Improve career counselling and enrolment promotion**

- The Prime Minister has approved the Project "Vocational education and student stream orientation in general education in the period of 2018 - 2025" (Decision No. 522/QĐ-TTg dated May 14, 2018): to 2025. To achieve the targets, one of the main solution tasks is to promote career counselling for school students. MoLISA is being assigned by the Government to develop a circular stipulating career counselling, employment, and start-up support for students of vocational education. It is recommended that gender issues should be taken into consideration such as developing gender-oriented career counselling materials.
  - Provide financial and technical support for TVET institutes to implement gender equality initiatives (from attracting more female students in enrolment to technical trades via Girls' Days and scholarships<sup>28</sup>, to career services after graduation);<sup>29</sup>
- Set up a special framework (with guidelines), backed up with financial means, for TVET institutes on how to support students to select and complete programmes in the trades

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<sup>28</sup> As this study focuses on promoting girls' and women's participation in technological TVETs, this recommendation only refers to female. However, in order for discrimination against boys to be avoided, it is recommended for the same support to be available when it comes to male applying for female-dominated jobs.

<sup>29</sup> Recommendation taken over from the GIZ project's Gender Analysis

that are non-stereotypical (e.g., men in nursing and healthcare, women in automobile engineering) – the guidelines can contain for example:

- the “how to” of: setting up gender sensitive career counselling, setting up cooperation with local enterprises to regularly organise orientation days for girls to try out “typically male” jobs, the designing of such measures, designing training schedules that allow students to attend classes and participate in such orientation programmes at the same time, organising visit programmes of role models from such trades to make presentations and carry on discussions with groups separated by gender, in an environment where students feels safe to ask questions and so on.
- the “how to” of developing trade-specific training and job descriptions leaflets/social media ads etc. in cooperation with job centres and local enterprises to help students with professional choices (as well as school counsellors). E.g., if someone is trained in programming, the leaflet should contain information about how the training would look like, what are the required skills, timely commitment, theoretical vs. practical part and, most importantly, information about what kind of jobs are usually available in that region for someone with such skills. Promotional materials should include representative images of a variety of people, including men and women, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities etc.
- Cooperate with education state agencies, industry and business chambers and private sector representatives to improve career counselling in lower and upper secondary general education based on actual skills needs and trends on the market: this could include increased possibilities for internships, or preparatory vocational education measures, for example models to offer middle schools students the possibility to try out different occupations by studying and getting practical experience in an enterprise at the same time (similar to dual training), for a relevant period of time, like 6 months to a year -see also the point below on orientation formats.

#### **Improve non-stereotypical employment choices and options for TVET teachers**

- Offer incentives for women who choose to teach in TVET institutes trades usually assigned to men (e.g., by offering free room and board, gender responsive facilities, equitable remuneration and advancement opportunities, flexible working hours to balance family and professional life, access to childcare facilities etc.). Similarly like in the case of female teachers, studies showed that a too large distance between the living and the training location often causes job changes by female TVET teachers, to be closer to their families.

#### **Cooperate with the private sector to facilitate career choice and transition to the labour market**

- Set up incentives for the private sector to offer 3-6 months long, paid internships to support people entering trades untypical to their gender or, in general, to support employment of women in male-dominated trades.

- Set up collaborations with the private sector to organise orientation formats (workshops/ weeks/days or a combined school + practical work concept) to encourage girls to approach male dominated fields, while being supported by gender sensitive supervisors from the respective trade – this enables girls to experiment among their peers and in a low-pressure, non-committed manner (see Chapter II., The Netherlands’ [gender scan](#)).
- Set up special incentives for employers to hire women graduates from TVET schools, especially in “traditionally male” fields, while offering them equitable remuneration and professional development opportunities. Depending on the exact context/company/field and the partner implementing the measures, the incentives could be e.g.:
  - tax reduction,
  - support in setting up early child centres/day-care/childcare centres at the working place (or for a group of enterprises, in the case of the small/medium ones) to enable balancing family responsibilities and work/training (see Chapter II, Ethiopia example), e.g., with technical expertise, staff and if possible/needed financially or with subsidies/ additional tax returns or reduction,
  - providing a 3–6-month wage subsidy to employers for each women hired who was trained in the TVET programs in non-traditional skill areas (example of ADB in Lao).

(See further measures in subchapter 3, related to cultural and institutional change)

### **Training formats**

- Review regulations and set up policies for flexible training times and means, so that women can also participate in trainings in the evenings or weekends, as many have (another) job or domestic and caretakers’ roles that limit their time and availability.
- Review regulations and set up policies for modular trainings and their official recognition, so that people who are forced to interrupt the training due to adverse life situations, illness, parenthood, or other impediments can continue it later without losing (much of) the progress reached.

### **Training access requirements**

- Review general education requirements for access to TVET (for example having to have graduated upper secondary to be able to be trained on college level). Easier access will support women to gain formal qualifications more easily.
- Review permanent residence requirements for being eligible for TVET support programmes (especially regarding female migrant workers).
- Set up flexible mechanisms to recognize prior learning or of a part of a qualification and/or experience (to then take further training) or a full qualification (see also Chapter II, examples of India, Germany).

See also above the recommendation on setting up modular trainings, to reduce the effects of drop-out forced by life circumstances and enable people (mostly women) to

continue training/ build up qualifications when their situation allows it - thus also the recognition of training modules, despite not having completed a whole cycle.

