



A review of technical education and vocational training in Zambia: Enhancing the role of social partners

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Abstract

Education and training are critical to efforts aimed at achieving the 2030 Agenda, emphasised by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal No. 4, which seeks to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". However, UNESCO has identified the lack of capacity and effective partnerships, among role players, as an important challenge faced by many countries in their quest to make technical education and vocational training deliver desired impacts; partnerships across governments and between agents and institutions involved in TVET at national and local levels. The author shares in this hypothesis and that indeed many countries, including Zambia, his native country, are ensnared in this problem of poor partnerships. Therefore, this paper traces the transformational trajectory of vocational education and technical training in Zambia, focusing on the role of social partners, from pre-colonial times to contemporary practice; making reference to international good practices, with Dutch system being highlighted as case study and further insights drawn from the perspectives of international bodies concerned with human development and skills development in particular, the International Labour Organisation and UNESCO. Zambia is best known for its robust mining industry, it amongst the top 10 largest global copper producers. Increased mining activities brought about new demands in terms of labour, services and products in turn creating a pull factor for the emergence of other support sectors such as manufacturing and commerce and agriculture, particularly along the line of rail. Thus, the mining industry has been a major catalyst in charting the economic traction and development of the country. However, the country was ill equipped in terms of skilled human resources at independence, in 1964, prompting government to undertake a number of educational reforms, particularly pertaining to vocational education and training, hence forth. Despite this effort, TVET has not performed to expectation; one major contributing factor is the lack of cohesion among employers concerned.

Keywords: skills, vocational education and training, social partner, sectoral approach, reforms

Introduction

Zambia has a population of about 16.59 million (2016) ^[9, 16], with an area of 752,618 km². Major Economic sectors include, mining, agriculture, manufacturing and tourism; mining being the main stay. In pursuit of the vision 2030, the Government recently launched the 7th National Development Plan, 2017-2021, under the theme, "Accelerating Development Efforts towards Vision 2030, without leaving anyone behind". In its quest to enhance human development, the government recognises, that "improved education and skills development are instrumental in creating societies that are better able to respond to social and economic development challenges they face"; and that, a skilled workforce is essential for ensuring productive economic sectors, investor confidence, human development and economic resilience. Thus, the plan emphasise the issues of lifelong learning, continuous professional development, knowledge production, and innovation to enhance individual and societal capabilities for competitiveness.

Similarly, the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) avers that nations have made a collective commitment to the 2030 Agenda for development, and that one of the main pillars is achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all. Thus education and training are critical to efforts aimed at achieving the 2030 Agenda, as guided by Sustainable Development Goal

No. 4, which seeks to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" in line with INCHEON Declaration 2030 (World Education Forum, 2015). In the main, Education 2030 aims to promote Technical and Vocational Skills Development; i.e. access to affordable and quality TVET, for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship.

However, this cause is not without challenges. UNESCO has, among others, identified the lack of capacity and effective partnerships, among role players, as an important challenge faced by many countries in their quest to make technical education and vocational training deliver desired impacts; that is, partnerships across governments and between agents and institutions involved in TVET at national and local levels. The author shares in this hypothesis that indeed many countries, including Zambia, his native country, are ensnared in this problem of poor partnerships and ineffective participation of social partners in TVET.

This paper attempts to trace the transformational trajectory of vocational education and technical training in Zambia, focusing on the role of social partners, from pre-colonial times to contemporary practices. In evaluating the opportunities for social partner participation in the Zambian TVET, comparison is made with international good practices, with the Dutch system being highlighted as case study while further insights have been drawn from guidelines provided by international

bodies concerned with human development and skills development such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNESCO.

Zambia is largely a mining country, with the activity being commercialised in the early 21st century, it amongst the top 10 global copper producers. The mining industry took root, mostly on the Copperbelt following the discovery of rich copper deposits, around 1928 in Luanshya. Subsequently more sites were brought on line, by 1957; production reached its peak in the 1970's, hitting a record annual production of 750,000 tonnes of copper, in 1973.

The growth of the mining industry introduced new demands in terms of labour, services and products, inevitably creating a pull factor for the emergence of other support sectors such as manufacturing and commerce and agriculture, particularly along the line of rail which served as a backbone of modern Zambia.

Thus, the mining industry has been a major catalyst in charting the economic activities in the country; to this day the copperbelt where most mining activities are concentrated remains the industrial hub of Zambia while Lusaka, the capital city, is more of a commercial hub.

The growth of the mining industry straddled the pre-colonial and colonial period, 1928-1957, the time when racial discrimination was almost an accepted norm; certain proportion of citizens, the non-whites, were confined to peripherals of social-economic and political life. Unfortunately, this social order or disorder of the time disadvantaged both individuals and the country in terms of essential human capital capabilities; with long term effects.

During this period there was little or no formal education skills training taking place for the African communities. Consequently, most of the jobs and opportunities of value, arising from commercial mining and 'industrialisation' were a preserve of whites. Whatever schooling which was extended to Africans, was packaged to, at best only help raise the standard of life at village level, Carmody, B (2016)^[1]; and not in any way advanced as to excite them to develop political ambitions. Education was to be adapted to the conditions and needs of society of the Africans, contextualised to village life. Hence for a long time Africans could only be allowed up to primary school and a few could proceed to junior secondary school, save for the Missionaries run programmes which sought to empower locals with basic life skills, such as bricklaying, carpentry and agriculture.

Carmody, B (2016)^[1] observes that the first government technical institute was established in 1930, in Mazabuka, it offered a two year course in agriculture. Subsequently, by 1957 there were a number of junior and special trades training centres in Lusaka and the Copperbelt, catering for about a thousand students; they included Central Training School, established in 1935 later called Hodgson College (now David Kaunda Technical School) and Northern Technical College opened in 1960, which was offering courses leading to City and Guide certification.

Hence, the country had a weak skilled human resources base at independence, in 1964. According to Alexander, D (1997), the 1963 national census of a population of around one million, indicated that only about 1200, African Zambians had obtained, Secondary School Certificates, with just about 100

African University Graduates. In contrast the workforce requirements for the nation had risen by 1970; estimated at 23,400 with O-Level, and 10,200 Diplomas and 5,600 University graduates.

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00002618.htm>

In spite of the lack of support from the colonial government, Missionary centres played a critical role in the provision of education and skills development in their areas of influence, from the early days. They ran programmes focused on literacy and numeracy, primary and general education, and life skills; this they did sometimes against the will and discriminatory policies of the colonialists. Subsequently, with persistent pressure and lobbying from missionaries, the government barged and began to support institutions with some limited grants, particularly towards the cost of qualified teaching staff and student support as part of the wider reforms. Thus, partnerships in the provision of education and skills development were beginning to form. Since then, such collaborations started to grow, drawing the interest of other social partners in different sectors in the economy, including the mining industry particularly in the post-independence era. Inheriting a largely disadvantaged and less educated local population at independence, the government led by Dr Kenneth Kaunda identified the need to establish and rapidly expand educational and training facilities, in pursuit of universal primary education. Generally, education was seen by African leaders of newly independent states as the most powerful vehicle for social equalisation and transformation. Hence to correct the imbalances of the pre-independence era, and orient the education and training system with the new socio-economic paradigm, radical reforms were inevitable. In Zambia landmark changes came with the enactment of the Education Act of 1966. Government took full control of the business of schooling and established relevant key agencies to achieve its objectives; covering staffing, curriculum development, examinations and educational materials publication. The government responded with similar urgency to expand the tertiary stream, by establishing the University of Zambia, in 1966, and opening up more enrolment opportunities under the vocational education system.

