



Piloting opportunity-driven Vocational Education and Training (VET)

2023 in review



A partnership project



Funded by the
European Union



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BMZ





VET Toolbox is a programme funded by the **European Commission** and co-financed by **BMZ**, which aims to maximise local benefits from European investments in Sub-Saharan Africa. The initiative is implemented jointly by **Enabel, Expertise France, GIZ, LuxDev** and the **British Council**.

Employment creation in Africa is an important objective of the global development agenda. **Investments** are a way to create **business opportunities** and support local benefits along the value chain but should be accompanied by a **local workforce** who possesses the required skill sets.

Skills development systems in Sub Sahara Africa, however, often lack the capacity to be more responsive to investors' needs, and as a result, investors do not see opportunities to use a locally trained workforce. This **mismatch** between demand and supply of skills reduces the potential for local benefits and their contribution to social and economic development.

To bridge the skills gap, VET Toolbox pilots an **opportunity-driven approach** to **Vocational Education and Training (VET)**, linking skills development with European investment opportunities to unlock local benefits through employment (e.g. increased income, development of local value chains).

Steps for an opportunity-driven approach to VET



First, concrete employment opportunities based on investments are identified.



After that, human resources are defined, and skills needs are specified.



VET is then selectively organised to address these skills gaps, focusing on job profiles requiring vocational skills.



Finally, graduates can find decent employment within companies operating in the targeted value chain.

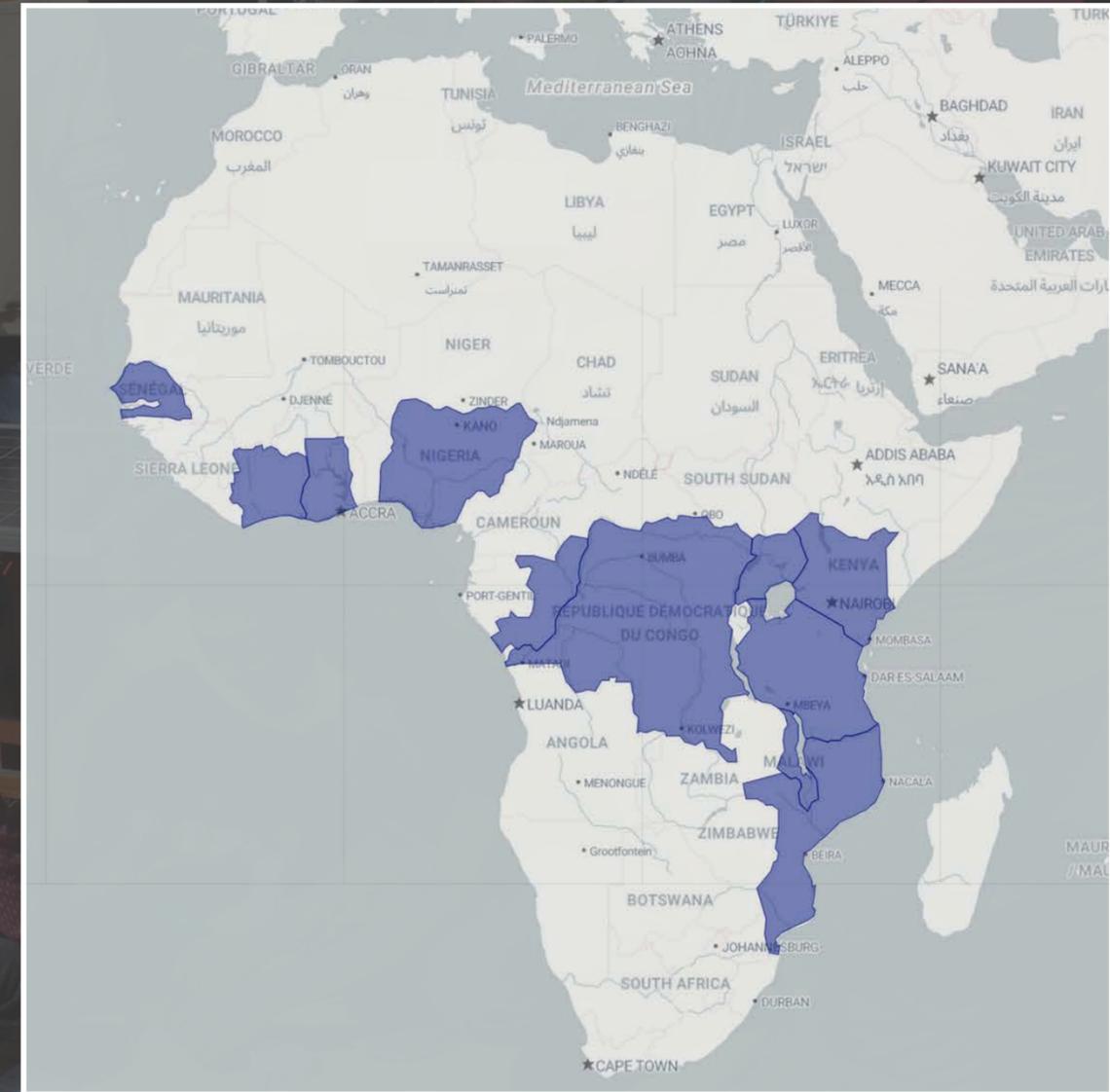
In 2023, VET Toolbox implemented projects in **11 countries*** in Sub-Saharan Africa.