- Set up public-private partnerships and/or networks to encourage employers to offer apprenticeships and jobs for women graduates – to include not only state actors and industry representatives, but also civil society and women’s organizations, and with the participation of relevant international partners.
- Develop and carry out country-wide communication and awareness-raising campaigns for potential trainees and their families/communities on the one hand, and for employers on the other hand, to inform about the measures to promote gender equality in TVET and access to more professions, beyond the ones traditionally assigned to women or to men, as well as on the progress of these measures and:
  - develop guidelines for other actors to conduct such communication campaigns,
  - encourage localized social marketing/advocacy campaigns to reach out to community members and families, particularly in rural areas, inform on policy incentives and provisions for women in TVET, while also discussing concerns and potential advantages (see also subchapter 3 below, promoting comprehensive approaches and progressive cultural change)
  - keep in mind that those who break gender norms are often socially sanctioned – include support if needed.

Important note: Policy and social advocacy must target the problem, which are the gender norms and perceptions that are deeply entrenched in the society and partly into policies and employers’ mentalities. Along with individual preferences, these influence study fields of boys and girls and career choices of men and women. Approaches focusing solely on promoting women (e.g., in this case leaving out men suffering from gender stereotypes in career choice) carry the implications that men are to be blamed or that they are disadvantaged in this process. Thus, a focus needs to be put on showing that all genders suffer from the existent gender norms, often with a stronger negative impact on women and on encouraging changes of mindsets and culture(s).

#### 4. Promote and support cultural change and a comprehensive approach towards gender equality in general and in TVET in particular

When promoting the participation of female trainees in non-traditional programmes, it is not sufficient to guarantee access and support retention. The actors involved in implementing such measures need to ensure that the students will be able to succeed in completing their training, protected from discrimination and violence. Additionally, when young women are encouraged to participate in a specific vocational programme (respectively their families encouraged to support them), one needs to ensure that the chances to get decent employment with an appropriate remuneration after completing the course are high enough – thus the support needs to be serious and appropriate. This is important on the one hand as

to not raise false hopes and create disappointment, on the other hand to establish successful precedents. This way, it is more likely that former trainees would promote other girls' and women's participation in vocational education and training in male dominated fields.

Thus, the approaches and the actions taken need to be coordinated and complimentary, taking into consideration the whole training to employment cycle and supporting the trainees until reaching gainful employment.

Another note of caution needs to point out that measures should not increase the burden on the people "supported". In the case of promoting the participation of women in male-dominated trades this would mean to not encourage women to perform jobs the same way that men do or attempt to reach the same kind of "success", as long as their roles and responsibilities within their respective social structure cannot be adapted to enable them to do so - thus avoiding having to respond to multiple, perhaps unmanageable challenges.

The efforts to align measures in a comprehensive and systematic way, which keeps in mind the whole cycle that a person would have to go through (from the times preceding training selection all the way to sustainable and gainful employment) need to be accompanied by measures to support change in attitudes and behaviours, as well as institutional and overall cultural change towards progressively embracing gender equality.

### **Promote an overall and institutional culture of gender equality and non-tolerance to discrimination**

- To encourage enrolment, attendance, and completion of trainings, create gender sensitive and responsive learning environments. Even when not having the possibility to carry out a gender assessment/audit, institutions can consider the following potential measures:
  - where not existent yet, set up a code of conduct, to include anti-discrimination and anti-gender-based-violence and -sexual harassment provisions; regularly follow up on its effectiveness and take improvement measures
  - install a culture of zero-tolerance behaviour towards sexual harassment/assault, which primarily affects girls and women,
  - set up mechanisms for complaints of discrimination in training/grading and support structures in TVET institutions,
  - active/regular information of trainees and personnel about these codes and mechanisms.
  - when logistically planning, developing, and managing facilities, include, wherever doable, gender-responsive spaces and spaces reserved for girls and women, e.g., dormitories, women-only showers and toilets, lit up alleys, door guardians etc (see also point above, subchapter 2. on procedures to supporting students' TVET participation and women teachers in TVET).
- Support/design intervention and activities on gender equality that effectively engage men, particularly the ones in leadership positions. According to the project's Gender analysis, in

Viet Nam gender equality is often seen as women's empowerment and it is considered by some to be the responsibility of Women's Union and CFAWs only. By working together with men, they can co-create "win-win" solutions and be change agents in promoting gender equality and women's rights, instead of feeling excluded or threatened.

- Promote career guidance activities and develop career guidance materials with attention to attracting women into TVET education, while combatting gender stereotypes, since career guidance or career counselling can play an important role for a better representation of women in TVET institutions (see. Chapter 2 example on the Netherlands). Design methods (social media campaign etc.) to approach families and communities for improved enrolment and access for girls, by educating and sensibilizing about TVET institutes and training programmes.

