

MAPPING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING GOVERNANCE IN PALESTINE



GEMM
GOVERNANCE FOR
EMPLOYABILITY IN THE
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mapping and peer review of the governance of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Palestine¹ was conducted by the ETF local expert working with the GEMM National Committee, and the final report was prepared for the ETF by an international expert. The governance issues investigated are management of the system, finance and quality assurance.

Although TVET ranks low in national priorities, Palestine has a clear vision for reforming and raising standards in the TVET sector. Strong commitment to reforms and good cooperation exist between the main stakeholders, in particular the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Labour. In the context of occupation, international donors are prominent in funding and supporting reform initiatives. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) works specifically with the refugee population. In spite of the volume of reforms, the system is fragmented, and a unified leadership, in particular of human and financial resources, is lacking.

The revised TVET strategy (approved by the Palestinian Authority in November 2010) was developed under the leadership of the ministries with support provided by the leading international donor, GIZ. Stakeholders were actively engaged in preparing the TVET strategy, which is wide ranging, comprehensive and coherent in setting out approaches to reforming and modernising TVET. The strategy includes detailed action planning for implementation under several main areas of concern, but the action plan and time line will need revision to be realistic.

The Higher Council of TVET was formed in 2005 as part of the implementation plan of the earlier national TVET strategy. The council, which is chaired in rotation by the ministers, is composed of 16 members with equal representation of public, private, and other relevant bodies. Its mandate is clear, but commentators have expressed the view² that the council does not function well. In 2002, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education established an Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC) and the Council for Scientific Research. The AQAC's chair is appointed by the minister and employer representation is very limited; its mandate is to take final decisions about licensing and accreditation for ministerial ratification. The Council for Scientific Research has limited resources and no influence over TVET; the board has, in any case, no social partner representation³.

The two ministries have recently presented a joint proposal to the Cabinet for establishing a new TVET agency⁴ that will have a strategic role for developing the sector, and will also assume the key responsibilities for TVET currently performed by the ministries. If established, the board of the new agency will have representation at appropriately senior level of the main stakeholders.

Employers' organisations have a significant role as social partners in some aspects of TVET planning and policy development as well as managing or administering particular initiatives, but mainly on an ad hoc basis. No single organisation represents employers, so the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Palestinian Federation of Industry and on occasion their constituent associations occupy, at least partly, the role of social partners. Employers' organisations mostly have limited capacity and no specific organisation that is devoted to developing and implementing TVET partnerships. Civil society organisations such as women's organisations also have a consultative role

¹ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of the State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the EU Member States on this issue.

² ETF, 2010, Torino Process: Country Note for Occupied Palestinian Territory

³ This information is drawn from the ETF 2010 publication on Education and Business: Occupied Palestinian Territory. Note D3EEZ.

⁴ Presented to the Cabinet by the Minister of Education and Higher Education with the agreement of the Minister of Labour in November 2013

and locally they also implement donor-funded programmes. By and large, trade union confederations engage in dialogue as TVET stakeholders little, if at all.

At governorate level, some of the chambers and associations initiate or act as partners when local initiatives take place, as do some civil society organisation. An initiative to establish collaborative local employment and TVET councils (LET councils) is particularly interesting. So far, a small number of LET councils are being piloted in four governorates through vertical and horizontal partnerships engaging the public authorities, employers and TVET providers into a formal forum tasked with leading more local initiatives that combine top-down and bottom-up approaches.

At the local level, and with the exception of the private community colleges and to some extent the not-for-profit public colleges, TVET providers have little if any autonomy to take initiatives, to make significant local management decisions, or to raise significant additional finance.

There are also significant numbers of non-formal apprenticeships in the informal sectors of the labour market. Until now, little attention has been paid in official circles to this aspect of training. Continuing training is also a rather neglected field.

Apart from the private community colleges, which are self-financed through fees and the patronage of the owners, almost all the funding for initial TVET comes from the Finance Ministry through the general budget or from donor activity. There are no levies or other requirements placed on employers to fund initial or continuing training, and student contributions through fees produce only limited income. TVET providers have little autonomy over their budgets and income. Budgets are allocated on a traditional input basis and resources are scarce, so funding is not used to incentivise reform.

The revised TVET strategy places strong emphasis on the importance of quality assurance and quality: 'a quality system will be used for all components of the TVET system, including internal and external evaluations to ensure the quality of the output' (revised TVET strategy, p. 40). The strategy aims to link TVET outcomes to labour market demands, improve the employability of graduates – and importance is placed on operating a set of unified quality standards that are consistent at all levels with best international practice. Although current quality control mechanisms refer mainly to the auditing and inspection of inputs and there is no overall approach to quality assurance, some important developments that can form elements of a quality assurance approach have been developing over recent years, such as establishing AQAC and the identification of objectives and key performance indicators by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Among the challenges that TVET governance has to meet in Palestine, some strengths are evident. These include: an up-to-date TVET strategy that government and non-government stakeholders can take ownership of; considerable expertise and a strong will to cooperate at the national level; significant experience on the part of the employers' federations and the availability of established TVET providers; and, well-established presence of supportive donors.

The report makes 17 recommendations for government and stakeholders to consider and take further. For the ministries, this includes: building on the solid preparations that are already in place to achieve a more systemic approach to collaboration and partnership; identifying how reforms can be successfully carried through in partnership with key stakeholders; achieving coordination of all development activities with donors. Recommendations also relate to improving governance with regard to finance and funding, quality assurance and establishing better labour market and management information systems. Recommendations for the federations propose steps that can strengthen their participation in TVET governance, and build capacity. Attention is also paid to suggesting how the intermediate level of governance can be strengthened. Finally, pilot schemes and the empowering of managers at the TVET provider level are proposed, so that a greater degree of local initiative, responsibility and accountability can gradually and successfully be introduced.

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the situation concerning TVET governance in Palestine, with particular reference to the current system of TVET management, how finance and funding are organised, and the extent to which quality assurance approaches are being introduced. Its purpose is to help the ministries and stakeholders at all levels of the system to secure improvements in the implementation of TVET policy, particularly in the light of the revised TVET strategy. The report begins with a synthesis of the more detailed mapping of the governance of TVET in that was carried out by the National Committee of the ETF's GEMM project. It then considers which improvements to TVET governance can be further considered and makes recommendations on how feasible changes can be introduced, so as to strengthen TVET governance. The report is based on the expectation that implementing the TVET strategy requires, among other developments, enhanced roles on the part of stakeholders, in order to make sure that the sector can better fulfil its labour market and social missions, and make a positive contribution to innovation.