GIZ successfully completed six projects in five countries, while other partners made progress in the remaining seven.

The following pages provide an overview of VET Toolbox's 2023 progress.

 [Read more in our detailed Annual Report](#)

*Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda





Objectives

The overarching goal of VET Toolbox is to demonstrate that **local skills development systems** can be **flexible** and more **responsive** to the **labour market's needs**. When skills systems deliver the competent local workforce needed to support **investments** in Sub-Saharan Africa, foreign capital can create **local benefits**, including **decent jobs** and income generation. This contributes to sustainable **social and economic development**.

More specifically, VET Toolbox aims to enhance the delivery of demand-driven skills development and VET that caters to investment needs. By doing so, it aims to better **meet the human capital needs of value and supply chain development and investment programmes** in selected countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

To achieve the objectives, VET Toolbox is working on the following result areas:



Result area 1

Enhanced national public-private dialogue (PPD) on employment-oriented skills development and VET conducive for investments.



Result area 2

VET stakeholders are supported to deliver relevant training in line with investment needs.



Result area 3

VET reform stimulated by capturing lessons from practical experience in delivering investment-oriented VET.

Achievements in 2023

- By the end of 2023, in total, **2,842 trainees** participated in new or adapted VET programmes.
- Among them, **1,420 graduates** from finished GIZ projects were **employed**. They either secured their current job through upskilling or found new employment. This represents 66% of all 2,148 GIZ training graduates.
- Among the employed graduates, **39%** are **women**, exceeding the target of 35%, despite the predominantly male-dominated sectors.
- All VET Toolbox partner countries have set up a **PPD platform** organised around one or more specific sectors, bringing together a range of public and private stakeholders at different levels. The project led to various examples of **sustaining public-private partnerships**. In some cases, companies and VET providers or companies/business associations and VET/employment authorities jointly finance activities or co-invest in skills development.
- **Lessons learned** were identified and used to derive **(policy) recommendations**, which were disseminated to policymakers in five countries (Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda) so far. This capitalisation on lessons learnt will continue in the other projects in 2024.





Benefits highlighted by private sector actors



Improved staff recruitment, enhancing service quality, efficiency, and profitability.



Defined occupational profiles tailored to their needs, facilitating flexible and practical training.



Enhanced quality and competitiveness through government-led accreditation and standardisation processes.



Updated in-house knowledge and techniques through capacity-building measures, promising business growth and increased profit.

Project highlights





Building 'Skills for Transport' in Mozambique

Implementing agency: GIZ

Status: Completed

The VET Toolbox project in Mozambique contributes to the economic development and the improvement of the investment climate in the economic corridors of Maputo and Beira through the promotion of demand-oriented skills development for the Transport and Logistics (T&L) sector.

Achievements

- Strengthening the dialogue on skills in the T&L sector through a **PPD platform** led by the business association of Beira (Associação Comercial da Beira -ACB).
- Developing an **Employability training course** for the T&L sector to prepare individuals to work in T&L companies.
- **Training and professionalising local T&L MSMEs** to improve their chances of accessing business opportunities with larger transport companies and, in turn, increase their revenue.
- **Capacitating VET centres** to transition youth into **employment** by setting up or reinforcing Employment departments and strengthening their link with the private sector.



Read the project's factsheet



Watch the project's video



Developing labour market-relevant skills across four key economic sectors in the DRC

Implementing agency: Enabel
Status: Ongoing

In the DRC, VET Toolbox collaborates with public and private partners to create access to local job opportunities in key economic sectors that support the formal mining industry, the driving force in the country's economy.

Achievements

- Establishing a **Sector Skills Council** in the targeted sectoral chambers of the local branches of the Congolese Business Federation (Fédération des Entreprises du Congo - FEC) in Haut-Katanga and Lualaba.
- Identifying companies in **need of skills** and effectively **mobilising** private and public (sectoral) **TVET stakeholders** and **companies** to define job clusters and develop professional profiles.
- Developing **high-quality professional training approaches** responding to market needs and occupational standards within the framework of public-private partnerships (PPPs), targeting the four key economic sectors in the mining value chain.

 [Read the project's factsheet](#)



Improving skills and employability in Senegal's eco-construction sub-sector

Implementing agency: LuxDev
Status: Ongoing

Through the "Jang Ban" project in Senegal, VET Toolbox works together with public and private actors to reinforce skills development and unlock job opportunities in the thriving eco-construction sector.