### **Promote gender equality in and through TVET programmes**

- Supporting TVET institutes to adapt training programmes and activities in line with international labour standards related to gender equality<sup>30</sup> and ensure that a gender focal point of the TVET institute participates in the training programme, the drafting of standards, follow up of compliance and, in general, in appraisal committees.
- When designing and advertising trainings programmes, in order to offer potential students concrete support and encouragement to enrol in TVET, offer a short practical course or an introductory workshop with work experience so that students can try out occupations with openness and without pressure (see also above, subchapter 2.: the respective recommended policies and procedures to support non-gender-stereotypical choice of TVET programme, career and job options).
- The location, accessibility and convenience of the training sessions appear to be some of the important determinants of attendance. Thus, whenever possible, insure conducting trainings at times and locations convenient and safe for all genders, including for women in charge of childcare and household duties.
  - If/when possible, offer mobile training units to reach out to people in rural areas (especially women with limited time and mobility means)
  - sensitise principals/managers/training organizers/ teachers for the need to take into consideration such gender-specific aspects/ challenges when planning and/or changing training times, duration, and locations.
- Integrate gender equality in learning materials, pedagogical approaches, and teaching processes (quality assurance of training and training materials, gender sensitive teaching methods- including capacity development of teachers, inclusion of gender equality contents in training programmes), to make it more accessible for women and girls.
- Provide trainees with soft skills training such as communication, leadership, assertiveness, and teamwork - especially those choosing a non-gender-stereotypical field

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<sup>30</sup> Recommendation taken over from the GIZ project's Gender Analysis

- Review the possibility to integrate gender equality modules into the general education parts of the training
- Encourage female TVET teachers and administrators to participate in training courses to improve professional capacity, management skills, and foreign languages. Attracting and developing a team of domestic and foreign scientists and experts to participate in scientific research and management activities at TVET institutions in Vietnam.

### **Attitudinal, behavioural, and institutional change regarding the transition to the labour market and sustainable employment**

- Provide gender awareness training (or access to it if offered by other actors) to career guidance counsellors at TVET schools and general education institutions and facilitate change of social and cultural attitudes, for female trainees to be more likely to receive objective, non-biased but realistic advice.
- Promote female role models in technical training fields and occupations, e.g., in cooperation between the business sector, TVET institutes, civil society organizations, (social) media; consider setting up mentoring programmes or networks for female students, to be consistently supported and advised by women professionals in their chosen fields.<sup>31</sup>
- Support gender responsive councils for cooperation between the state, private sector, and civil society (see also 3.2) by:
  - supporting the equitable participation of men and women in such councils,
  - “scanning” the gender sensitivity of such councils and assess the capacity development needs in terms of gender,
  - including gender sessions in the capacity building measures,
  - choosing gender sensitive moderators of the councils’ meetings and include gender equality points in the terms of reference,
  - when setting up new councils, (e.g., currently at the provincial and national level), engage in developing the gender awareness and capacity of both TVET providers and employers.
- Sensitize the employers regarding some constraints faced by women workers: “need for flexibility in working hours, need to balance work and domestic life, fear of sexual harassment, and lack of social benefits based on perception of women as secondary workers or subsidiary labour at the workplace”<sup>32</sup>, and if/where pertinent, offer

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<sup>31</sup> Accessibility might be especially important. In interviews carried out for Chapter 1 of this study, there seem to be the belief that many young women and girls do not have a positive image of women in leadership positions in their field of preference – thus the personal contact may enhance their interest and confidence to set up similar professional goals.

<sup>32</sup> ILO (2012 est.): TVET Reform: Gender Mainstreaming into Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Bangladesh.

incentives<sup>33</sup> to employers that hire women while promoting employment responsive to gender-specific challenges; coordinate with other agencies to improve career opportunities for women in companies.

- Demonstrate potential economic gains from promoting gender equality and women's participation in TVET and technical occupations in the digital economy.<sup>34</sup>
- Award a yearly prize for companies with gender responsive employment and training policies and practices and/or setting up a gender and diversity quality label initiative to recognise the performance of employers, accompanied by public/media campaigns to recognise and encourage performance - by categories for each: micro, small, medium, and large businesses
- Building up on existing measures taken by companies to promote a positive image (e.g., their own Corporate Social Responsibility measures)

(Note: The last three recommendations look at cultural change as a win-win situation, as employers too would have gains in terms of marketing and promoting a positive image.)

- Strengthen linkages between private sector firms, employers', and workers' organizations, and TVET centres to, among others, improve the enrolment and school-to-work transition of women from STEM-related TVET programmes to the labour market.

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<sup>33</sup> It can be argued that one should not offer incentives to an economic entity to "do the right thing", as they are already earning through the work of these employees. But it needs to be considered that, in terms of investment and gains, in many cases it is less profitable to maintain part-time or flexible positions etc. Thus, from an economic perspective, it can be seen as legitimate for these entities to expect some kind of compensation.

<sup>34</sup> Taken over from GIZ's project internal Gender Analysis.