The population of Palestine stood at 4 271 000 in 2012, and by 2015 almost one third of the population will be aged 15-29 years. Almost half of the total population are refugees. The UNDP's Human Resource Development Index provides a broad measure of national development and well-being by combining health, education and income indicators. On this scale Palestine has a rank of 110th country out of 187⁵. This places Palestine in the medium human development category as a global comparison, somewhat lower than neighbouring countries such as Jordan. Between 1980 and 2011, life expectancy at birth increased by 10.1 years and expected years of schooling increased by 2.2 years. In terms of literacy rates Palestine performs well in comparison to similar countries, with a literacy rate in 2010 of almost 95% (5% higher for males than for females)⁶. This is reflected in comparatively high enrolment rates in education from pre-primary through to tertiary levels. However, only approximately 6% of upper secondary students follow a vocational programme; this reflects the low esteem that vocational education is accorded by communities, in contrast to the popularity and status of general upper secondary education.

A key feature of the labour market is that only 11.8% of employed people now work in agriculture, while almost 25% work in industry and over 60% in services. 'Services and other branches' and commerce, hotels and restaurants jointly employ almost 60% of employed people, while agriculture, manufacturing and construction each employ something over 10%⁷. In any case, it has to be taken into account that the occupation of the territories and other factors mean that the 'labour market' in Palestine is a highly imperfect market.

The GDP growth rate stood at higher than 6% for each year between 2003 and 2005⁸. However, in September 2012, the IMF expressed the following view⁹:

The Palestinian economy is facing serious risks, with a slowdown in growth and rise in unemployment in both Gaza and the West Bank. During 2008–10, the West Bank's real GDP

⁵ Source: United Nations Development Programme, see http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR2013_EN_Statistics.pdf (last accessed 2 May 2013).

⁶ Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UIS Data Centre 2013, see http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/document.aspx?ReportId=136&IF_Language=eng&BR_Topic=0 (last accessed 30 April 2013).

⁷ Source: 2010 data, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey 2010, see www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_PCBS/Downloads/book1744.pdf

⁸ Source: World Bank, see <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG> (last accessed 30 April 2013)

⁹ Recent experience and prospects of the economy of the West Bank and Gaza: Staff report prepared for the meeting of the ad hoc liaison committee, New York, 23 September 2012, see www.imf.org/wbg

grew by an annual average rate of 9 percent, reflecting sound economic management and reforms supported by donor aid, and an easing of Israeli internal barriers. However, growth declined to 5% in 2011 and the first quarter of 2012, while unemployment rose. [...] The economic slowdown reflects continued fiscal retrenchment combined with severe financing difficulties, declining donor aid especially from regional donors, and slower easing of restrictions on movement and access. (Source: op. cit., p. 3)

Unemployment rates are high, at 23% (in 2012), while youth unemployment stood at 38.8% in 2010 taking the West bank and the Gaza Strip as a whole, with females considerably over-represented in the unemployment statistics compared to males¹⁰.

Overall, the reform agenda on the West Bank is characterised¹¹ as consisting of challenges, alongside some areas of progress. Specifically, progress in many areas (governance, public finance management) has been achieved in a context of occupation, where Israeli incursions into areas formally under the control of the Palestinian Authority continued. However, real GDP is more than 10% below the level of 1999. Therefore, the revival in economic activity has come from a low base and is still held back by current restrictions. The standard of living is exceptionally low in comparison to other partner countries of the EU, with an overall poverty rate of 55 % in the West Bank.

The situation of TVET, which (as stated above) is not highly regarded in the way that general education is, can be summarised as follows¹²:

1. Palestine has a clear vision for standardising its TVET sector. Strong commitment to reforms and good cooperation exist between the main stakeholders, in particular the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Labour.
2. Two TVET strategy objectives have not yet been addressed: the establishment of a strategic framework of governance, and the proper coordination of all development activities implemented in the TVET sector by the donor community.
3. A priority of the TVET strategy is to make TVET relevant to the labour market: historically this has not been the case, but things are improving due to several new initiatives.
4. In addressing the problem of social inclusion, the Palestinian authorities' main aim is to tackle the situation of refugees and residents in area C.
5. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) works specifically with this population group.
6. In terms of internal efficiency the main problems are the low cost efficiency of the system and its little relevance to the needs of the labour market. Little progress has been made, and underlying causes include the limited autonomy of schools and the overall rigidity of the system. Notably, the TVET strategy provides for a reform of the rules concerning the management of TVET institutions.

¹⁰ Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics – for 2010 data, Labour Force Survey 2010, www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_PCBS/Downloads/book1744.pdf; for 2011-12 data, Labour Force Survey October-December 2012 (Q4/2012), 21 February 2013

¹¹ The passage that follows is adapted from European Commission (Foreign Affairs and Security Policy), June 2011, Joint Staff Working Paper Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2010 – Country Report: occupied Palestinian territory, COM(2011) 303, Brussels

¹² Adapted from ETF 2012. The Torino process 2012: Palestine. The report was prepared by a working group led by Salah Al Zoroo from the Ministry of Labour, and included members from the Ministry of Labour (including vocational training department and employment department), MoHE, MoE, UNRWA, Federation of Palestinian Chambers, Central Bureau of Statistics, general Federation of Trade Unions.

7. The private sector is involved in the various developments. Its challenge is to take a leading role in delivering labour market needs analysis to support the reform and continuous updating of TVET provision. Social partners such as the Palestinian Federation of Industries, the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions are not yet in a position to play this leading role. However, they are increasingly interested in and aware of what they can do. They are also beginning to develop the necessary capacities to take on such a role. Quality is not clearly defined.
8. The main issues that negatively affect governance of the TVET system, which remains weak despite the high volume of reforms being implemented in the sector, are: the fragmentation of the system, the absence of a unified leadership; and the lack of financial and human resources. In these respects, there is a strong need for both improving the financial resources invested in the sector and human resource capacity building if reform is to be effective.

This report aims to inform and assist government and stakeholders as they address some key questions about the future governance of TVET. Questions include: How can a more coherent system of governance be developed to support the implementation of the revised TVET strategy that is intended to improve outcomes for learners who are aiming at labour market entry and progression, including women and young people? Are there some achievable improvements to governance that can increase the contribution of TVET to achieving the economic and social objectives identified in Palestine's human resources development strategies, and to match better the supply of graduates with the skills demands of the labour markets? How can the governance of TVET at the national level engage in more systematic partnerships with stakeholders? How can the social partners and other stakeholders play a more significant and dynamic role in policy development and implementation? Is there a case for a stronger local dimension to TVET governance? Is the time right to devolve more autonomy and accountability to the TVET providers at a local level?

