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Editorial

TVET[@]Asia Issue 1: Collaboration in TVET

In view of the immense importance technical and vocational education and training (TVET) holds for social and economic development, one can simply never underestimate the significance of the collaboration between all stakeholders at all levels in this process. Learners can only be introduced into their professional community of practice during their education and training phase when given the opportunity to learn at authentic, real workplaces in close contact to their future peers. For several years workplace learning has been high on the TVET agenda in many countries worldwide, not only serving the learners but also the companies, by giving them the inestimably valuable opportunity to become acquainted with their future employees in advance of actually hiring them and in addition being able to shape both their education and training. In determining what should be learnt, in terms of developing curricula, a share of that input must come from the corporate sector, for one of the significant roles of TVET is to prepare a skilled workforce for the economy. Vocational teachers must have access to the world of work simply to be able to find out what it is that their students should learn in the here and now. It is crucial to the framework of initial teacher education but also vital in helping their work stay up-to-date, regarding technical knowledge, and even more vitally regarding the work processes, their organisation, and the current competency requirements. At both national and sub-national levels all stakeholders, government agencies, social partners (i.e. employers and labour unions), TVET providers and the relevant sciences have to work together to continuously shape a vocational education and training system attuned to the needs of the people, the society, the economy and the environment, and furthermore, quite simply, render it attractive to its clients. Last but not least, in the era of emerging transnational economic areas featuring goods, services and labour mobility, nations are compelled to work on the transparency of national qualifications and the mutual recognition of skills. Moreover, they should learn from each other about the partners' vocational education and training systems within an atmosphere of economic cooperation and competition.

Hence, collaboration in TVET is a huge and broad-ranging topic. This first issue of TVET[@]Asia, the Online Journal for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Asia, tries to approach this topic from different sides without claiming to address all the relevant issues. Most of the contributions were already presented at the 2nd UPI International Conference on TVET which took place under the same theme heading as this journal issue,

and was organized by Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia and the Regional Cooperation Platform on Vocational Teacher Education in Asia, supported by Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, in Bandung, Indonesia on 4th to 5th December 2012. They were selected from approximately 55 paper and poster contributions, and represent quite a diverse view on the subject of “collaboration in TVET”. Several directly address the issue, while other articles focus on another primary topic. All of them, however, address the fundamental necessity of collaboration in TVET in one way or another.

Collaboration between institutions offering TVET and their direct stakeholders (such as companies at the implementation level) is vital in assuring the quality and relevance of TVET. However, such collaboration is not always problem-free as the contributions by Rashidi, Abdullah and Mustapha demonstrate. **Rashidi** suggests that an internal, formative evaluation of collaboration can lead to improved understanding of the partners and proposes a related procedure. Based on case studies in Indonesia, **Abdullah** explores what factors TVET institutions have to consider to ensure their collaboration with companies are successful. In his article **Mustapha** suggests providers of TVET should sometimes take a closer look at what their clients, i.e. the companies, wish to obtain from them. The survey carried out among Malaysian automotive companies reveals that equipping graduates with social skills and social values is almost of equal value to the provision of technical knowledge and skills.

How important the development of a mutual understanding is between the parties involved in the vocational education system, whether at a local or national level, can be well estimated from the contributions by Ratnata, Alias & Hassan, Kurnia & Ilhamdaniah, and again Rashidi. **Ratnata** addresses the question of how TVET can be made attractive for young people and their parents and thus meet quantitative and qualitative development goals. **Alias and Hassan** relate what efforts have been undertaken to tap the potentials of collaboration for the development of the National Dual Training System in Malaysia and also reveal the related challenges. The article by **Kurnia and Ilhamdaniah** examines the practical part of vocational teacher education via a cross-border comparative perspective concluding that the required practical teacher competences simply cannot be developed without contributions from companies and vocational schools.

Agrawal illustrates how India uses the potential of inland cooperation between education and training institutions and industry for the benefit of TVET, but also points to a number of India’s international cooperation initiatives. The supranational perspective on TVET collaboration in Southeast Asia has been provided by **Paryono**, who adopts a more political viewpoint. Finally, **Smith & Brennan**’s article shows that learning from one another of the properties of different TVET systems under a true international perspective could itself be quite worthwhile and is also a form of collaboration.

The articles have been roughly organised according to spatial coverage, beginning with the international perspective and proceeding towards more local issues. We hope that this first issue of TVET[@]Asia is helpful reading for all those interested in technical and vocational

education and training in Asia and that it constitutes a good start to this new open-access online journal.

The Editors of Issue 1

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