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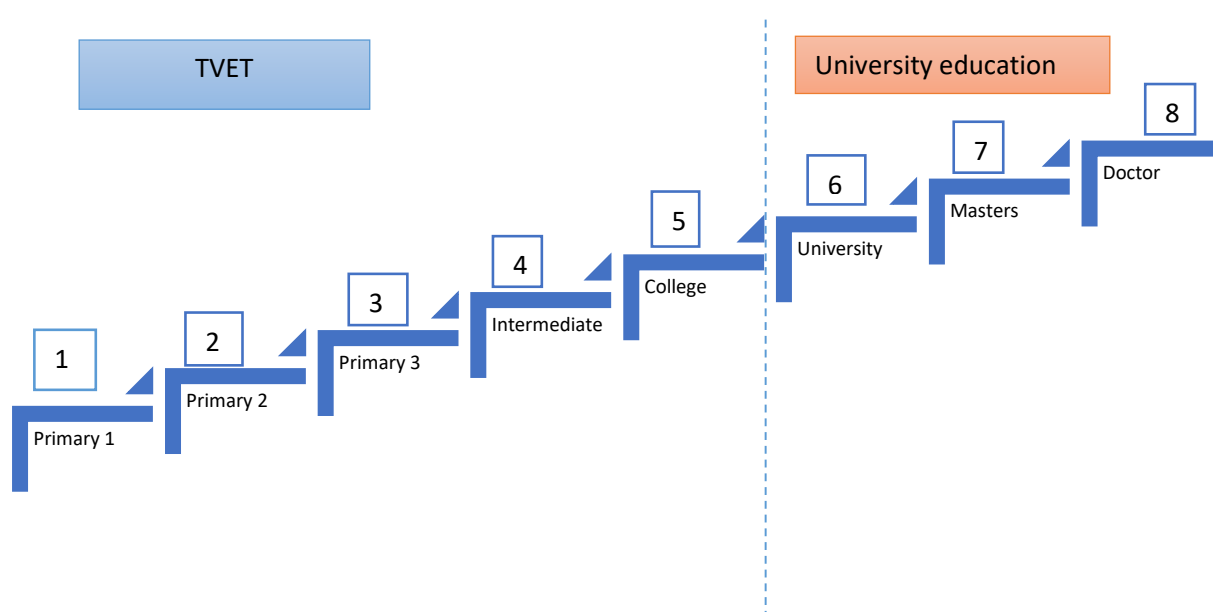
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## ANNEX: Background Information on Viet Nam's TVET System

### System Structure, Governance

According to the provisions of Decision No. 1982/QĐ-TTg dated October 18, 2016, of the Prime Minister, the National Qualifications Framework of Vietnam includes 8 levels, of which 5 levels belong to the training levels of TVET.

Figure 1. Vocational education qualifications in the Vietnam National Qualifications Framework

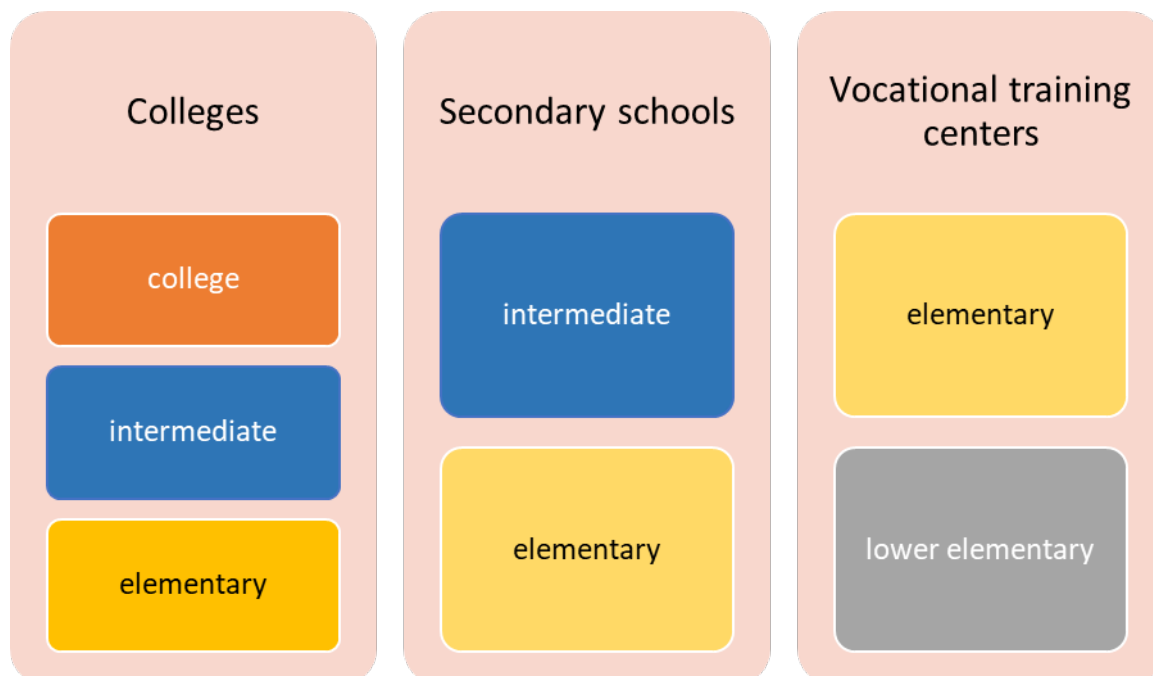


Up to the end of 2016, a dual TVET governance structure offered two distinct tracks in parallel. Institutions supervised by the MOLISA offered formal vocational education and training at three levels for secondary school graduates: (i) elementary TVET (3–12 months) at TVET centers (VTCs), (ii) intermediate TVET (3–4 years or 1–2 years depending on entrance qualifications of lower secondary and upper secondary graduates) at vocational secondary schools, and (iii) higher TVET at vocational colleges (3 years). Respective training certificates are awarded at elementary and intermediate TVET and a diploma for those who completed training at vocational college level. VTCs also offered nonformal skills training (up to 3 months) for unemployed youth and workers. On the other hand, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) institutions provided formal technical and professional training in professional secondary schools and technical colleges as well as some short-term TVET. Resolution No. 76/NQ-CP dated 3 September 2016 (Article 14) took effect on 1 January 2017, merging both tracks into one system under MOLISA's Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET), which now acts as the single central "state management" agency for TVET governance.