1. MAPPING TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING GOVERNANCE – KEY POINTS

The current, revised TVET strategy was developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Labour, which are responsible for the VTCs, the vocational schools and the community colleges, with support and facilitation provided by the leading international donor, GIZ. A wide range of stakeholders was engaged in the four thematic working groups that prepared inputs for the revised TVET strategy, and the editorial group comprised the two key ministries and GIZ. The strategy is wide ranging, comprehensive and coherent in setting out approaches to reforming and modernising TVET. It also contains some detailed action planning for implementation under the main areas of concern, namely: labour market relevancy, engaging stakeholders, systematic frameworks for jobs and qualifications, linkages between the TVET and education system, the legislative basis, the TVET system, organisational development of TVET institutions, development of teaching and learning processes, human resource development, access and equity for target groups, financing, and quality development and assurance.

While some reforms have been developed along the lines set out, these are not sufficient so far and it has not proved possible to adhere either to the action lines or to the timetable of the new strategy. It should also be noted that at the time of writing this report (November 2013 to January 2014) the two key ministries have presented a joint proposal to the Cabinet for establishing a new TVET agency that will have a strategic role for developing the sector, and will also assume the key responsibilities for TVET currently performed by the ministries. The board of the new agency will have representation at appropriately senior level of the main stakeholders.

1.1 General mapping of the TVET system management

For the main areas of TVET policy and provision the two key ministries, Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Labour, maintain systems of providers, for most of whom they make the main decisions, and provide central administration and funding. The two ministries have established a culture of working collaboratively together and both work closely with international donors such as GIZ and the European Union, as well as other donor agencies. As well as occupying a consultative role, the international donors are prominent in funding initiatives and parts of TVET system of provision (probably to a greater extent than in many other partner countries) and, notably, they have a frequent role in initiating reforms along with the two ministries.

As was the case with revising the TVET strategy, employers' organisations have a significant role as social partners in some aspects of TVET planning and policy development, as well as managing or administering particular initiatives. Mostly this engagement is ad hoc and on a project-by-project basis. At the national level there is no single organisation that represents employers, and the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Palestinian Federation of Industry and on occasion their constituent associations for particular branches of commerce and industry occupy, at least partly, the role of social partners. Whilst they are actively engaged, this occurs on an occasional basis and is not systematic. Furthermore, employers' organisations mostly have limited capacity and no specific organisation that is devoted to developing and implementing TVET partnership activity. Civil society organisations also have a consultative role at the national level, not least women's organisations and the businesswomen's forums; often they also implement donor-funded programmes. By and large, and although invited to participate from time to time, the trade union confederations appear to have other sets of priorities, and engage in dialogue as TVET stakeholders only a little, if at all.

For the refugee population, UNRWA is the UN organisation that manages and organises TVET provision. Although somewhat separate, UNRWA co-operates on many occasions with the ministries and with the international donors. It has also been able to form quite strong links with some of the employers' organisations at the local level, for example in the recent signing of six memoranda of understanding with the local chambers.

At a governorate level and also at more local level, some of the chambers of commerce and the associations of particular industries initiate or act as partners when local initiatives take place. Some civil society organisations, such as the women's organisations mentioned above, undertake a similar role. Even though this activity is rather limited in scope and may not be widespread, it is clear that at least some initiatives are being taken, and much may be learnt from this. In this respect an initiative to establish local employment and TVET councils (LET councils) may be particularly interesting. So far 12 LET councils installed in west bank governorate being piloted through collaborative work between the Governorates, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the private sector, institutions of local community, youth employment organisations and GIZ. Their structure and operation is intended to bring together the public authorities, employers and TVET providers into a formal forum tasked to gather sound labour market intelligence, bring together the main stakeholders into active local partnership, and set up ways to improve the teaching and learning in local, more demand-driven TVET provision. Again, this is an initiative of GIZ working with two ministries¹³.

The governance of different types of TVET provision is currently fragmented in different sub-systems. At the local level, and with the exception of the private community colleges and to some extent the not-for-profit public colleges, providers have little if any autonomy to take initiatives, to make significant local management decisions, or to raise significant additional finance. A pen picture can help to illustrate how different facets of TVET management operate in the different systems.

Twenty-eight community colleges (some are technical colleges) are operating across Palestine. Most of the community colleges are public or not-for-profit, being established by civil society organisations. The private colleges are responsible for raising their own funding. Each public community college has a board of trustees, representing key stakeholders, and this serves to give the public colleges at least some degree of local responsibility, for example in forming links with local employers and community organisations. They are also subject to the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC) recognition and accreditation procedures and use the comprehensive examination for matriculating students. In other respects they have much more local responsibility for management, staffing, and finance than the smaller number of governmental colleges. The public colleges also have a considerable degree of autonomy, but are entitled to state funding if they meet conditions set.

The five governmental community colleges come under the management responsibility of the TVET directorate of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The ministry is responsible for management, funding, appointing the dean and all staff and equipping the colleges under the regulations and norms that are laid down. In practice, significant funding is also provided by a range of international donors, who may be involved in particular initiatives. In theory, the college should have a stakeholder consultative committee for advisory purposes concerning ethos, local partnerships, etc. The governmental colleges are subject to the quality control and financial auditing that the Ministry of Education and Higher Education has in place, which does not include a formal evaluation procedure, and also the financial auditing of the Ministry of Finance. To be accredited, any new community college has to be recognised by AQAC, to whom the colleges must also submit any proposals for new programmes. Colleges can award their own diplomas on completion, but if students are successful in the comprehensive examinations then it is the Ministry that offers relevant certificates.

¹³ See the GTZ project specification for local employment and TVET councils (LET councils) published as part of the GTZ/GIZ 'Promotion of TVET and the labour market' programme.