Achievements

- Organising **multi-level stakeholder workshops** between key private and public sector partners aimed at identifying private sector needs and skills gaps.
- **Formalising a partnership agreement** between Elementerre SARL, a construction company; Worofila, a collective specialised in bioclimatic architecture; and two training centres to train the required labour force for the new eco-construction project.
- Expanding the professional training offer in the field of eco-construction through the development of **new professional standards and curricula**.



Read the project's factsheet



Enhancing training & professional integration in Congo's forestry, industrial maintenance & ecotourism sectors

Implementing agency: Expertise France
Status: Ongoing

In the Republic of Congo, VET Toolbox collaborates with both public and private partners to reinforce skills development in response to private sector needs in the growing sectors of ecotourism, forestry and industrial maintenance.

Achievements

- Setting up a **PPD platform** engaging public and private stakeholders in the discussion on sector-specific challenges in skills development and job creation for youth.
- Engaging in **capacity development activities**, such as upskilling employees of private company partners and Vocational Training Institutes.
- Developing tailor-made and certified **training programmes** for all **three sectors** (covering ten trades), including work-based learning opportunities through active private sector involvement and dual VET.
- Facilitating **job placement** and supporting graduates with **entrepreneurship skills** and tools to start up their own businesses.



[Read the project's factsheet](#)



Enhancing agricultural skills in Ghana

Implementing agency: British Council

Status: Ongoing

VET Toolbox collaborates with public and private partners to create a conducive environment for local job creation in the agriculture and agro-processing sectors in Ghana.

Achievements

- Developing **three distinct curricula** in Agronomy, Farm Enterprise Management, and Tractor Operation Maintenance and Management, in collaboration with training providers and private farms.
- Pioneering **work-based learning** in the sector through collaboration between commercial farms and training providers to provide **inclusive employment** for graduates.
- Enhancing dialogue between the main actors in the sector through a **sustainable multi-level PPD**, aiming to formalise and streamline sector-specific VET in response to investments and labour market dynamics.



Read the project's factsheet

Key lessons learned & recommendations from piloting an opportunity-driven approach to VET in the project context

- When designing the action, it is essential to gain a **deep understanding of the specific (and evolving) needs and challenges** related to investment circumstances, skill development, and job opportunities. This requires **early and continuous consultation** of **relevant public and private stakeholders** from the relevant sectors and value chains.
- The investment-relevant sector or value chain highly determines the success of the project. When **identifying investment opportunities**, the following criteria need to be considered for **maximising the employment impact**: the timing of the investment, its potential to create tangible employment (in time) as well as its potential for sectoral and value chain growth for sustainable economic development and local benefits.
- **Leveraging existing programmes and structures**, as well as tapping into established networks and expertise, provides significant advantages that should be utilized to identify opportunities in an efficient way and expedite implementation in a way that employment effects can be realised in the scope of the project.
- **Active private sector involvement** throughout the **entire project lifecycle** is vital to an opportunity-driven approach, particularly for effectively identifying investments and employment opportunities. Private sector engagement should also be emphasized in the development of tailored training programmes and in accompanying graduates' transition to decent employment, as well as in integrating programmes into the national VET framework for sustainability. **Capacity development measures** for MSMEs should allow for their active participation and enhanced employment opportunities at the local level, including in emerging sectors.
- **PPDs** play a crucial role in an opportunity-driven approach to VET, offering a platform for linking private sector needs with skills development. To support these PPDs, facilitation and capacitation is needed (at least in the starting phase). It is recommended to foster multi-level PPD for a structured exchange on skills development and the continuous articulation of employment and investment needs by the private sector. Also, **financing opportunities** (joint financing or cost-sharing mechanism) should be explored early on in the process to allow for sustaining mechanisms.



Policy recommendations

To inspire **policy development** and advocating for an **opportunity-driven approach** to VET, VET Toolbox projects targeted **recommendations towards local policy makers**.

- To successfully driving the green transition, connecting local communities to electricity, and boosting employment in Uganda, it was recommended that local policymakers should **invest in training, expand the piloted solar technician programmes, and facilitate access to finance** for business growth.
- To position Nigeria as key player in the cashew industry, contributing to **employment and economic growth**, policymakers were asked to integrate the developed cashew processing training modules into a **broader VET food processing curriculum** for a country-wide roll-out.
- To stimulate the growth of the green sector, realise its **job potential** and support Kenya's environmental goals, the established PPD needs **political commitment** for a legal mandate and funding.



Read more in our detailed Annual Report



Outlook

The end of 2024 will mark the completion of VET Toolbox. Until then, four out of the five agencies are proceeding with their implementation efforts, pursuing effective skills development that start from concrete employment opportunities, actively engage the private sector and create sustainable public-private partnerships for unlocking decent local employment opportunities.

As a consortium of five European governmental agencies engaged in VET, we are committed to continue to contribute to this paradigm shift where VET is reverse-engineered from concrete job opportunities, showcase our achievements, and inform the upcoming TEI "Opportunity-driven VET in Africa" (OP-VET).



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