### Network of TVET institutions

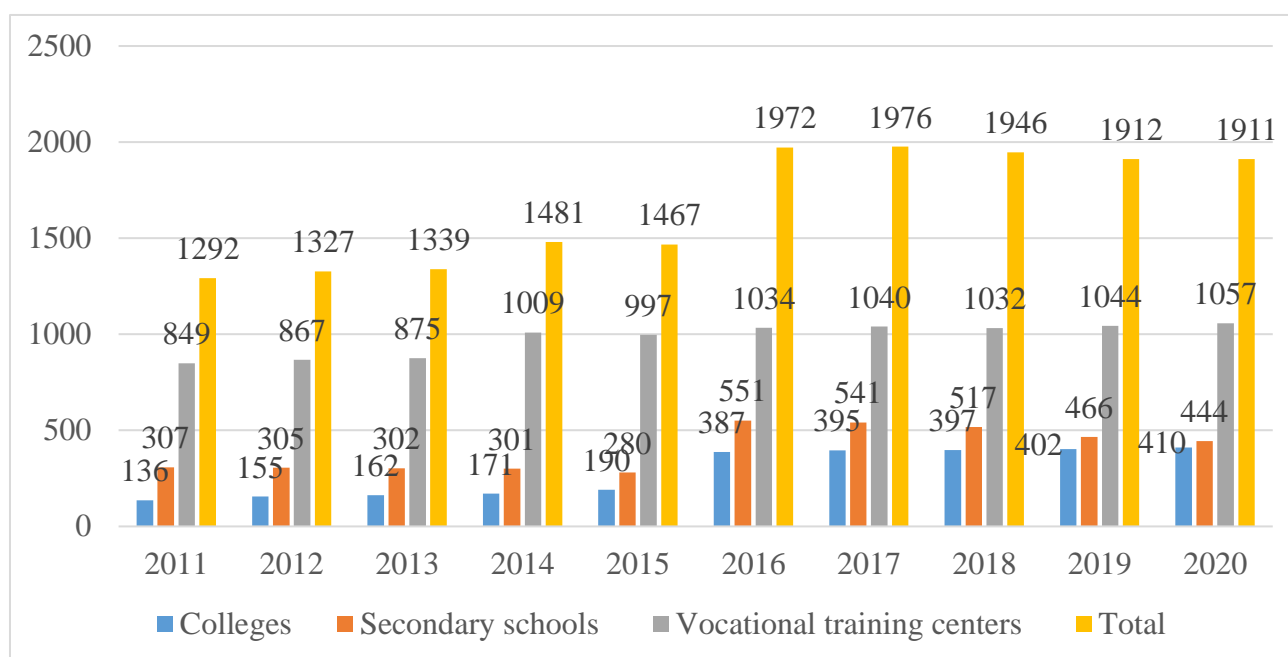
VET institutions include Vocational education centers, intermediate schools, and colleges to train all levels of VET.

Figure 3: Functions of TVET institutes



In the period 2011-2020, the number of TVET institutes (including former TVET institutions) has continuously increased in number, developing widely in localities throughout the country. By the end of 2020, the total number of TVET institutions nationwide is 1.911, an increase of 1,5 times compared to 1.292 institutions in 2011.

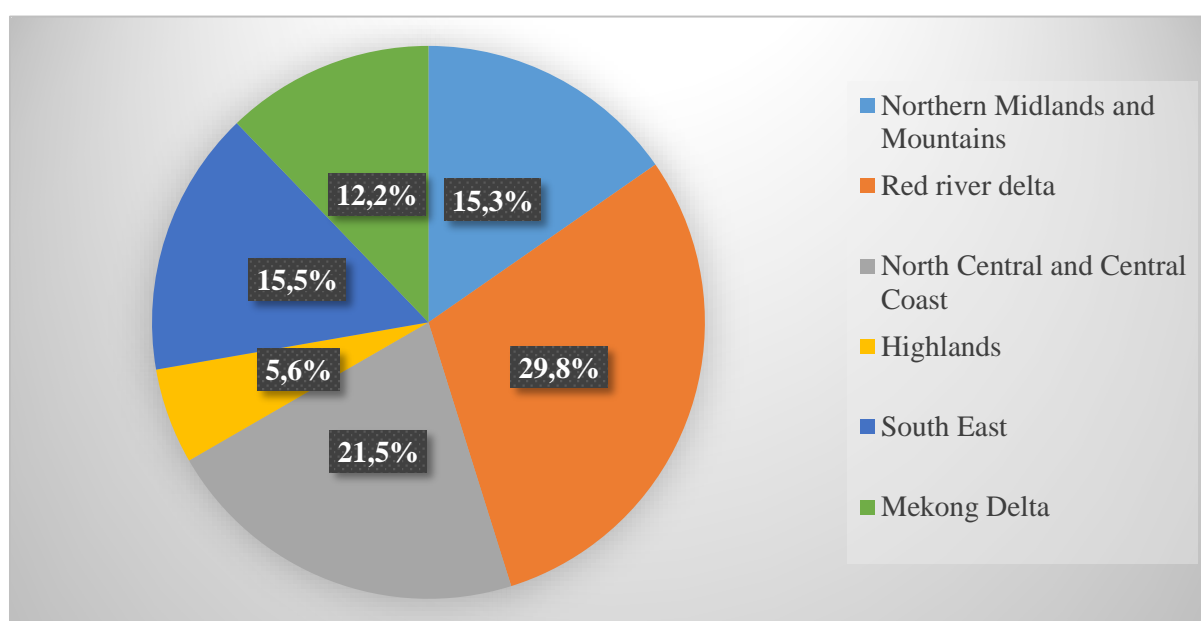
Figure 4: Number of TVET Institutions by training level, 2011–2020



Source: Authors' calculations from 2020 DVET's report.