Vocational schools come directly under the management responsibility of a directorate in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The ministry manages, finances, staffs and provides facilities and equipment including textbooks and curriculum. They must follow the quality control and auditing systems set down by the Ministry and have, in practice, very little local autonomy. The Ministry certifies successful achievement of the vocational Tawjihi and the schools certificate completion of study. Culturally and in terms of management capacity, vocational schools do not usually take strong initiatives, nor are their strong incentives to innovate. Thus, for example, when EU programmes relating to new initiatives in vocational schools are established, the initiative is almost always taken by the directorate, top-down. The school principals are mainly responsible for carrying out the requirements of the Ministry, and teachers are not generally expected to contribute new ideas. In any case the teachers have a low salary and do not enjoy a high social status, and some teachers operate in their own profession or trade when not teaching, whilst having the limited but significant benefits of a secure income and pension from the state employment. Nevertheless, some initiatives are taken at this local level. Although there is an absence of incentives, if the vocational schools asked approval to take educational initiatives or to generate income, the directorate general would probably endorse the request subject to suitable safeguards being met. In the small number of private vocational schools these arrangements vary somewhat.

The VTCs come under the direct management responsibility of the Directorate General for Vocational Training of the Ministry of Labour. In most respects their management mirrors the situation found in the vocational schools. Management is centralised and the centres are expected to follow the norms and requirements of the Ministry, while having little if any local autonomy. This is considered to be a non-formal branch of vocational training that does not lead to formal and recognised qualifications and, therefore, the centres award their own certificates of successful completion, which is endorsed by the Ministry of Labour.

Additionally, there are significant numbers of non-formal apprenticeships in the informal sectors of the labour market. Until now, little attention has been paid in official circles to this aspect of training. Although it receives some mention in the revised TVET strategy, more careful research into how the informal sector of apprenticeships operates and how best this may be linked to TVET systems that government is currently concerned with would be valuable.

Agencies established with a specific strategic or functional remit often have a cross-section of governmental participation, but do not yet embrace a social partnership approach. Thus, the Council for Higher Education is chaired by the Minister of Education and Higher Education and composed of all public and governmental university heads, one representative of private universities, a Community College Dean, the Deputy Minister of Finance, the Deputy Minister of Planning, two representatives from the Ministry of Education, eight academics, and a Secretary General. But the business sector is not represented at all.

The Higher Council of TVET was formed in 2005 as part of the implementation plan of the earlier national TVET strategy. The council is composed of 16 members with equal representation of public, private, and other relevant bodies. The Council is chaired in rotation by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Labour. Its mandate is to establish the overall policies and strategies for TVET, define national TVET priorities, oversee the implementation of the strategy, and secure the necessary financial resources. ETF expressed the view in 2010¹⁴ that the council does not function well (in the last years it has not met at all) and the economic sectors are not sufficiently covered.

¹⁴ ETF, 2010, Torino Process: Country Note for Occupied Palestinian Territory

In 2002, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education established the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC) and the Council for Scientific Research. The AQAC's chair is appointed by the minister, and AQAC has a board of 12 professionals whose mandate is to take final decisions about licensing and accreditation of tertiary education institutions for ministerial ratification. The board comprises four representatives from local universities, three from related Palestinian organisations, two from the Ministry of Planning, one from UNRWA, one from the private sector, and one from the technical and vocational education sub-sector. Employer representation is thus very limited. The Council for Scientific Research is a body that was established by the ministry but it has limited resources and no influence over TVET; the board has, in any case, no social partner representation¹⁵.

Planning, on the other hand, for the TVET agency that was referred to earlier would be likely to establish a stakeholder partnership approach to the governance of the agency, with a considerable extent of operational autonomy from the key ministries.

Table 1.1 below shows the extent, type and level of coordinating partnerships that already exist.

TABLE 1.1 EXTENT, TYPE AND LEVEL OF COORDINATING PARTNERSHIPS

Level	Actors	Coordination mechanism	Policy area/example of cooperation
National	Ministries	Inter-ministerial	Overall planning and management: to coordinate the national policies for training and employment.
National	Ministries, federations, unions, donors	National strategies	Overall planning and management: GIZ-reviewing the TVET strategy. More than 55 people representing all stakeholders, from the supply side, demand side, donors and associations.
National	Donors, ministries	Cooperation agreements	Management and reform of curricula: GIZ, BTC-curricula development for TVET
Providers	TVET providers, federations, companies	PPP	Identifying and matching skill needs: polytechnic university and union of marble and stone industries, provision of a relevant programme.
Providers	TVET providers-UNRWA, companies	Cooperation agreements	Identifying and matching skill needs: Qalandia vocational training centre (UNRWA) with JDECo, the Jerusalem District Electricity company, for training of students in the companies training centre for practical courses
Providers	TVET providers, companies, donors	Cooperation agreements, skills needs assessment	Identifying and matching skill needs: Al-Ommah Technical (tertiary) College and JDECO, a BTC-funded project, to provide a two-year programme in electrical engineering installations, utilising the equipment in the company.
National	MoL, employers, trade unions	Tripartite agreements	Overall planning and management: taking care of the legislations that govern the training and employment sectors.
National	MoEHE, MoL	Inter-ministerial	Overall planning and management: preparation of joint explanatory notes for the cabinet in relation to policies, e.g. the TVET agency.
National	Donors, ministries	Cooperation agreements, skills needs assessment	Management and reform of curricula/identifying and matching skill needs: BTC-funded project for curricula development for levels 1 and 2 in the electrical family and communications; GIZ programme defining processes for curriculum development in line with labour market needs.

¹⁵ This information is drawn from the ETF 2010 publication Education and Business: Occupied Palestinian Territory, Note D3EEZ.

Level	Actors	Coordination mechanism	Policy area/example of cooperation
Local/regional	Donors, LET councils	Sectoral/regional skills councils, steering, evaluation	Overall planning and management/management and reform of curricula/identifying and matching skill needs/management of training providers: the EU- funded, ETF- designed, and GIZ-implemented project with the LET councils in Hebron, Bethlehem and Nablus districts to support TVET development.
Local/regional	Companies, TVET institutions	Bipartite, inter-regional	Identifying and matching skill needs: cooperation agreement between PPU and Royal Company (south), between Nablus Vocational School and Haddad Metal company (north), between Ommah College and JDECo (centre).
Local	Federations, institutions	PPP, inter-regional, skills needs assessment	Identifying and matching skill needs: Union of Engineering and Metal Industries with PPU and Hebron Vocational School to provide courses for the welding of pipes and metal works.
Local and providers	Funding associations, companies and TVET providers	Observatories	Identifying and matching skill needs/management of training providers: Welfare Association funding the graduates of TVET institutions through a scheme called Education for Employment (efe), in which the Welfare Association pays 50% of the salary and the employing companies pay the other 50% for a six-month duration.
Local	Donors, companies and TVET institutions	Tripartite skills needs assessment, evaluation	Identifying and matching skill needs/management of training providers/guidance and counselling: GIZ (through a fund from the BMZ) designed and implemented an Apprenticeship Training Scheme in Hebron area, through a partnership agreement with some employers (workshops, factories, garages) incorporating the chamber of commerce. The World Bank support under the Quality Improvement Fund (QIF), to identify and match the skill needs for the demand side requested from the tertiary institutions' graduates.
National	Donors, ministries, TVET providers, federations...	Cooperation agreements, recommendations, inter-ministerial, evaluation	Training and standards for teachers and trainers: the ETF project for TVET teachers under LEARN project. Also GIZ support under the human resources development component. Both are tailored for staff and personnel in ministries and institutions.
Local	Donors, LET councils	Cooperation agreements	Overall planning and management: the SWISS cooperation and GIZ in their support to the LET councils in the governorates to establish centres of excellence.
Local/provider	PPU-synergy centre, companies	Cooperation agreements, PPP	Identifying and matching skill needs: bilateral agreements and MOUs with companies from various production sectors.