Reforms in TVET

Zambian TVET has undergone significant transformation since the pre-colonial era. Paron Mweetwa, in an undated article recalls that legislation dating from 1943 barred Africans from apprenticeship training until 1959, save for the effort of mission centres which trained some community members in basic skills to enable them carry out menial tasks. This racial discrimination, particularly in education and work environments contributed to negative perceptions about Technical Education and Vocational Training, among local people; preferring, to follow academic routes instead which promised prestigious status and high paying white collar careers. As a result the locals were not adequately equipped to vie for skilled jobs.

Faced with such serious skills deficits and other legacy challenges, the new government of independent Zambia embarked on massive reforms to correct imbalances of the past and orient the nation on progressive path to a prosperous equitable society. Thus development of critical human capital

at all levels of the spectrum of occupations was of the inescapable essence. In education, the enactment of the Education Act, 1966 coupled with the 1968 Technical Education and Vocational Training forms set the new strategic direction for Zambia; the latter was in direct response to the Saunder's report of 1967. The report promulgated the following recommendations; Abolishment of apprenticeship training, Introduction of fulltime pre-employment training programmes, Consolidation of all sub-professional training, Capacity building of teachers for technical education and vocational training, and Fostering of positive attitude change towards Technical Education and Vocational Training.

The Government established the National Commission for Technical Education and Vocational Training in 1968, to spearhead skills development, which operated until 1972; following a simple structure. However, this was streamlined, following further reforms, and replaced by the Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training (DTEVT) in 1973, through the enactment of the Technical Education and Vocational Training Act Chapter 138. The Department was established under the Ministry responsible for Education and headed by the Director.

The Act gave the Minister, specific functions and powers to direct and control the running of matters pertaining to Technical Education and Vocational Training, to address the needs of industry, commerce and business and fulfil socio-economic aspirations of the country. The functions of the Minister included to; Promote and provide Technical Education and Vocational Training, Establish and develop institutions and training facilities,

Establish standards and qualifications for occupations, skills, technologies and trades, and Provide relevant services for the smooth running of Technical Education and Vocational training.

The Minister had powers to, among other things; establish standards, set and conduct or approve examinations, for persons following TEVT programmes, and issue certificates and Diplomas in respect of examinations set, conducted or approved by him. It was also in the power of the Minister to prescribe any occupations, skill, technology or trade and establish standards as appropriate.

The Act provided for the establishment of a Council to advise the Minister on matters pertaining to TEVT; the Minister appointed members of the Council including the Chairman and the Secretary. The Council of Technical Education and Vocational Training superseded and assumed the functions of the National Apprenticeship Council. The National Apprenticeship Act has never been amended to date, leaving a gap in the TEVT legal framework. Some companies have attempted to circumvent the dilemma adopting the South African Model of learnerships, a form of Work Based Learning (WBL) model; realigned to TEVETA requirements.

The Council was authorised to establish committees to perform certain functions as was necessary, with the consent of the Minister. With changing social, economic and political environment, the scope and skills required to run Technical Education and Vocational Training increased in complexity; for one thing the country's population was fast rising and the Zambianisation drive came with new demands. TVET was seen as an important vehicle for harnessing the talent of the

growing number of young people and also integrating Zambians who were already in employment, into meaningful roles in the professional and management strata.

Hence, placing the responsibility of running Technical Education and Vocational Training under a dedicated department in a Ministry provided better strategic direction and control, than was possible under the National Commission for Technical Education and Vocational Training. The government concentrated significant powers in the Minister responsible to direct and control matters pertaining to TEVT; however, this highly centralised system was not ideal for effective participation of social partners.

Training institutions did not have full control of their staff, as these remained a responsibility of the Teaching Service Commission and the Director of DTEVT who retained the power to hire and fire.

Another, weakness in the governance structure was the fact that, the members of the Advisory Council appointed by the Minister were not accountable to their constituencies; there were no proper structures to facilitate effective participation of social partners through the appointed representatives. The social partners did not have internal or sectoral mechanisms to facilitate quality input or influence.

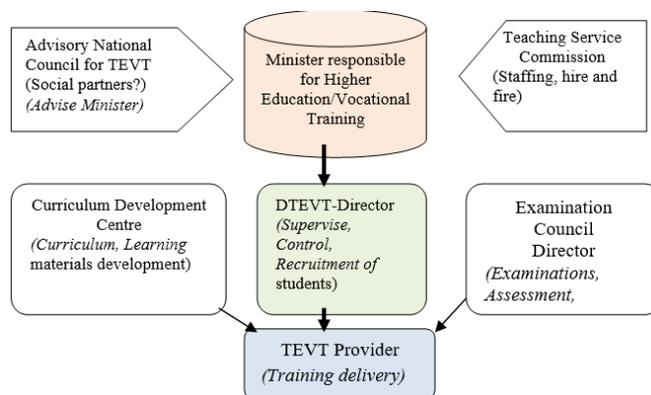


Fig 1: Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training (DTEVT) in 1973

Further, to promote technical trades and professions, the Government introduced practical and technical subjects in few selected secondary schools, to orient talented pupils towards Science, Technology and Engineering careers. During this period, the governance system of Technical Education and Vocational Training was highly centralised. The role of employers was not adequately incorporated, particularly with the phasing out of the apprenticeship arrangement, in favour of pre-employment training programmes. With an exception of the Mines and financial institutions, most employers were not actively participating in Technical Education and Vocational Training in the country.

During this period, government had embarked on a nationalisation of major industries in key sectors, such as mining, commerce and trade, manufacturing, transport and communication, and utilities. These State Owned Enterprises, served as important nodes for human resource development in the country, to support governments Zambianisation policy and as a vehicle for achieving socio-economic objectives. Most major SOEs established own training facilities and

systems which they supported with generous budgets. The mining industry, through the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines, took a leading role in work based training as well as pre-employment training programmes. ZCCM run craft improver programmes, apprenticeship training programmes, student scholarships at universities and colleges locally and abroad. The conglomerate established, trust schools, skills training centres at selected divisions across the Copperbelt, with some specialising in clusters of trades. Notable trades training centres included, Kitwe Trades School, Luanshya Craft School, Nchanga and Mufulira. The trades offered included, mechanical fitting, welding, rigging, machining, Heavy Equipment Repair, auto-mechanic, power electrical and many others including driver training which was conducted in-plant. In addition, ZCCM ran comprehensive graduate development programmes for new hires from universities and colleges.

Similarly other parastatals had dedicated training facilities. The National Imports and Exports Company (NIEC) established a centre in Ndola to train personnel, mostly in business and commercial related skills. The Postal and Tele-Communication Corporation established PTC College, comprising two wings in Ndola, one unit specialised in telecommunications and electronics, while the other offered courses related to postal services; drawing participants across the region. In the Insurance Sector, the Zambia State Insurance Corporation (ZISC) established a training centre in Ndola. In rail transport, the Tanzania-Zambia-Railways (TAZARA) limited, established a training centre at its operation in Mpika.

However, despite state owned enterprises playing an active role in human capital development, these activities were done as company specific initiatives, which were not integrated under the Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training (DTEVT) Act or the national Higher Education system. In fact, candidates trained this arrangement only obtained internal certificates of attendance, with limited or no recognition beyond their work places. Other companies still ran student scholarships schemes with various local and foreign training institutions, under their own volition.

Hence the role of employers in Technical Education and Vocational Training during this period, though prominent, cannot be said to have been well incorporated in the national system; for whatever collaboration and participation attributed to industry was largely dependent on the interest or policies of individual enterprises or parent companies concerned. The mining industry had one of the most robust training systems, setting the pace for other SOEs.