But TVET institutions are unevenly distributed among regions. TVET institutions are mainly concentrated in the Northern provinces, specifically, by the end of 2020, the Red River Delta has 570 institutions (29, 83%), and followed by the Northern Midlands and Mountains with 291 establishments (15, 23%) and the North Central and Central Coast have 441 establishments (21, 51%). The Central Highlands region has the lowest number of TVET institutions with 107 institutions (5, 6%).

Figure 5: Proportion of TVET Institutions by regions, 2020



Source: Authors' calculations from 2020 DVET's report.

According to the type of ownership: TVET institutions are formed in 3 types: (1) Public: A public TVET institution is an establishment owned by the State, invested and built by the State; (2) Private: A private TVET institution is an establishment invested and built by socio-professional organizations, private economic organizations or individuals; (3) Foreign: Foreign-invested TVET institutions include establishments with 100% capital of foreign investors; joint venture between domestic and foreign investors. In fact, most TVET institutions are public, non-public TVET institutes have a slow development, especially foreign-invested TVET institutions account for only a small percentage. By the end of 2020, out of 1.911 TVET institutions across the country, there are 1.223 public institutions, accounting for 63%, 681 private institutions accounting for 36%, and 7 foreign-invested institutions accounting for less than 1%.

### **Training field**

TVET in Vietnam has the most diversity in terms of training professions, in the national education system. With about 825 intermediate-level occupations, 559 college-level occupations in 21 fields, and 90 training occupations, covering all sectors of the economy, not to mention thousands of elementary-level occupations and other short-term training programs.

In addition to the field of engineering, technology such as computers, information technology, engineering technology; architecture and construction; production and processing; Agriculture, forestry, fisheries; environment and environmental protection... there are many other fields such as teachers; culture and arts; languages (English, German, French, Japanese...); information journalism; business and management; law; health (medical); social services, transportation services; hotel tourist; national security, etc.

### **Training programme and organization**

According to the Law on Vocational Education and Training (2015), the State does not promulgate a framework program but assigns TVET institutions to independently develop training programs based on the learning outcomes of each profession promulgated by the state.

In a training management organization, in addition to annual (traditional) training, there will be two new training methods: module-based training and credit-based training. TVET institutes have the right to choose training methods according to the conditions of each institution.

According to this training method, the TVET system will be an open, flexible system, ensuring favourable connection between training levels in the same profession or with other occupations or connecting to a higher level in the system national education system; Learners are considered to be the centre of the training process, learn according to individual's capacity, conditions and circumstances, can learn many contents in the same time, and are recognized in the form of accumulating competencies; Learners can shorten or prolong the learning time completely depending on the capacity, conditions and circumstances of the individual learner.

## Policy for learners

Tuition waiver policy: Students are exempt from tuition fees if they fall into the following categories:

- Learners at the intermediate and college levels are those with meritorious services to the revolution and relatives of those with meritorious services to the revolution; ethnic minorities in poor households, near-poor households; there are very few ethnic minorities people living in areas with difficult and extremely difficult socio-economic conditions; orphans of both parents, without support.
- People graduating from lower secondary school (secondary school) continue to study at the intermediate level.
- Learners of intermediate and college levels, for professions and professions that are difficult to enrol but are in demand by society; learners of particular professions and professions meeting the requirements of socio-economic development, national defence, and security.

Support policy: Learners are supported by the state if they fall into the following categories:

- Learners who are women and rural workers when participating in elementary level training programs and training programs for less than 3 months are supported with training costs as prescribed.
- Students graduating from boarding junior high schools for ethnic minorities, upper secondary schools for ethnic minorities, and boarding schools for ethnic minorities may be recruited directly to public intermediate schools and colleges.
- Learners are ethnic minorities belonging to poor households, near-poor households, people with disabilities; learners are Kinh people belonging to poor households, near-poor households or people with disabilities, have permanent residence in areas with extremely difficult socio-economic conditions, ethnic minority areas, border and maritime areas, islands; Students of boarding high schools for ethnic minorities, when participating in training programs at intermediate and college levels, are entitled to boarding policies as prescribed.

## Policy of using, honouring

- Graduates are recruited into state agencies, socio-political organizations, public non-business units, armed forces according to regulations; priority is given to those with excellent diplomas or higher.
- To be entitled to a salary as agreed with the employer based on the job position, capacity, and working efficiency, but must not be lower than the base salary, minimum salary or starting salary for the employee jobs or titles that require intermediate or college degrees as prescribed by law.
- Learners graduate from college, are awarded a college degree and recognized title: Bachelor of practice or practicing engineer.

## Other policies for learners

- During the course of study, if the learner goes to military service or because of illness, accident, unwell maternity, or family has difficulties and cannot continue studying or working, his/her results will be reserved study and be returned to continue learning to complete the course. The reserved period is 05 years.
- The knowledge and skills that learners accumulate in the process of working and the learning results that have been accumulated during the study at recognized levels and do not have to be re-learned when participating in other programs other training.
- The State has policies on TVET for workers to be sent to work under contracts abroad. In case a person studying at a TVET institution goes to work under a contract abroad, his/her study results will be preserved. Retention period is 5 years.
- Winners in national skills contests, ASEAN regional skills contests or international skills contests shall be commended and rewarded according to the provisions of law.