1.2 Finance and funding

Apart from the private community colleges, which are self-financed through fees and the patronage of the owners to a considerable extent, almost all the funding for initial TVET comes either from the Finance Ministry through the general budget or from donor activity. There are no levies or other requirements placed on employers to fund provision, and student contributions through fees produce only limited income. The students in the colleges pay some fees, but the UNRWA students are not required to pay, while students in the not-for-profit institutions only pay some of the fees, with the donors contribute to facilities, equipment, etc. Some fees are collected in government establishments, but many students are entitled to pay only a small proportion of the fees.

Usually it is government funding that covers the fixed expenses including permanent salaries, running costs and some of the developmental expenses. On the other hand many of the funds used for both initial and continuing training are provided by donors. These may be international organisations, other agencies involved in technical cooperation and the international co-operation agencies of some national governments. This is a significant commitment on the part of the international donors, but their allocation of resources is almost always over the lifetime of a project or programme, thus on a temporary basis that results in non-permanent appointments in ministries and TVET establishments and time-limited expenditure on equipment, learning environments, etc. This methodology can be helpful in generating initiatives, but often results in challenges and problems that inhibit permanent solutions and sustainability once the project and its financing draws to a conclusion.

The methodology that the ministries use to distribute funds to TVET providers is consolidated. Through the appropriate section, the director-general requires provider establishments to estimate and justify their spending needs for the following year on a pro forma. After adding in the central costs of Ministry staff, buildings, equipment, etc., the ministry's requests are presented to the Finance Ministry. Given the shortage of resources, the allocation that is allowed is usually considerably smaller than that requested. Once the TVET funding allocation to the appropriate ministry has been decided centrally, the directorate general is responsible for trimming and allocating funds to the various sections and establishments.

The ministries must follow the auditing requirements laid down in their regulations and as required by the Finance Ministry, and some details of the funding allocations are publicly available on the website. On the other hand, the funding mechanisms and audit requirements associated with donor activity are the domain and property of the donors. While subject to their own procedures, these are not published or otherwise detailed as part of the funding of TVET activity in Palestine.

With the exception of the private community colleges, TVET providers have very little autonomy over their budgets, and very little opportunity to raise income. Because budgets are allocated on a traditional input basis and because funding is scarce, funding is not used to incentivise reform, except where there is specific donor activity. Two recent schemes are intended to make more coherent and more strategic use of resources. WAP is a form of programme aid directed to particular sectors in which government and donor funding is directed towards the achievement of a sectoral strategy. Secondly, with the support of GIZ the government is establishing a National Training Fund, which aims to establish a sustainable mode of financing TVET for the reform and upgrading of the system and its institutions.

In the meantime, a lack of national resources, the relatively low national priority that is given to supporting the TVET sector, the fragmented pattern of government and donor funding, a certain lack of experience in making effective public/private partnerships work, and a reluctance in many cases on the part of employers and companies to become actively engaged are all barriers that relate to finance and funding, and which inhibits effective reforms.

1.3 Quality assurance

The revised TVET strategy places strong emphasis on the importance of quality assurance and quality management as a defining aspect of all the reforms proposed, stating that 'a quality system will be used for all components of the TVET system, including internal and external evaluations to ensure the quality of the output' (revised TVET strategy, p. 40). The strategy refers to linking TVET outcomes to labour market demands and improving the employability of TVET graduates through the effective and efficient use of available resources and according to a set of unified quality standards that are consistent at all levels with best international practice. It recognises that this has major training and capacity building implications at all levels in the system, while the action planning associated with the strategy places emphasis on setting up an appropriate national accreditation and quality assurance

body For TVET, developing and applying a TVET quality system, promoting a quality culture across the whole sector, and on developing curricula, assessment and certification that are based on the standards of working life for all TVET learners and apprentices. Other elements of the action planning, including the development of teaching and learning processes, the development of a national qualifications framework as well as Palestinian occupational standards, are also referred to as essential for quality assurance and quality management.

Although the current quality control mechanisms that are in place refer mainly to the auditing and inspection of inputs and there is no overall approach to quality assurance, some important developments that can form elements of a quality assurance approach have been developing over recent years. Several examples can be referred to.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education now includes objectives and key performance indicators in its planning, which can be a starting point for system-wide quality assurance. The ministry has established AQAC with the functions of licensing higher education providers and approving new programmes and qualifications using quality criteria, and this applies to all community colleges as well as to universities. AQAC links a national governance role with quality development and quality assurance at the local, provider level. AQAC does not however cover all aspects of the quality cycle and its functions are not sufficient to ensure quality at the colleges' level. A Belgian-funded project aims to enhance the capacity of both the supply and demand side through partnerships with the chambers of commerce in four governorates, so as to improve the linking between taught programmes and labour market skills needs, while the LET councils are piloting the development of local public-private partnerships around the local chambers, so as to increase the relevance of TVET programmes to labour market skills needs. GIZ support also focuses on involvement of the private sector in the definition of content of vocational training in order to raise quality of the curricula. The World Bank's Quality Improvement Fund is also being used in the 'Education to work transition' programme to enhance partnership between the supply side and the demand side. Another example is a new BTC-led, donor-funded project called 'Enhancing capacities for institutional building', with a focus on improving the opportunities through apprenticeship to reach disadvantaged groups by building the capacitors of local providers. Other projects and plans include support for a reformed approach to TVET curriculum development, planning the implementation of the approved national qualifications framework and the adoption of the Arab classification of occupations as a step towards identifying the profile, knowledge and skills associated with particular jobs. While these developments are potentially important, for the most part they are at an early stage and do not yet provide evidence of joined up quality assurance policy.