However, during the period running from the early 1970's to the late 1990's, Technical Education and Vocational Training experienced mixed fortunes, deteriorating during the later years, getting worse with the passage of time. The Challenges were strongly rooted in the general economic recession the country was going through, which was triggered by falling global copper prices, the main source of revenue. This was compounded by sky-rocketing oil prices and other militating factors.

With the deterioration of the economy, sliding into a free fall by the mid 1980's, the government found it increasingly difficult to provide for social services and other common

goods, including critical areas such as education and health. Hence, TEVT like other sectors faced serious funding challenges, public training institutions experienced operational problems and were unable to attract and retain qualified teaching staff, which factors contributed to the fall in the quality of training and graduates. Funding to TEVT was far inadequate and kept on shrinking, and disbursements becoming more and more erratic as the government struggled to meet its domestic and international obligations. The government resorted to international borrowing even for consumption, the debt skyrocketed, reaching about USD 7 billion by the 1990's, ensnaring the country among the highly indebted and poor nations of the world.

Still government had the responsibility to provide for all capital and recurrent costs of training Institutions, Institutional managers then, like all other government departments, merely passed the accumulated bills in assorted services and products to central government for payment to suppliers. Similarly, all employees were on government payroll, not something to worry about by training institutions, students too received some form of stipend from the government.

However, given these financial constraints, government was compelled to rationalise its expenditure. Consequently, support to the TEVT subsector dwindled in the late 1980s; even compared to other subsectors such as general and university education. Government grants did not only decline but became even more and more erratic with time, stipends for students were abandoned, save for university Education, and little or no re-investment was going towards Technical Education and Vocational Training any more. The consequences were obvious and dire; quality of training was severely compromised, the disjoint between the training system, or supply side, and the world of work, the demand side widened exponentially, to the disenchantment of industry. The Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training ran from 1973 until 2000 when it was phased out and replaced by the Technical Education Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) as part of the wider economic reforms following the national political 'revolution' of 1991. The country transitioned from a One Party Participatory Democratic state, under the 27 year rule of the founding President, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, to a Multi-Party Democratic state, under a free market economy, shifting from the commandist system adopted by the old regime.

TEVET policy of 1996

Given the dismal performance, amid rising dissatisfaction among employers with the quality of graduates from public institutions, the new government prioritised the TVET subsector for radical reform. The government, constituted a task team of technocrats to chart the way forward. The TVET reforms commenced with the development and speed implementation of Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship (TEVET) policy of 1996, subsequent to formulation of a strategy paper.

The TEVET Policy had three major pillars, to: Balance the supply of skilled labour at all levels with the demands of the economy, Act as a vehicle for improved productivity and income generation, and be an instrument for minimisation of inequalities among the people.

In pursuing these objectives, government was to address the following issues; Enhancing of the capacities of the educational and training systems to develop curricula that would provide skills relevant to the labour market and enable graduates to enter the productive sector, i.e. ensure graduate employability and mobility; facilitating the acquisition of necessary technical skills and business and entrepreneurial skills, through appropriate extension and outreach programmes; Enhancing the development and dissemination of technologies beneficial to small scale enterprises to stimulate productivity and employment; and Enhancing the development of training opportunities for vocational skills at technical education and vocational training institutions, to increase the supply of skilled labour in the economy.

Through the TEVET policy, government hoped to, among other things, create an environment that could foster linkages between TEVET and industry, and research and development, and the informal sector; Ensure curriculum development and review was End-User driven. To encourage industry participation, government committed to developing an appropriate incentive system for industry and institutions that would support or provide TEVET. However, it is worth noting that the proposed incentive system was never actualised, to some extent government was not eager to toe this route or engage social partners to chart the way forward. Even the newly introduced Skills Development Levy Act 2016, does not provide clear guidelines on this aspect.

Further the policy provides for the introduction of a contributory training fund, promoting diversification of funding sources by adopting the concept of cost sharing and principle of “the one who benefits pays for the service”, as well as inculcating a business culture among TEVET

institutions to encourage them to be self-sustaining. It must be stated, though, that while many of these aspects were adequately reinforced by the TEVET Act, No 13 of 1998, and amendment, No 11 of 2005, plans to introduce a contributory Training Fund remained “frozen” until the enactment of Skills Development Levy Act 2016, due to misgivings by industry.

The reforms also called for the re-engineering of organisational and management systems. Firstly, the Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training which had been identified as lacking the necessary capacity and flexibility to respond to the demands of the world of work, and was facing logistical and financial challenges, had to be replaced by a more transformative institution with regulatory powers; hence, the establishment of the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Authority (TEVETA), through the TEVET Act 1998.

Similarly, TEVET institutions required overhaul, in terms infrastructure and training facilities. In addition, institutions needed increased level of autonomy if they were to function effectively under the new order. Thus, to implement the strategic direction envisioned in the TEVET Policy of 1996, government enacted the TEVET Act, No.13 of 1998, triggering the reform process.

Among the major features of these reforms was the hiving off of the public TEVET providers from the direct control and support of the mother Ministry, and placing them under Management Boards; under the delegated authority of the Minister responsible for Technical Education and Vocational Training. Equally, staff were removed from the public service and were to be employed directly by the respective institutional management Boards.

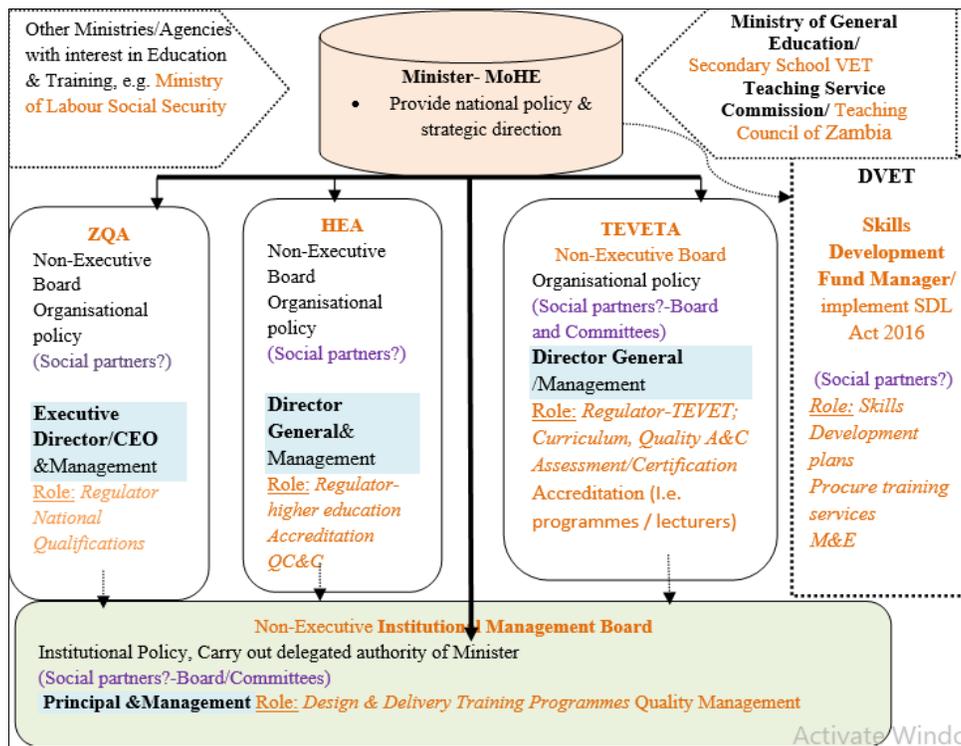


Fig 2: Zambia-TEVET System -1998 to 2018, source: Author analysis

The current System is fairly devolved; Institutions are more autonomous, as provided for by respective regulatory frameworks, Acts of Parliament. Comparatively, organisational arrangements increasing in complexity, with each reform that came.