#### **Policies for vocational education institutions**

According to the Law on Vocational Education, TVET institutions have a number of additional support and preferential policies of the State such as:

- Tax incentives according to the provisions of tax law; tax exemption for the undivided income of establishments carrying out socialization in the field of TVET left for development investment.
- Tax exemption or reduction as prescribed for profits earned from products and services generated from training activities; tax incentives for production, business, and service activities suitable to training activities, publication of textbooks and teaching materials, production, and supply of training equipment, import of books, newspapers and financial resources training materials and equipment.

TVET institutions, regardless of public or private, are allowed to participate in bidding, receive training orders from the State in accordance with the law on bidding, and order the provision of public non-business services using the budget. government; get preferential loans from domestic and foreign programs and projects; to participate in training programs for teachers and VET managers at home and abroad with funding from the state budget.

In addition, TVET institutions have improved their autonomy and self-responsibility, such as: TVET institutions using the state budget are entitled to decide on the mobilization, use of capital and assets associated with their assigned tasks. assigned to expand and improve the quality of training; autonomy and self-responsibility for the management and use of assets formed from sources outside the state budget. Foreign-invested TVET institutions are autonomous in their organizational structure. Public TVET institutions are self-financed with all operating costs for recurrent expenditures and investment expenditures, which are fully autonomous and self-responsible; may recruit, employ, and manage teachers, officials, and employees, decide by themselves the number of people working, and decide to pay wages according to work efficiency and quality.

## **Policies with businesses when participating in TVET activities**

Enterprises participate in TVET activities as an entity with the same rights and responsibilities in TVET activities.

Enterprises are allowed to set up TVET institutes; be held training at primary level and regular training; may participate in the council of colleges, public intermediate schools, the governing boards of colleges and private intermediate schools; participate in building the list of training industries and occupations; building training programs and curricula; organizing teaching, guiding practice, assessing the learning results of learners at TVET institutions; to coordinate with TVET institutions to organize training at elementary, intermediate, and college levels and regular training programs; training is carried out according to the orders of TVET institutes, orders of the State.... and is exempt from corporate income tax for the entire cost of TVET activities.

### **Training quality assurance conditions**

- The number of TVET teachers has increased rapidly in number, quality, gradually reaching the standards of training qualifications, vocational skills, and pedagogical capacity; a part of teachers teaching key occupations at international level are trained abroad. More than 50% of teachers in secondary schools and colleges can teach integrated (both theory and practice). A network of VET pedagogical training and retraining institutions for teachers has been established<sup>35</sup>.

- TVET management staff, including the state management of VET and the management of TVET institutions, have appropriate professional qualifications, are interested in, trained, and fostered to improve their professional qualifications and knowledge, management skills<sup>36</sup>, meet the standards step by step. In particular, a part of management staff has been trained and fostered in the country according to international programs and trained abroad (Australia, Germany, Korea, USA ...) <sup>37</sup>.
- According to the Law on Vocational Education, training programs are actively developed and promulgated by TVET institutions. The development of training programs is based on the minimum amount of knowledge and capacity requirements that learners achieve after graduation (Learning outcomes)<sup>38</sup>. On the basis of learning outcomes, TVET institutions have coordinated with enterprises to develop training programs that are more flexible, more suitable to the practice of using human resources of enterprises. Cooperated with international organizations to pilot the development of advanced training programs of a number of developed countries such as France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland. At the

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<sup>35</sup> Forming a network of 45 TVET and retraining institutions in VET pedagogy for teachers, including universities of technical education, research institutes, and colleges with VET pedagogical faculties.

<sup>36</sup> There are 20,627 VET managers nationwide (in which: 1,438 state managers and 19,189 managers of TVET institutions).

<sup>37</sup> Take 45 Principals/Vice Principals of CLC colleges and 582 teachers for training and retraining abroad to teach occupations transferred from abroad (including: 318 teachers for training) in Australia and 264 teachers went to Germany for training).

<sup>38</sup> By the end of 2020, 600 regulations have been developed, appraised, and issued with 600 regulations on the minimum amount of knowledge, the requirements on competencies that learners can achieve after graduation (output standards) for 300 training professions and occupations. created at intermediate and college levels; pilot building output standards for 17 occupations from levels 1-3.

same time, it has transferred sets of training programs. of Australia and the Federal Republic of Germany. The transfer of programs and textbooks has also been implemented in a number of projects with ODA loans from the French and Korean Governments<sup>39</sup>. Many TVET institutes have implemented high-quality training programs and associated programs with foreign training institutions<sup>40</sup>.

- Training methods are gradually renewed, applying training technology and information technology to teaching and learning activities; change the direction of passive teaching to the active, active direction of learners and towards individualization.
- The first step to implement digital transformation in management and training organization<sup>41</sup>, has built shared software in training and piloted the digitization and simulation of training equipment for a number of occupations. Since 2019 due to the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, TVET activities have had changes in enrollment with diverse and diverse forms, in online teaching organizations...
- Training facilities and equipment are invested according to the list of minimum training equipment and training programs<sup>42</sup>; a number of key industries and trades are invested in synchronous, modern, and advanced equipment suitable to enterprises' production technology in the context of Industry 4.0. The promulgation of economic - technical norms<sup>43</sup> for industries and professions, contributing to the initial reform of financial management mechanism from allocating regular operating funds to ordering training according to output for TVET institutions. Schools participating in the ODA project are invested in synchronous equipment, approaching regional and international standards, and factories are built/upgraded according to standards to receive equipment and meet training needs.
- High-quality training is promoted, pilot training has been organized according to the sets of transfer programs<sup>44</sup> from Australia, Germany. After graduating from school, students are granted 02 diplomas (degrees in Vietnam and the country of transfer), capable of participating in the international Labor market.
- The link between TVET and the labour market and decent jobs has positive changes, enterprises' perception of TVET has changed in the cooperation between enterprises and state management agencies at all levels and TVET institutions. TVET institutes and

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<sup>39</sup> Transferring and adjusting 07 capacity standards, programs, and textbooks according to French standards; transfer national competency standards and develop programs and curricula for eight occupations according to Korean standards.