The next section of the report will provide further analysis of some key governance issues and consider some of the gaps. Then some recommendations can be made for stakeholders to consider further, with a view to making achievable improvements in TVET governance.

2. ANALYSIS

2.1 Self-evaluation of TVET governance in Palestine

With the mapping of the current situation complete, the GEMM National Committee surveyed its members and a small number of other national stakeholders in order to gain a clearer impression of how successful and effective key players perceive current TVET governance to be. Using a grid of 25 indicators organised around six principles, 18 expert respondents indicated how frequently they consider the current governance system to enable good performance and outcomes in the TVET system.

The six principles of good governance are summarised as ‘relevance’, ‘effectiveness’, ‘subsidiarity and proportionality of decision-making’, ‘transparency’, ‘accountability’ and ‘participation’. If the diagnosis achieved through this expert survey has weight and validity, it leads to the conclusion that the experts who completed the survey are fairly positive and optimistic about how governance is developing. Although there were very few instances in which respondents consider that any of the indicators are met very frequently, it is equally the case that very few responses indicated that particular indicators are never or very rarely met. Mostly, respondents considered that the different criteria are met occasionally or frequently, and this is the case fairly evenly across each of the six principles, and most of the 25 indicators.

It is noteworthy that the most positively self-assessed indicator is the one that indicates that decision makers assess and respect the contributions and recommendations of the different stakeholders. More than 50% of the respondents also indicated that the following indicators are met frequently and in a few cases very frequently.

- Governance systems help to improve the professional standards and professional development of teachers and trainers.
- Feedback shows that current governance systems support VET provision and the implementation of reforms.
- Governance procedures are recognised to be efficient, in that they provide good value for money.
- Governance responsibilities, roles and functions are defined clearly and they take into account the outcome is expected by users and stakeholders.

On the other hand, more critical self-evaluations were made for a number of indicators. One of the most critical indicates that governance systems only rarely encourage VET to find innovative solutions, and another that the appropriate range of stakeholders is not engaged collaboratively throughout the policy cycle. A similarly self-critical evaluation is made that different government agencies are not well coordinated at the different national, regional and local levels of government. The following indicators were also given a comparatively critical or negative evaluation, suggesting that governance is not efficient or effective in the following ways.

- Governance systems do not support well the social equity role of VET.
- Governance systems do not mobilise sufficient funding and financing mechanisms at all levels of the system.
- Governance systems do not respond well to learner and labour market needs.

- Governance does not support well the achievement of national development goals and a range of broader policies and national intermediate and provider level.
- Goals are not well formulated in response to shared concerns and identify policy gaps, while taking account of the feasibility of resources for implementation.
- Decisions are not taken at the most appropriate level and/or at the lowest level to optimise the VET policy implementation.
- Evidence shows that roles and responsibilities of stakeholders conflict and leave gaps in the policy-making process.
- Hard regulation (laws, etc.) and soft regulation (recommendations, cooperation agreements, etc.) do not apply at each stage and level in the policy cycle.
- The VET policy cycle is not an open process that engages the identified relevant stakeholders; policy dialogue is not coordinated and supported by relevant documentation, reports, etc.
- Management information systems and other data do not meet the governance needs of the stakeholders.
- Formal and informal mechanisms for sharing information do not operate efficiently.
- Different actors at vertical and horizontal levels are not yet working in partnership to shape the anticipation of VET policies and systems.

A caveat should be introduced here. The difference in these self-evaluations between the more positive and the more negative indicators is often relatively small, compared to the way that other countries engaged with the GEMM countries are tending to self-report. Nevertheless, the emphasis placed by the expert respondents in Palestine is worth further consideration and debate.

The results of the mapping and self-assessment work call for further analysis of several of the key questions raised in the introduction to this report. These are dealt with below, so that government and stakeholders can give these matters further consideration.

2.2 TVET leadership at national level

Over the past decade a significant number of reforms and partial reforms have been put in place in the diverse and fragmented TVET sector, even though these have not led by and large to the hoped-for improvements in the quality, efficiency and relevance to labour market needs that in 1999 and 2011 versions of the TVET strategy anticipated. Nevertheless, Section 1 of this report and the table showing different types of initiatives that are being set up indicate that some progress has indeed been made. Not least, some valuable experience and capacity for localised to change has built up in the system and least among a limited number of professional managers in the main ministries concerned.

There is broad agreement across government, donors and stakeholders that two key issues have not been tackled until now. Furthermore, two strategic attempts to tackle these issues are now 'on the table'. In each of these respects, it is a strength that the two key ministries concerned with TVET generally prefer to work together well, and having this way achieve a mutual culture of cooperation.

The two key challenges can, if resolved satisfactorily, lead to an overall improvement in TVET governance and provision. The first challenge is the system is rather fragmented at all levels from national management systems through to different types and traditions of local provision. The second challenge is that the roles and functions that donor organisations perform in different programmes and projects are not well coordinated, do not necessarily lead to sustainability or upscaling of reform and,

while important, often do not constitute a coherent and transparent strand in the development of TVET systems and reforms in Palestine. Behind these two challenges set a number of structural conditions that in any case may limit the effectiveness of TVET reforms in the context; for example, the labour market performs very imperfectly in the continuing situation and limitations of occupation and there is a linked and perennial difficulty in securing sufficient finance for the sector to work well.

Taking these difficulties into account, both the revised TVET strategy and the proposal to establish a single, unified TVET agency are both clear and ambitious steps that aim to meet the challenges mentioned above as effectively as possible.

In parallel, at the national level, sufficient finance has to be secured as far as possible and funding allocations made in ways that incentivise change more effectively than current funding mechanisms to. Furthermore, quality assurance and quality management will have to be strong and common strand that runs through all the reform programmes that can actually be put into practice, in the diverse aspects fact both the strategy and this report have referred to.

In terms of governance, both the TVET strategy and the proposal to establish the agency are ambitious and multifaceted, but both also carry the risk of partial and incomplete implementation. Action planning for implementing the strategy should be revisited by a forum of the ministries and key stakeholders to ensure that plans and timetables are realistic and achievable this time round, and that the correct steps and stages are identified and followed if the decision is taken to establish a TVET agency. It must be remembered, for example, that numerous countries, such as Jordan, have set up such an agency, but the outcomes have been at best only partially successful. As well as getting the partnership and functions right, extensive training and capacity building will be needed, as well as the required financial resources.

