

## Enhancing the Contribution of the Belgian TVET Programmes to Girls' Empowerment

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## Introduction

ONE contribution to an increasingly important international debate

### Rationale :

- Link with YEE, CEFM
- Learn, Lead, Decide and Thrive

### Methodology :

- Conducted by South Research : L. Caubergs, E. Verhofstadt
- Mainly based on existing Belgian TVET programmes (Interviews, Reports...)
- A compendium/toolkit (based on good practices) for practitioners
- Reference group: APEFE, CTB, Via Don Bosco, VVOB & Plan International

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## Definitions & Approach



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## Definition: Empowerment

Empowerment as multidimensional processes of change ... “touches on many different aspects of change in women’s lives, each important in themselves, but also in their interrelationships with other aspects. It touches on women’s sense of self-worth and social identity; their willingness and ability to question their subordinate status and identity; their capacity to exercise strategic control over their own lives and to renegotiate their relationships with others who matter to them; and their ability to participate on equal terms with men in reshaping the societies in which they live in ways that contribute to a more just and democratic distribution of power and possibilities” (Kabeer, 2006).

=> TVET Not just technical knowledge !



## Definition: TVET

### TVET : Technical and Vocational Education and Training

- **Informal Education:** ‘...the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment from family and neighbours, from work and play, from the marketplace, the library and the mass media...’
- **Formal Education:** ‘...the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded “educational system”, running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialized programmes and institutions for fulltime technical and professional training.’
- **Non-Formal Education:** ‘...any organized educational activity outside the established formal system whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientèle and learning objectives.’

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## Approach

What are the (f)actors enabling of impeding girls’ Access to and Completion of TVET programs

and Participation in Transition activities towards decent work

be it

- At governmental and policy level
- At the level of schools, TVET Centers, (local) development agencies, NGOs
- At the level of families and communities



## Findings

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## Access



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## Access strategies (1/2)

### At governmental and political level

- Develop appropriate policy (know local context, future trend...)
- Rely on an inter-ministerial approach.
- Gender awareness-raising activities for civil servants or school and programme staff

### At the level of families and communities

- A condition *sine qua non*
- Girls /young women and their direct environment (family, community) through mass campaigns or individual approaches (+ encourage for "non traditional women trades".)
- Work with men (fathers, brothers, husbands, employers and employees).



## Access strategies (2/2)

### At the level of schools, TVET centres, (local) development agencies and NGOs

- Stimulate the development of gender policy (at the level of schools and/or TVET centres)
- Change of mentalities and prejudice by training school staff
- Facilitate girls scholarships, adapting admission criteria
- Create a girl-friendly school environment
- Schooling infrastructure : sanitation facilities for girls, lodging, ...  
! not only important for the students but also to convince parents !!
- Provide perspective on decent work opportunities
- Go beyond the traditional perceptions of "men and women jobs/ trades"
- Role of non-formal TVET opportunities (shorter or free trainings, provision of additional services, closer to their homes) -> increase quality and recognition



## Completion



## Completion strategies (1/2)

### At the level of families and communities

- No formalised strategies in programme planning and budget => ad-hoc measures
- Girls and young women often drop out when resistance from husbands, parents or important family and community members



## Completion strategies (2/2)

### At the level of schools

- Integrate measures against GBV at the level of school policies, (school) services and infrastructure **as well as** behaviours and attitudes of students and staff.
- Platforms that offer (safe) discussion spaces for girls, boys, teachers and staff.
- Social and psychological support, training and awareness-raising activities for school staff and students.
- Provision of kindergarten centres for the children of young mothers, remedial courses to **re-integrate students** who dropped out or missed classes, or the provision of stipends for poor students or as a financial compensation for income generating opportunities.



## Transition



## Transition Strategies (1/2)

### At the governmental level

- Analyse situation of young women with regard to access and participation in the job market
- Facilitate access to self-employment for young women

### At the level of the private sector

- Assess risks and resistance to female employment.
- Women entrepreneurs as female role models.
- Gender sensitivity and awareness trainings of private sector actors.



## Transition Strategies (2/2)

### At the level of schools and services

- Develop gender sensitivity among staff and in strategies of employment services.
- Gather adequate information (for instance a graduate tracking system with gender disaggregated data).
- Organisation of internships also provides opportunity to develop gender awareness and gender equality on the work floor.
- Develop in-school-production departments BUT !! not as a side-track.
- Not exclusively to execute technical tasks but also for more responsibility.
- Self-employment programmes; credit and saving groups.



## Recommendations

## Recommendations

- Invest in all three stages: **Access**, **Completion** and **Transition**.
- Focus on “poverty” and “safety”.
- Mentality switch as a general principle.
- Importance of non-formal education.
- Empowerment to choose and have options.
- Need for an holistic approach to come to sustainable change.





Thank you for your attention !

Research available on : [www.planbelgique.be](http://www.planbelgique.be)

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Voor en door kinderen.  
Avec et pour les enfants.