<sup>40</sup> Up to now, 21 schools have developed a project to deploy high quality programs with 103 college and intermediate level programs; There are 07 colleges granted certificates of joint training with foreign countries according to Decree No. 15/2019/ND-CP dated February 1, 2019 with 19 training programs (18 college degree programs, one college degree program). elementary level), 19/19 programs are all foreign degrees.

<sup>41</sup> Building a data system integration center, deploying level 3 online public services; implementing a system for collecting and managing data on TVET; implementation of enrollment applications on mobile phones....

<sup>42</sup> By the end of 2020, a list of equipment for training at minimum intermediate and college levels has been organized for 197 professions and occupations.

<sup>43</sup> By the end of 2020, it has organized the development and appraisal to submit for promulgation the economic-economic norms on training at the intermediate and college levels for 173 professions and occupations.

<sup>44</sup> Pilot training under 34 sets of programs transferred from abroad (12 occupations from Australia, 22 occupations from Germany); enrolling 1,781 students, of which 725 have graduated.

enterprises have had many diverse and rich forms and models of cooperation, link between training and job creation for graduates.

### **Quality and effectiveness of TVET**

- The quality and effectiveness of TVET has been gradually improved to better meet the labour demand of enterprises and the labour market. Vocational skills of learners are enhanced, about 80% of graduates have jobs suitable for their occupations and training qualifications or self-employment, participating in most sectors of the economy. In some occupations (welding, Mechanics - electronics, telecommunications, logistics, tourism, oil, and gas ...), the vocational skills of Vietnamese workers meet the requirements of foreign-invested enterprises and can take on many complex positions that previously had to be performed by foreign experts. According to the assessment of the World Economic Forum - WEF (2019), the quality of TVET in Vietnam has increased by 13 places in the skills pillar<sup>45</sup>. In regional and world skill competitions, the Vietnamese delegation has achieved high rankings, the quality of TVET has been initially confirmed at regional and world level<sup>46</sup>.
- For the TVET scheme for rural workers, after TVET, the number of people who have new jobs or continue to work in old occupations with higher productivity and income reaches over 80%.

### **Financial resources for TVET**

- Investment resources for TVET continue to be enhanced and diversified. In the period 2012-2019, the state budget expenditure on TVET accounted for an average of 8% of recurrent state budget expenditure on education, training, and TVET<sup>47</sup>. The state budget prioritizes investment in disadvantaged areas, mountainous areas, islands, deep-lying and remote areas in the direction of increasing gradually (from 2017 up to now, the allocation norms for training and vocational education expenditures, depending on each region) adjusted for an average increase of 1,76 times compared to the period 2011-2016<sup>48</sup>.
- Mobilized social resources from businesses, organizations, and individuals to invest in TVET development.

### **Quality inspection and assessment, granting national vocational skill certificates**

- The activities of accrediting the quality of TVET gradually become stable. In parallel with the self-accreditation of TVET institutes, external accreditation (outside assessment) of TVET institutions has been organized and verifying training programs for a number of occupations. Implemented a number of international cooperation programs, schemes and

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<sup>45</sup> WEF (2019), Vietnam's TVET quality reached 44 points, ranking 102/141 countries.

<sup>46</sup> In the last two World Vocational Skills Competitions, Vietnam had candidates winning bronze medals (2017) and silver medals (2019).

<sup>47</sup> According to the report of the Ministry of Finance: State budget recurrent expenditure for TVET and vocational education in the period 2012-2019 is 127,9 billion VND. Through ODA projects directly managed by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, loans and aid from bilateral and multilateral donors has been mobilized at \$186.155.870. The central budget's investment through the National Target Program and the Environmental Program in the 2011-2020 period is more than 20.500 billion VND.

<sup>48</sup> Decision No. 59/2010/QĐ-TTg dated September 30, 2010, of the Prime Minister on promulgating norms for allocation of recurrent expenditure estimates of the state budget in 2011 and Decision No. 46/2016/Decision-TTg dated October 19, 2016, of the Prime Minister on promulgating norms for allocation of recurrent expenditure estimates of the state budget in 2017.

projects on quality assurance and accreditation of TVET according to international standards. A number of independent TVET quality accreditation organizations have been established.

- Organize the development and promulgation of the Ministry of National Occupational Skills; to form a system of organizations to assess vocational skills for employees in association with investment in building key industries and occupations at TVET institutions. Initially study the framework for mutual recognition of vocational qualifications and skills between Vietnam and ASEAN countries and the world to move towards mutual recognition of qualifications, promotion of skills development, labour mobility active and students, students<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Developed and issued 193 sets of national occupational skills standards, 96 theoretical question banks and practice tests. Forming 49 organizations to assess occupational skills for workers associated with investment in building key occupations at TVET institutions and a number of enterprises, which are eligible for assessment and grant of national vocational skills certificates for employees 57 occupations.