The role of social partners in TEVET

However, the role of social partners, though recognised at various stages, still remains limited to advisory roles through largely amorphous representation. One contributing factor to this status quo is the fact that social partners themselves lack coherent sector organisational structures. While government’s intention to involve social partners may be genuine, often the representatives appointed do not seem to be accountable to their constituencies. The sectors or professional bodies concerned lack established platforms and structures to ensure collective input from the membership, e.g. what inputs do the representatives gather before attending committee meetings and how effective are feedback mechanisms to relay outcomes to the members. Arrangements are disjointed thereby rendering the participation of social partners suboptimal. This is compounded by often over domineering position enjoyed by government as the major stakeholder, in the face of an indecisive and not so proactive industry, at least on matters skills development. The industry has chosen to be reactive at best, lacking the collective zeal to convince government that they possess the critical mass to count as an equal partner in finding solutions to current and future challenges in Technical Education and Vocational Training. There are a few examples of good practice, though; some companies have taken a strategic decision to invest in human capital development,

spending colossal amounts on talent development programmes and developing facilities to address their needs as well as corporate social responsibility (CSR) issues. However, by and large, their efforts remain disjointed, sector wise.

The key stakeholders in the TEVET system include the Government (i.e. Ministries and Regulatory Bodies), industry, Training Providers and Society (sponsors and students); all of whom have expectations and roles to play. Societal expectations revolve around human development needs.

In terms of roles, Government as the principal stakeholder is responsible for setting national skills development policies and plans, Financing, including coordination of other role players. The Industry/employers on their part should assist with defining occupational (job) profiles, providing Skills Demand Projections, participating in curriculum review and development, Financing and providing work based learning (WBL) opportunities, including attachments and placements.

The roles of Training Providers include Designing and delivery of learning programmes and ensuring internal quality management; under the guidance of the regulators. TEVETA looks after issues of Standards, Quality Assurance, Assessment, Certification, progression pathways (including Recognition of Prior Learning, Flexible-Distance-E-Learning). The counter parts, the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA) is in charge of validation, accreditation and evaluation of qualifications in accordance with the National Framework, while the Higher Education Authority (HEA) regulates higher education.

Zambian national qualifications framework-2010

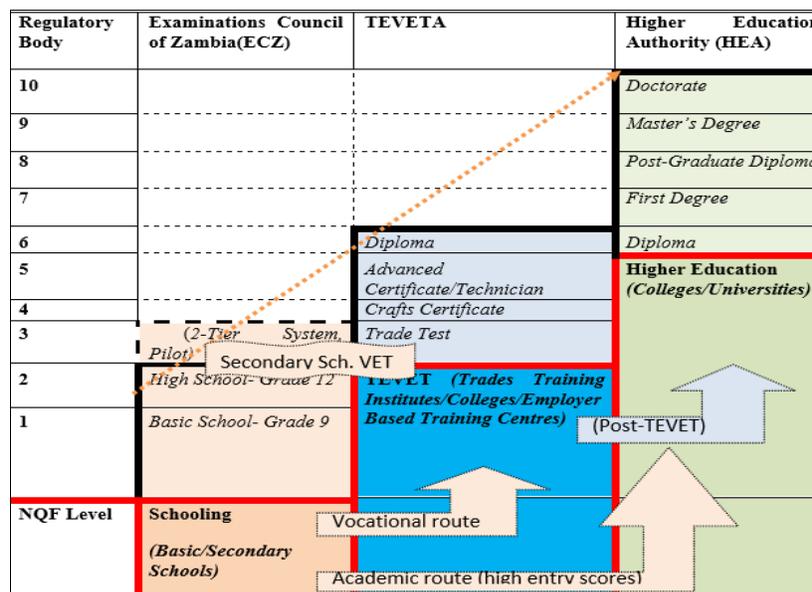


Fig 3

The problem- issues in TEVET persist

However, notwithstanding the various transformations that Technical Education and Vocational Training has undergone over the years, a number of the challenges still persist; under the National Commission for Technical Education and Vocational Training 1968-1972, Department of Technical

Education and Vocational Training (DTEVT)- 1972-1998, and now TEVET system 1998-Date.

Challenges in TVET start with the status itself, the low perception by target groups including school leavers and parents, is not uncommon; TEVT careers are normally only considered as an option only if the academic routes fails,

mostly on account of a candidate failing to meet competitive entry scores or as result of financial issues. This seems to be a global issue, though vocational education provides the “boots” on the ground needed to move productive sectors of any economy and therefore there is need to incentivise it to ensure talent flow.

For Zambia major constraints facing TEVET have been outlined in the 7th National Development Plan, 2017-2021. They include low access to skills training, poor quality of skills and mismatch caused by the peripheral role played by industry in the development and implementation of TEVET Curricula. Further, the plan has proposed some strategies to remedy the situation. With regard to low access to TEVET, a multimodal approach is proposed; institution based, Open-Distance-Flexible Learning (ODFL), Work Based Learning (WBL), Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and other good practices. However, the plan is mute on the issue of low participation of industry in TEVET, while some strategies have been suggested to enhance the participation of the private sector in the provision of TEVET. This gap could be indicative of inadequate involvement of industry in policy design on Training.

With regard to quality of graduates, the debate about whether training should best be provided in the workplace, school, before or after one is employed, rages on. Similarly, issues of access and gender imbalances remain relevant. The total annual enrolment in institutions registered with TEVETA was reported to have reached 45,000, in 2015, posting a 28% increase over the figure reported in 2012. On the other hand the enrolments at secondary, though low by international standards, have continued to rise. According to a report by the Basic Education Teachers Union of Zambia (BETUZ), titled “The Status of Education in Zambia Report: A special focus on Quality of Education”, there were at least 327, 980 pupils enrolled in Secondary Schools in Zambia in 2014, increasing to 802,341 by 2015 Given that entry to universities is highly limited, the numbers of candidates flowing out of the general education system is by far disproportionate to the absorptive capacity of the TEVT system. This predicament is also acknowledged in the 7th National Development Plan, it states that in 2015 the Net Enrolment Rates (NERs) at primary and secondary school were 89% and 28.1%, while only 7.6% of the population had first degrees. Hence investment in Education and skills development was needed to address the challenges of low progression rates to higher education and tertiary levels.

Similarly, while Zambia has more less reached gender parity in enrolments at primary and Secondary School level, it is not the case for Technical Education and Vocational Training where male dominated courses are common; particularly traditional engineering and technical programmes.

According to the UNESCO 2016 report, titled, “Zambia-Education Policy Review: Paving the Way SDG4-Education 2030, a number of issues affecting TEVET were identified. These include; Limited and inadequate access to TEVET, Reservation about the roll out of the two-tier system being piloted, Inadequate public funding to TEVET, Weak TEVET Responsiveness to labour market, Curriculum not relevant to labour market, Lack of quality Trainers, and Low quality of training

Most of the highlighted inadequacies are not in any way new, they have been discussed from the post- independence days, and have been cited as basis for reforms undertaken in technical Education and Vocational Training, at various stages, yet they do not seem to go away.

Some studies have been conducted to enquire into the availability and quality of skills, including one done by Hamukoma, M, P, titled “The Survey and Analysis of Demand for Supply of Skilled Workers in the Zambian Mining Industry 2011” under the Jobs & prosperity: Building Zambia’s Competitiveness (JCP) program which is working to improve the productivity of three Zambian Industries i.e. Copper mining, tourism and Cattle (Beef & Dairy).