As part of a more coherent approach to the governance and reform of TVET the Government should respond to the long-standing request of core donors to establish a TVET Technical Working Group within the LAC-structure under the overall guidance of the two ministries concerned, and in the future of the new TVET agency.

Currently, little attention is paid concerning how best to link the formal training arrangements with informal apprenticeships in the informal sectors of the labour market.

2.3 Social dialogue and partnership

In the Palestinian context the terms social dialogue partnership can be taken quite clearly to mean both the organisations that represent employers and other civil society organisations, such as the key organisations that represent women. On the other hand, the trade union federations are not currently prominent in social dialogue on training; this may also change at some point in the future.

It is clearly the case that these interest groups already have significant, if ad hoc, experience of engaging in dialogue and partnership with both government and donors. Notably, there is co-operation that goes beyond consultation in such matters as developing the national strategy. Furthermore, on account of the extensive involvement of donor activity, some of the employer organisations and civil society organisations have significant experience of implementing projects; in some respects this is accentuated in Palestine because of the prevailing importance of donor funding and activity.

Engagement in partnership carries implications of responsibilities as well as rights to participate in more formal and transparent networks. In turn, this means that the social partners that are engaged have to build up their own capacity and culture in such a way that they can meet the new demands of a new way of working. A step in this direction can be to identify their own training and capacity building needs, and to explore how their organisation can take into its culture the social dialogue partnership approach. Then, it will probably be necessary to set up a small unit staffed at an appropriate level and

reporting to the senior managers to handle the links between the demand for and supply of skills, and the more systematic work that will need to be done in the field of VET governance and programmes. Where organisations have regional, local, industrial or sectoral constituencies, this expertise will need to spread out to other levels in the organisation.

2.4 Territorial dimension

While the management of TVET was (and in many respects remains) highly centralised and the private sector of the economy is still developing, current initiatives suggest that there is now a clear space for partnership activity at an intermediate level between government and the schools and colleges. This is not to suggest that a new bureaucracy should be established at the governorate or local level. Rather, it is entirely appropriate that formal partnerships under the umbrella of a national project or programme should be formed in many instances to ensure the local implementation in the most useful way possible of particular innovations. The model can be one of a local public-private partnership whose management and implementation engages government at the appropriate level, social partners and a range of stakeholders, the schools and colleges engage and, perhaps, higher education to participate, inject ideas or evaluate. Ways should also be found to upscale successful local initiatives.

As is the case with the social partners at national level, this kind of activity can benefit substantially from peer group learning, training and capacity building.

2.5 Increasing responsiveness, autonomy and accountability of TVET providers

A change in the management role of the colleges and schools - and, in particular, of deans in the colleges and principals in the schools - is of prime importance if VET provision and outcomes are to become more responsive to employment and skills needs and, at the same time, more accountable to government and stakeholders.

Currently, although they clearly take some smaller decisions at the local level, the ways in which school and college leaders and their colleagues operate, at least in the public sector of provision, is micromanaged centrally from the directorate general. Whilst a sound, participatory framework for the central governance of VET has to remain a key feature of the system, the effect of a growing reliance on quality assurance systems on the local level is that school leaders locally have a sensible degree of local management responsibility, within a clear regulatory framework and a clear framework of functional responsibilities that are supported and evaluated through quality assurance mechanisms.

Increasing local management responsibilities and accountability is intended to ensure that school deans and principals, their management colleagues and their associated boards, committees and development plans are responsive to the needs of their students, local communities and to the local and wider needs of the labour market. In essence, this means devolving to school leaders and the relevant local committees an appropriate amount of autonomy to take some decisions concerning the management of the school, how priorities can be met in terms of human and financial resources, the organisation of teaching and learning programmes and forming local networks that engage the community and the world of work actively in the work of the school.

Local pilot projects are an integral part of the ETF approach to the GEMM project, for which this report has been prepared. The GEMM pilot projects at the local level could be useful incubators for introducing some extent of devolved responsibility and the setting up of appropriate accountability measures.

Devolution of some powers to the local level raises more than a question of a sound regulatory framework. It calls for discussion between the national and local level, the formation of links and partnerships between the school and local communities and industry, adequate funding arrangements that can help to generate change. Principally, training and capacity building of the teachers and managers in the VET schools involved will be needed, as will support in building the local networks envisaged.

2.6 Improving the evidence-based policy approach to steering TVET policy making in multi-participatory environments

As yet, there is no clear or effective labour market information system, although this forms part of the cooperation between GIZ and the ministries. However development is still at quite an early stage.

2.7 Summary: GEMM National Committee's evaluation of strengths and weaknesses

The GEMM national committee carried out a SWOT analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the current state of development of TVET governance, and this provides a summary overview of many of the issues discussed in this report (see Table 2.1). The SWOT analysis also adds some additional weight to the evidence gathered in the mapping exercise.

The analysis emphasises that the renewed national TVET strategy provides a careful and thorough framework for reform, and the extensive contribution of a wide range of stakeholders to developing strategy is a highly positive step forward. However, the next stage remains problematical and will involve extensive activity for implementation, and the engaged partnership activity of numerous stakeholders; in the past it is these next steps that have not been successfully engaged with. A positive reading of the swot analysis suggests that in spite of some formidable obstacles, considerable further progress can be made to improve TVET provision through modernising governance. In turn, these reforms can make provision more responsive to the needs of the labour market and more worthwhile for young people and their families as they seek to optimise the outcomes that they gain from their education and training and to make the best of their opportunities for employment.

The steps that colleagues in Palestine may wish to consider, and the recommendations that follow, are informed by the descriptions and analysis of TVET governance that the report has produced.

