

# EDUCATION WATCH

## CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATION MANIFESTO: PROVIDING A FACELIFT TO TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN GHANA

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a neglected sector in education. Long periods of neglect of the sector have made it a second fiddle to grammar oriented secondary education. Families only subscribe to TVET as a last resort, after failure to secure admissions into grammar second cycle institutions. The Ghanaian approach and perception towards TVET nonetheless, does not take away the pivotal role TVET plays in providing the middle level industrial manpower base of any developing or developed economy.

The issues affecting TVET are of patronage, quality and relevance of TVET delivery in Ghana. They include the existence of archaic TVET curriculum, limited academic progression for TVET graduates, lack of adequate financing for TVET, low quality of TVET instructors, lack of modern equipment in TVET workshops and lack of adequate TVET school infrastructure. The broad outcomes of the above issues is the relevance of TVET graduates to the economy, as there are limited employment opportunities for most skilled graduates produced by TVET institutions.

### **Poor Quality of infrastructure and equipment in Technical and Vocational**

**Educating Training Centres:** TVET centres nationwide lack adequate equipment, infrastructure and qualified instructors. This is partly the reason why TVET seems unattractive to the high numbers of youth unable to transit into Senior High Schools each

year. With the current national emphasis on skills training, the need for continuing and expanding on-going interventions by COTVET and NVTI to upgrade TVET infrastructure and provide modern TVET equipment should be pursued.

**Lack of jobs for Technical And Vocational Education Training graduates:** The current link between TVET and industry is weak. As a result, most TVET graduates fall short of industries' skills requirements and are unable to secure jobs after completing school. There is the need to align TVET courses to industrial skills requirements.

**Outmoded Curriculum in Technical And Vocational Education Training institutions:** Most TVET curriculums are outmoded and irrelevant to the current dynamic technology driven global development agenda. Apart from these, there still exist rudimentary methods of teaching TVET, which makes it non-compliant with the current ICT revolution in teaching and learning.

**Poor Quality of TVET instructors: The poor quality of teaching and learning TVET institutions is to blame on the poor quality of TVET instructors, a situation occasioned by limited capacity of TVET instructor training universities to train adequate numbers of qualified instructors to teach in TVET institutions. This is worsened by the lack of adequate TVET instructor motivation, especially, the conditions of work.**



**Limited Academic Progression in TVET:** The current educational system does not provide opportunities for TVET graduates to pursue degrees up to the Doctorates level in their respective vocations. For example, whereas it is possible to progress academically to attain a Doctor of Technology in metal fabrication, plumbing, auto mechanics etc in other European and Asian countries, the same cannot be said for Ghana. Limiting academic progression within a vocation also reduces one's ability to earn more income in that vocation. This is one of the factors accountable for the low interest of ambitious youth in TVET.

**Inadequate TVET financing:** Of cross-cutting effect is the issue of funding. Without adequate funding, the aforementioned issues in TVET will remain, if not worsen, just as funding in itself remains the causal agent of all the major quality deficits in TVET. In the past ten years, TVET has received less than 2% of the education sector's annual budget. This is due to the use of the per capita funding criteria in education budget allocation, which disadvantages TVET institutions (due to the relative high cost of TVET) to the benefit of grammar institutions.

Civil society, in their effort to revive the TVET sector hereby recommends the following policy measures for adoption and implementation by the next political administration. It is worthy of note that, most of the policy recommendations are at various stages of implementation and may have to be fully implemented by whichever party annexes the political seat in January, 2013.

- 1) Provide scholarships for Technical and Vocational Education Training to encourage patronage by the youth.
- 2) Establish technical resource centres at the circuit level to support the practical aspects of Basic Design Technology at the basic level.
- 3) Implement apprenticeship policy for Junior High School drop-outs as indicated in the 2006 Education Reform.
- 4) Accelerate and expand on-going TVET infrastructural development programmes, especially the Ghana Skills and Technology Development Project (GSTDP) and the Development of Skills for Industry Project (DSIP) to ensure all technical and vocational schools are renovated and re-equipped to serve as effective learning centres.
- 5) Commit 5% of the education budget into Technical and Vocational Education Training.
- 6) Develop a program to establish and strengthen institutional collaboration and exchange programmes between all technical and vocational schools and key actors in industry.
- 7) Engage and motivate qualified instructors to teach in technical and vocational schools.
- 8) Review the curriculum of technical and vocational schools to make them responsive to the demands of the modern job market in Ghana.
- 9) Develop a policy that encourages the award of government infrastructure and equipment contracts to competent technical and vocational institutions.
- 10) Link TVET institutions to polytechnics and Universities to ensure there are advanced (degree) courses for key TVET courses in polytechnics and universities.