The findings of this study were summarised as follows: Low number of skilled workforce in mining trades attributed to Training Providers not offering some courses in mining and metallurgy at technician and craft level, and the low interest in mining training programmes among potential candidates graduating from the General Education System, and Low quality of graduates produced by local Training Providers, attributed to unsatisfactory training delivery by Public Training providers due to poor funding compounded by lack of investment, Inadequate mechanisms to facilitate effective involvement in education and training by mining industry

Another study by the World Bank investigated what it would take for the mining industry to reach its full potential, established some important factors that were affecting the competitiveness of the mining industry in Zambia. The report of 2011, titled “what would it take for Zambia’s Copper Mining Industry to achieve its potential?” outlines the following major factors that undermine the competitiveness of the mining industry in Zambia; Inherent cost of exploiting depleted reserves, i.e. at considerable depths; Poor support infrastructure; e.g. energy, transport, and High input cost and low productivity- The major input of concern being labour whose cost keeps increasing whereas productivity was reportedly well below international standards

generally, inadequate public funding is identified as the root cause of most challenges, while issues such as those relating to the relevance of curricula and responsiveness of the TEVET system to the labour market and mismatch between skills demand and supply point to poor and ineffective linkages between TEVET and the labour market or industry; prompting the question as to how well social partners in TEVET, i.e. training institutions, industry and government are playing their roles.

With regard to the issue of funding, the challenge of inadequate resources mobilisation continues to hinder efforts aimed at successfully transforming Technical Education and Vocational Training, the TEVET subsector ranks least in terms of funding allocation in comparison to other subsectors in education such as secondary and university education. According to the 2016 report, by the World Bank titled “Education Public Expenditure Review in Zambia, the average public expenditure on TEVET as a share of the total education expenditure averaged a paltry 0.5% from 2006 to 2013. Of course the recent low funding was attributed to government policy of decentralising management and financial responsibilities, including revenue generation to management boards in TEVET institution, and personal

emoluments.

Though the total education expenditure improved from ZMW 1.5bn in 2006 to ZMW5.2bn in 2013, the expenditure on Technical Education and Vocational Training was low even in comparison to that of other African Countries; e.g. report Rwanda (9.6%, 2012), Liberia (8.5%, 2012), and Central African Republic (7.4%, 2008). To emphasise the challenges of public funding to TEVET, the reports indicates that the average government expenditure per student in TEVET was just about ZMW700 (approx. USD 70), while that for university students was about 15 times higher, per annum, in the period 2008 to 2013.

An overview of VET system in the Netherlands: key role of social partners.

The Netherlands has a population of about 16.9million and an area of 33,718 km²; it has similar population with Zambia, but is about 22 times smaller in terms of area. The economy is dominated by the service industry (80%); major sectors include agriculture and fisheries, manufacturing and construction, commercial services, and non-commercial services. Vocational Education and Training is an important social-economic issue, and like many developed countries, it has endeavoured to develop effective systems with appropriate capabilities. Examples of good practice in TEVET are many; other countries that have excelled in TVET include German, Australia, to mention but a few; whose models have inspired many globally.

This section attempts to provide an overview of the Dutch Vocational Education and Training system, with the focus on the role of social partners; the choice of the Netherlands as good practice case is rooted in an educational visit that the author once undertook and the availability of reliable contacts who have shared useful perspectives and their rich experiences, notable among them, Jan van den Hoogen and Rene Lenssen who served as Consultants, at the Centre for Innovation of Education and Training (CINOP) at the time.

Vocational Education and Training in the Netherlands is considered one of the best in the world with good labour market outcomes, comprehensive and flexible according to the 2016 report by the European Centre for the development of vocational training. Organised industry plays a key role in the development and implementation of VET. Both the employers through the branch or sector organizations as well as the unions for the employees or workers have a major input in the development of VET and the implementation of the school programs.

According to Lex Borghans, Hans Heijke (2004) ^[3], The Dutch Adult and Vocational Education Act (WEB) states that vocational education courses should fill a social need, provide qualified school-leavers and graduates with favourable perspectives in the labour market, while contents should contribute to the students' general education and provide them with sustained and broad occupational qualifications

Thus, Wim J. Nihof (2004) ^[3] observes that the Dutch Vocational education and training underwent significant transformation from the 1980s through to the 2000s, in terms of organisational structure and content, at all levels of the education system; including the relationships between vocational education and business and industry. Some of the

outcomes of the transformation include; improved relations with business and industry through organising interfaces to enhance communication between the two. Thus effectiveness, efficiency and quality of vocational education had improved with the application of modern ideas to training and responsiveness

In the 1990s', system change resulted in increased autonomy of institutions, Expansion of scale, Output control, financing, external quality control. The transition was from the traditional system oriented to disciplines, to a system of learning pathways based on competencies; from a fixed route for all to a system with internal and external flexibility. Stakeholders realised at the end of the 1970s' that the developments in vocational education were not alignment with those in business and industry. There was a mismatch between the school output, supply side, and the needs of the world of work (demand). It was also noted that there was a decline in interest in vocational education among students, while complaints about the quality of graduates were increasing; that vocational education was not preparing learners for the labour market. While on the economic front, performance was moderately poor, with relatively high unemployment levels. The output of the vocational education was low, so was mobility.

The Dutch education system comprises the following segments:

- a. Primary education (ISCED-1), 8 years duration targeting for 4-12year olds,
- b. Special Education for 3-20year olds with various challenges,
- c. General Secondary Education (ISCED 2-3) providing three streams; Pre-University (integrated lower and upper secondary programmes- VWO) offering European Qualification Framework (EQF) 4, integrated lower and upper Secondary general education programmes (HAVO), 5years duration, to prepare learners to study in higher professional education. Transfer to pre-university is possible. Two general programmes (Theoretical and mixed pathways within pre-vocational education- VMBO), EQF2, 4 years duration.
- d. Lower secondary pre-vocational school based programmes (VMBO), EQF1-2, 4years duration.
- e. Upper Secondary vocational education programmes (MBO), EQF1-4, and MBO1-4, of 2-4 years duration.
- f. Higher (Tertiary) Education comprising a VET and general (academic) streams; Higher education (HBO) part of VET provided by Universities of Applied Sciences, offering Associated Degrees (AD). While Scientific/University education (WO) caters for Bachelors (EQF6), Masters (EQF7) and PhD (EQF8) levels.
- g. Continuing education and training (CVET), and
- h. General Adult Education.

Thus the current VET system is a result of a long history of reforms in the regulatory framework, from the 19th Century. The reforms, like in the case of Zambia, were aimed at addressing social and political concerns about the quality of VET. Suffice to say that the recent reforms brought into force legislation that led to the amalgamation of schools into large

regional training centres (ROCs), with increased autonomy and enhanced vertical and horizontal accountabilities, and promoted competition among training providers particularly for government funding. Casey (2013) [15], estimates that each ROC has a portfolio of as many as 150 courses, with a population of about 10,000 VET students and 2,500 Adult Education students; in 2013 there were 42 ROCs and other government funded institutions. The ROCs also have own representative bodies, falling under the Association for Vocational and Adult Education (MBO) which serves as the umbrella body.

In terms of governance and institutional arrangements, The Dutch VET system is organized at three levels, namely national, sectoral and regional/local levels. To anchor these relationships, legislation allows for the establishment of the Cooperation for vocational education, training and labour market (SBB); it was established in 2012 at the request of the Ministry of Education. The SBB facilitates effective linkages between VET and the labour market. Its principal

responsibilities include; maintaining the qualifications of secondary school VET, Accrediting and coaching companies involved in work placements for learners, collecting relevant labour market information, it also handles issues involving different regions and sectors. The SBB serves as an advisory body to the Ministry of Education on VET Policy, providing a single point contact for gathering recommendations and advice on education and labour market capturing social interest. These functions were previously done by the ROCs until, 2015 when they fully transferred to the SBB. The SBB comprises eight Sector Chambers in which VET and Social Partners are equally represented.