TABLE 2.1 GEMM NATIONAL COMMITTEE'S SWOT ANALYSIS OF TVET GOVERNANCE IN PALESTINE (ADAPTED)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Publication of the national TVET Strategy, after the involvement of all stakeholders in the drafting committees is a sound achievement ■ Improving employment opportunities for the TVET graduates along with growing need for qualified and professional graduates ■ The national will to develop the TVET sector in Palestine ■ National-level expertise, on both supply and demand sides. Team work results in generating good ideas that reflect positively on the TVET governance ■ Cooperation of some labour market actors with TVET providers ■ Availability of various established TVET providers, and a good geographical distribution of learning institutions and vocational training ■ Financial support from the donors ■ Availability of a unified database for the TVET ■ The development of theoretical and practical curricula in the Ministry of Labour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TVET governance is fragmented. There is a lack of coordination between stakeholders, and meanwhile diverse TVET systems operate in isolation. Multiple agencies have a role, but many stakeholders lack awareness of the importance of good TVET governance. The system lacks unified management and the non-operation of the Higher Council for TVET is a sign of this weakness. TVET provision is often under-utilised, and repeated but unsuccessful attempts at reform lead to frustration ■ Weakness in the implementation of policies and strategies. Absence of cooperation mechanisms and incentives to engage private sector stakeholders. Few TVET teachers and managers are trained in needs-based curriculum development ■ Obstacles include the variety of uncoordinated ministries responsible for the TVET sector (which leads to multiple rules and regulations), the separation between the vocational education and technical education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A lack of financial resources ■ The weak national Palestinian economy leads to structural problems and instability in the labour market. Limited employment opportunities ■ There is a lack of labour market information systems, curriculum studies and evaluations to support TVET governance ■ TVET has a low social image. There is a lack of awareness of the importance of TVET, weak incentives and guidance, a lack of relevant curricula, programmes, learning environments, equipment and materials ■ Some of the existing laws are bureaucratic and inefficient ■ The limited autonomy of TVET providers
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Existing international donors who have experience in the TVET sector (e.g. Germany, Belgium, Switzerland) ■ Availability of Palestinian technical and administrative expertise ■ Availability of new training programmes that keep pace to the new technologies with high employment potential in the labour market ■ The development and expansion of the industrial sector ■ The financial investment in technological industrial projects ■ The implementation of the TVET strategy in Palestine ■ Potential application across the governorates ■ The availability of many projects supporting TVET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of financial resources: risk of unsustainable resources, limited investment in TVET programmes, budget reductions to TVET providers. ■ The unstable prevailing political conditions in Palestine, including multiple obstacles created by Israeli occupation ■ Real engagement of labour market actors in TVET governance is lacking ■ Reluctance of the youth to enter the TVET sector ■ Weakness of the private sector to absorb TVET graduates ■ Difficulty in selecting properly qualified persons for professional roles, and human resource/capability weaknesses ■ The allocated time for international projects ■ Brain drain of professionals ■ Cultural factors, especially in relation to girls training ■ Lack of appropriate rules and legislations ■ The implementation of the governance system in some governorates and exclusion of others

RECOMMENDATIONS

The mapping and further analysis of TVET governance in Palestine leads to a number of recommendations. These are put forward so that the public agencies and stakeholders involved can plan and implement improvements in TVET governance at all levels.

Consolidating the strategic approach to TVET governance

Recommendation 1. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Labour should build on the opportunity offered by the strong culture of cooperation that led to the adoption of the revised TVET strategy in order to establish a strategic framework of TVET governance. More coherent management across the sub-systems could make a strong contribution to realising the vision, and take into account a number of aspects that include finance and funding and developing a sound approach to quality assurance.

Recommendation 2. The ministries should review (with partners) the action plan for the TVET strategy with a view to working out which reforms are essential, and how to prioritise and implement these. If it is established successfully, the new TVET agency would be the ideal vehicle to lead this development.

Recommendation 3. The coordination of all development activities implemented in the TVET sector by the donor community should be a priority. This is precisely because donor policy and implementation support and funding are an important component of the system, yet without effective coordination can lead to projects and reforms whose full potential is not fulfilled after the ending of a specific project.

Recommendation 4. The ministries should work consistently on governance measures to increase the attractiveness of TVET learners, their families and to employers (thus improving quality of curriculum, assessment and facilities, opportunities and participation). Simultaneously, tools should be developed and used widely to make TVET more responsive to identified skills demands in the labour market.

Recommendation 5. Further enquiry into informal apprenticeship in the informal sectors of the economy should be undertaken, so as to work out the most useful linkages between informal and formal sector training.

Recommendation 6. Developments of aspects of a quality assurance approach that have taken place should be kept under review through the work of AQAC. Institutionalisation of quality assurance for the whole TVET sector should take into consideration the role and experience of AQAC.

Recommendation 7. The system should become more flexible, starting from devolving some responsibilities to school management and provision of services for the labour market. This will also support the financial sustainability of the TVET institutions and of the TVET agency (if established).

Social dialogue and partnership

Recommendation 8. The private sector should be encouraged to taking a leading role in identifying labour market needs and a stronger role to support the reform and updating of TVET provision. Partners such as the Palestinian Federation of Industries, the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and are not yet in a position to play this leading role. However, they are increasingly interested in and aware of what they can do, and they should be supported by government and donors to develop the necessary capacities to take on a stronger role.

Recommendation 9. Employer federations' involvement in planning and implementing some of the reforms should be made more systematic and less ad hoc.

Recommendation 10. Dialogue should be established with the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions, with a view to PGFTU's eventual participation in consultations and/or partnership on TVET matters.

Territorial dimensions

Recommendation 11. Where collaboration has already begun at the more local level to create TVET initiatives, such as through the LET initiatives and a number of bilateral developments being undertaken by the public authorities working with particular chambers, attention should be paid to setting up a robust and durable approach to governance at the more local level.

Recommendation 12. Consideration should also be given in each case to how local initiatives taken with ministerial support can be up-scaled and applied successfully more widely.

Recommendation 13. Governance arrangements for the education and training of refugees and the inclusion of residents in Zone C should retain high priority on the part of all stakeholders.

Increasing responsiveness, autonomy and accountability of TVET providers

Recommendation 14. Limited pilots should be established with particular TVET providers to encourage and incentivise the principals and managers to work with the national level and governorates in order to experiment with taking greater responsibility for aspects of management. Various this could include curriculum decisions, forming partnerships with local industries, raising more resources locally, and meeting particular identified social and labour market needs.

Recommendation 15. The leaders of the TVET providing schools and institutions should receive the training needed to prepare for taking more initiative and responsibility locally.

Improving the data and evidence base

Recommendation 16. A first task of stakeholders working with the donor community is to work out what systems of management information and labour market skills needs analysis are feasible and necessary to support more coherent governance of the whole sector.

Recommendation 17. A full set of indicators for monitoring the efficiency of the TVET sector and its reform process should be developed.

Capacity building

Recommendation 18. Almost all of these recommendations have human resource capacity and financial implications, which should be given careful attention as the reform process progresses.


ACRONYMS

AQAC	Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission
BTC	Belgian Development Agency
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German federal enterprise for international cooperation)
LET councils	Local employment and TVET councils
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MoL	Ministry of Labour
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees
VET	Vocational education and training

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, please see the ETF website:

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