The dutch educational system

The Dutch educational system is illustrated in the figure below; it incorporates progression pathways in academics, applied/ vocational streams. (Source: https://www.thedutch-way.com/img/theNetherlands_educational_system_in_2017.png).

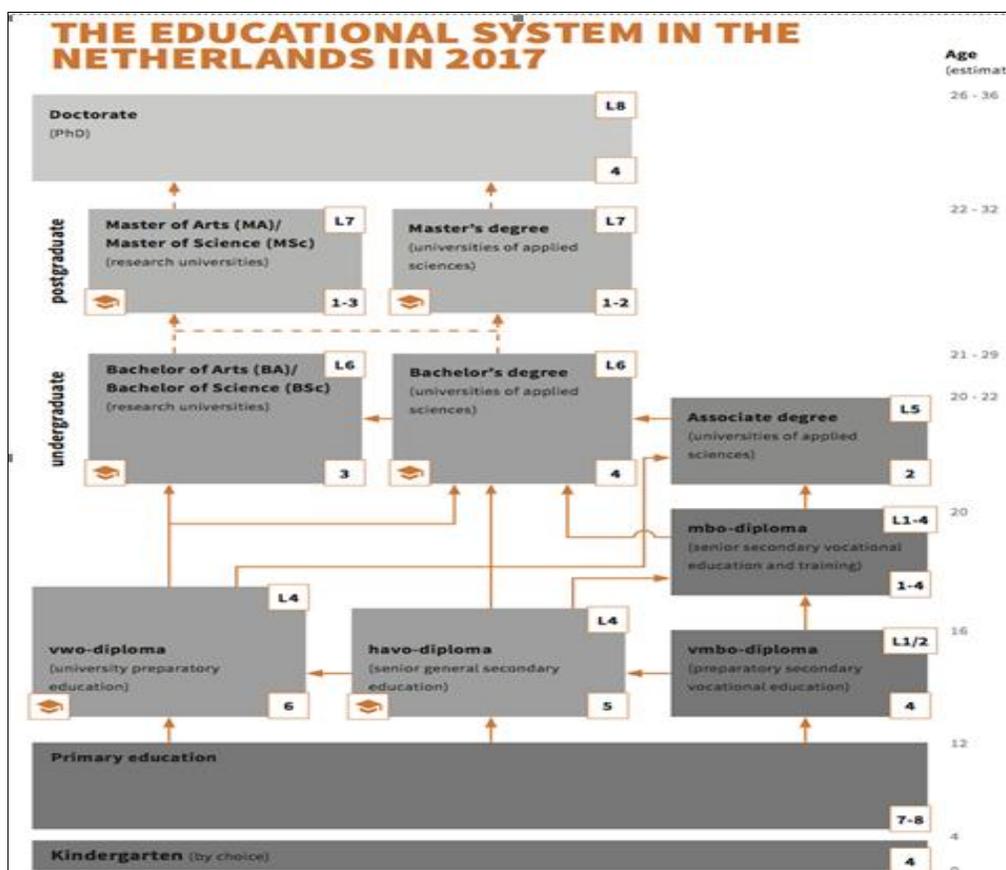


Fig 4

Role of social partners

Dutch VET is organised in Regional Training Centers. In 2008 there were 62 in total, including 13 Agricultural Colleges. Approximately 480.000 students attended programs on four levels. Hence, the training centres enrolled high numbers of students, as many as 10,000 and above. In addition the system included 18 Centres of Expertise, organised on sectoral basis. An important feature was participation of approximately 175.000 certified companies with qualified

coaches or mentors to assist students on attachment in practical learning. Thus VET is part and parcel of the overall education system as illustrated below.

The basic structure when it comes to the governance of VET is anchored by the Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (SBB) as the overarching body, bringing together government and social partners in 8 key sectors (www.s-bb.nl); i.e. Engineering and Built Environment Sector Chamber, ICT and Creative

Industry Sector Chamber, Mobility, Transport, Logistics and Maritime Sector Chamber, Food, Agriculture and Hospitality Sector Chamber, Healthcare, Wellbeing and Sports Sector Chamber, Business Services and Security Sector Chamber, the Trade Sector Chamber and Specialist Trades Sector Chamber. The Board draws representation from 9 organisations (i.e. 6 representatives from industry (4 employers and 2 trade unions) and 3 representatives from the VET-institutions). Employers, trade unions and organized educational organizations cooperate closely to develop the qualification structure, through Sectoral Chambers. Casey (2013) [15], citing Sung *et al*) writes that the Dutch skills system has been “Developed under a specific political culture where consensus is central”, facilitated by strong tripartite arrangements. This approach adopted in the 1990s with the introduction of the 1996 Education and Vocational Training Act which enhanced the ability of employers to influence content and certification. The system allows for effective vertical and horizontal dialogue. Social partners are able to engage with government actors through sectoral platforms; in the same vein, role players in organized sectors engage amongst themselves on matters pertaining to skills development in their respective areas which fosters cohesion and collective responsibility. Better still, when it comes to implementation, schools and industry cooperate to ensure that the student is properly combining learning in school and learning on the job. In school the teacher is the key figure, while on the job the coach or mentor takes over. Overall, the government through the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is responsible for developing strategic policy and oversight on VET, with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation taking care of issues falling under its sector. The government is assisted in its work by the The Cooperation Organisation for Vocational

Education, Training and the Labour Market (SBB). Employers, participate through knowledge centres, which number about 17 in all, each representing a specific sector Casey (2013) [15]. It is estimated that, in 2008, there were approx. 700.000 enterprises in the Netherlands; small, medium and large, employing approx. 7.5 people or more. Most of them were organized in branch or sector organizations (employers) or labor unions (employees). At national level they were organized in the largest employer federation (VNO/NCW) and the major labor unions (FNV, CNV). They played a crucial role in society with regard to policy issues, including education and training. With regard to VET, social partners are generally committed and positioned to contribute to both the quality and its growth and development. They feel committed because they recognise that it is in their best interest to have sufficient well trained workforce, and positioned because they pride in being amongst the well represented national bodies and committees dealing with VET, especially in the Centers of Excellence. These centers are sector specific, focusing on a specific industry e.g. construction and building, transport and logistics, hotel and catering and the like. The Centers are organized to provide effective the interface between VET and industry, thus playing a crucial role in linking both the world of work and the world of training. The advantage of this close cooperation between all partners (now facilitated by the SBB) is that it ensures that the programs in VET are as relevant to the needs of industry as possible. Further, by playing an active role in the processes of VET, both the government and VET institutions underscore the broader importance of VET, i.e. for the achievement of personal and social development objectives, and promotion of the learning of more general skills and attitudes.

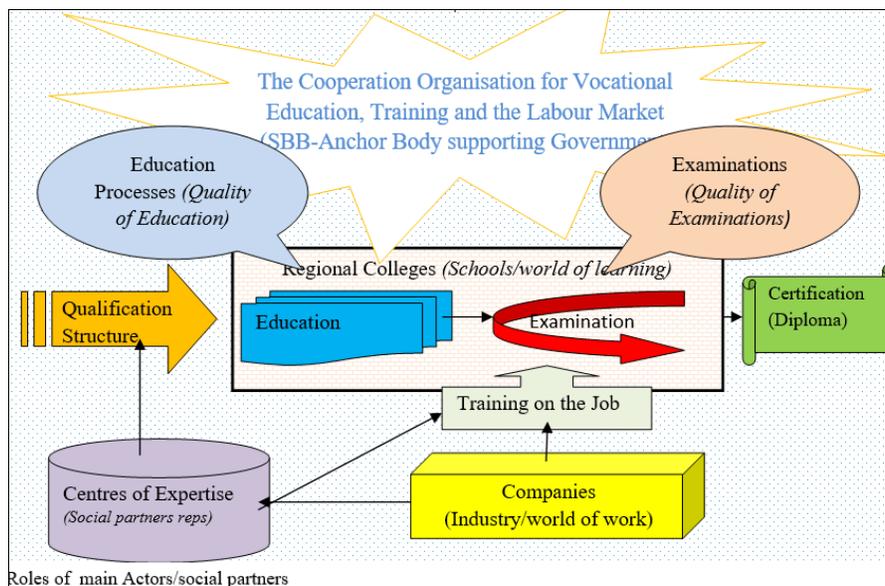


Fig 5

Hence, when the students graduate and get their diploma it is fully recognized by the industry, and the knowledge and skills learnt as well as the required attitudes are relevant for the

future job. The high level of organization of both industry and VET institutions, jointly with the role of the state, contributes to good partnerships and linkages between industry and VET.

The model is aiming at mutual understanding and a win-win situation, in Dutch the so called “Poldermodel”. Industry is investing in VET to ensure graduates with relevant skills; VET is investing in linking up with industry to ensure its training responds to the demands and needs of industry but is also keeping an eye on the importance of civic education. The government is creating proper conditions for this organized cooperation and through the Inspection keeps an eye on quality of programs and examinations. The qualification framework as well as the training programs are primary the responsibility of the social partners, the centers of expertise and the VET institutions, a triangle system.

Comparison of the Zambian and Dutch TVET systems the role of social partners

From the onset, it is worth noting that comparison of systems of one nation with those of another has limitations, more so if the difference in the level of development is significant, as is the case between Zambia and the Netherlands. The former is a developing nation with a relatively small economy, while the Netherlands is far an advanced economy. None the less there are always lessons to be learnt from good practices depending on the context which can help improve local practices.

The Dutch system has demonstrated unique strengths anchored on enabling legal frameworks and institutional arrangements; Education and Vocational Training Act and supporting legislation which give social partners ample room to influence content and processes, organized industry, Centers of Expertise, strong VET institutions, key role of social partners; well organized system in place for attachments. There is a political culture of evidence based continuous improvement and developing VET systems based on consensus. The sectoral approach allows for effective dialogue, promoting internal, vertical and horizontal accountability among the various organs and structures, also institutional arrangements are in to provide reliable information relating to industry and labour market interaction. Thus the TVET system in the Netherlands, though not perfect possesses some key attributes good governance and connectivity with the world of work grounded on strong social partner participation; in line with practices recommended by the international community such ILO and UNESCO. Gasskov, V (2018), defines governance as a “process of consultation and making decision; strategic decision regarding direction and roles, and decisions which are to represent the interest of stakeholder groups”. Further, he spells out the following main principles of good governance; information transparency and competence (accessible to all stakeholders), Equitable participation and treatment of stakeholders, cooperative and open relationships between participants which facilitate both horizontal and vertical consensus (e.g. within the sector and with government), Accountability of participants (horizontal and vertical accountability), provision of clear direction (on overall objectives, policy and strategies), efficiency (outcomes meet stakeholder expectations with optimal resource input), responsiveness (able to address issues of demand and supply). This requires effective dialogue, coordination of principal role players (government, employers, workers and other stakeholders) who must have capacity and mandate to engage through the structures

provided.

In the case of Zambia, partnerships are slowly developing, but the role of the state, through the ministries and agencies responsible education, vocational education and training is still a dominant feature, while that of employers is piteously low and not well coordinated, most sectors are not organized to have meaningful participation in TVET as equal social partners. Hence, it is difficult to ascertain the levels of accountability within and across structures. For example, there are sustainable mechanisms are in place to promote a culture of consensus building within employer groups or sectors; on the contrary there is some kind of mistrust among most stakeholder groups, within themselves and more so with government, particularly when it comes to issues relating to funding of TVET and who should take the lead.

A review of the legal framework pertaining TVET has revealed some important gaps in governance and institutional arrangements; for example while vertical accountability relationships (between individual institutions and government are obvious, the horizontal accountability relationships (among peer institutions) are not clear or missing, so are internal arrangements for employer groups or sectors. The various regulatory agencies concerned with education and training are left to their own devices to identify and forge collaborative linkages. Take an example of teacher registration, while instructors/lecturers employed by TEVET institutions falling under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education, are regulated and accredited by TEVETA, their counterparts working in Skills Centres under the Directorate of Distance Education in the Ministry of General Education are regulated by the Teaching Council of Zambia, however they are also expected to be accredited by TEVETA because some Skills Training Centres offer courses covered under TEVETA’s mandate; both regulatory bodies charge accreditation fees, though because of this complication, some flexibility is exercised by the parties, thus affected staff are allow to only accredit to the body of their choice; i.e. the TCZ or TEVETA. Further, the Teaching Council of Zambia and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) serve a common constituency though their mandates differ; however the two bodies have identified the need collaborate and are now in the process of working out arrangements to this effect, by way of a memorandum of understanding as reported by Mildred Katongo, Times of Zambia, Monday 30th April, 2018. TCZ was established under the Teaching Profession Act 2013 to regulate the teaching profession, on the other hand the HEA regulates higher education. In retrospect, such linkages could have been enhanced if the working relationships were interwoven within the principal or subsidiary legal framework, other than through MoU which normally does not confer binding accountabilities between the parties; it is not uncommon for some entities to purposely enter into memoranda of understanding with little or no follow-up action.

Similarly, given the high level of fragmentation among social partners, it is not easy for sectors or employers to secure consensus on key issues and participate in meaningful dialogue with government, even when they are given an opportunity as it often happens; employers have developed a reputation of going it alone and tend to drag their feet when

engaged as a collective, some well-intended initiatives have stalled or simply been abandoned this way. Take an example of the mining sector, most operators acknowledge and bemoan the skills challenges the affecting the industry, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. In fact in the recent past, the four largest mine companies operating in the country, namely Konkola Copper Mines, under London-listed Vedanta Resources Plc., Mopani Copper Mines (under Glencore Plc.), First Quantum Mining Limited, and Barrick Lumwana (owned by Barrick Gold) have invested significantly in skills development. Three of them have established modern and well equipped training centres worth millions of dollars (actual amounts are difficult to ascertain because of proprietary issues, but could be in excess of USD30million. According to available information, Mopani Copper Mines is reported to have invested over USD22 million in its Central Training Centre, located at the Mufulira Mine Site, in the 5 years. The company has supported over 200 trainees in scholarships to the tune of about USD21, 000 per trainee to complete the full 2-3 year programme. Additionally, it is reported that the company spends about USD2.2 million annually to provide quality education at its four schools.

Interestingly the training centres have similar course portfolio, signifying that the companies have similar needs; mostly focusing on heavy equipment repair, welding, mechanical fitting, power electrical, instrumentation and mining programmes. However, attempts to rally the mining companies around an industry wide initiative on skills development, between 2013 and 2016, received little enthusiasm amongst the members, despite receiving support from cooperating partners. The project dubbed, “Zambian Mining Skills, Education and Training Trust (ZAMSET), was to provide a collaborative approach to skills development in the mining sector. ZAMSET was to operate on three pillars; strategic planning and sectoral coordination, skills development, and fund management and commissioning (procurement of training services). A number of cooperating partners heralded the initiative and expressed interest to support it. On the contrary, there was little or no buy-in from target industry, even when it was placed under the representative body, the Zambia Chamber of Mines, to drive it and provide a “neutral platform”. Consequently, the destiny of the trust that was established remains obscure for want of support from the industry it was meant to serve, only one of the large mining companies demonstrated practical support for the initiative; offering to house it and provide start-up logistics.

There is need to put in place strategies to strike a balance between the role of the state and of social partners/industry and TVET institutions; encouraging sectoral participation will enrich the contribution of employers. At local level, some training institutions try to establish bilateral working relationships with industry through various initiatives such as strategic planning; appointment of eminent members from industry to the Boards and committees. However, such partnerships have limited impact; For instance the TVET providers run student attachments and placements programmes with industry, but are no arrangements to synchronise the role of in-company coaches with that of the teachers in the world of learning. Employer representatives on

the various boards and committees “function” as individuals with no proper platforms for securing the representative input of their constituencies; contrary to the Dutch experience of developing VET system shaped by a political culture where consensus is central.

Success factors for effective participation of social partners in TEVET

From international good practices and the case of the Netherlands, there are some important attributes associated with a successful TVET system which can be identified, referred to as success factors; some of which have been discussed below.

Economic demand: It can be inferred that the role of industry in TVET is greatly influenced by economic factors. When the economy is vibrant, industries tend to show a lot more and are likely to be active in TVET than in lean years; gravitated by the needs to meet skills requirements. The interaction between industry and TVET is almost always, meant to achieve an economic end result. In short the ‘national economy’ is the medium in which the industry and TVET providers mingle to further their interests and those of the nation; a well performing economy provides the pull for more and better skills.

Institutional capacity of training providers: The level of confidence among industries to do business with any institution is influenced by the perceived capacity or potential for that institution to deliver to expectation. Thus, the state of infrastructure, equipment and expertise are critical. Old equipment and scant facilities will not attract companies to do business with TEVET institutions. It is also important to have necessary organizational structures and willingness to commit financial resources to promote linkages and marketing activities, undertake regular detailed labour market analysis, to facilitate course design and development to address fresh industry training needs.

Organised industrial sector: Experience has shown that when industry is not organized, institutions face the challenge of attending to a multiplicity of company demands which may require different approaches leaving the training provider in some a dilemma of some kind. The interactions become inefficient, costly and sometimes impractical; where companies are organized say along trade lines linkages easier to manage for training institutions.

Enabling government policy: This is very important become defines how the various key players including the government itself will execute their individual and collective mandates to ensure that TVET system is effective and relevant. The Policy will state ‘the stakes’ for each of the key stakeholders. For instance what will entice industry to actively participate in TVET and will they participate effectively?

The role of the state: This varies from country to country. However, the major role of government is to formulate policies that guide national agenda on VET in accordance with the medium and long term social-economic goals. For instance, in the Zambian situation, the provision of VET is guided by the TEVET Policy and Act of Parliament. The

Government then puts up the necessary structures to carry out the (1) policy functions, (2) Regulatory functions, and (3) still others to deliver the service to the people. In the Zambian context, these functions are done by the Ministry responsible for Higher Education, and Vocational Education and Training, supported by relevant regulatory agencies, which include the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA), Zambia Qualifications Authority, Higher Education Authority, with training providers serving as implements. The government has a responsibility, through appropriate policy interventions, to address market failures, often then interest of industry in TVET tend to be short term, skewed to addressing their immediate needs. This short-termism propensity should be moderated by the state which has a global focus; to meet medium to long term objectives including socio-economic perspectives.

The role of industry and social partners

The industry is in business to make money. So their major interest will revolve around profit maximization and aspects that will contribute to improved productivity; though they may do extra in pursuit of corporate social responsibility and objectives which will help secure the social license. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), Training Strategy of 2011, titled “A Skilled Workforce for strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth: A G20 Training Strategy” elucidates this thought with the caution that, “the world of learning and the world of work are separate. One imparts learning; the other produces goods and services”. However, it is further acknowledged that neither can thrive without the other and that appropriate policies are required to create sound bridges to link the two worlds for their mutual benefit. The strategy, identifies eight building blocks of strong training and skills development strategies; Anticipating future skills needs, Participation of social partners, Sectoral Approach, Labour market information and employment services, Training quality and relevance, Gender equality, Broad access to training and financing of training-Participation of social partners finds a seat in nearly all the other blocks.

Being such key stakeholder in VET, industry or employers in general have a major role to play to ensure that the quality of graduates conforms to the needs of the world of work; which cannot be achieved if the two worlds worked in silos. Ideally, industry can latch into the VET system and play a significant role at various stages and through processes. They

can help relevant state agencies in issues of human capital planning. Industry needs can inform national manpower policy. Failures in planning may lead to imbalances in the supply and deployment of skilled labour. Industries would be forced to import labour to bridge gaps in case of shortage, while an oversupply of labour in certain trades as a result of faulty planning could mean a waste of public resources.

Further, there is need for Industry to actively influence curriculum development, implementation and review, to ensure the desired quality of the VET graduate. This could be supplemented through participation in the provision of certain student services, such as graduate placement, student and staff attachment, scholarships for staff and students, secondment of Expert staff and availing business opportunities through

service contracts with institutions and donation of training equipment.

Another critical area is that involving resource mobilisation for the purpose of supporting TVET. Technical education is undoubtedly an expensive venture which calls for a lot of ingenuity on the part of the state and implementers to finance the system, or training institutions to operate at sustainably. According to the ILO, three main modes of financing TVET are used globally. The first is payroll based tax system (ranging from 0.5% to 2%), which has come to be known as the “Latin American Model” because of its popularity in that region. The second avenue is the use of National Budgetary allocation. The third is tax- incentive approach, under this arrangement the host government provides for rebates or reimbursement to enterprises commensurate with their investment in training their workforce. It must be said though, that these approaches are not exclusive, but can complement each other.

Traditionally, Zambia has relied on national budgetary allocations to run TVET, sometimes with the support of cooperating partners. However, in 2016, introduced a payroll based Skills Development Levy, charged at 0.5% of the organisation’s payroll, above Zambian Kwacha 800,000 (approx. USD80, 000). Hence, with the enactment of the Skills Development Levy Act 2016, social partners, particularly contributors need to be proactive and participate effectively in matters pertaining to TEVET, and ensure that resources so mobilised have desired impacts.

In light of the aforesaid, a strong partnership between social partners, government, employers and workers is a critical condition for the success of TVET for any nation. According ILO training strategy, such partnerships will involve; sound financing arrangements which provides for incentives to all parties to invest in the right skills at the right time, participation of employers and workers’ representatives in the design, implementation and evaluation policies pertaining to TVET, existence of effective institutional arrangements (e.g. national, regional, sectoral, boards/committees), effective social dialogue necessary to motivate investment in skills and knowledge, and a sectoral approach.

In the same vein, ILO through recommendation 195, on human resources development education, training and lifelong learning, provides guidance on the broad roles which states and social partners can play to complement each other’s effort. The state bears the responsibility to provide certain training services, e.g. pre-employment training, cross cutting issues such as ensuring inclusiveness for disadvantaged social groups and the disabled. Noting social dialogue is essential to creating sound partnerships among role players in TVET, it is imperative for the government to provide support to social partners to enable them to participate effectively in social dialogue on training. Further, government has responsibility to create an enabling environment for businesses, particularly micro-enterprises to operate efficiently and competitively, and encourage them to participate actively in education and training, including entrepreneurial aspects.

On the other hand, with increased decentralisation or devolving of functions by governments, it has been realised that the role of social partners is inevitably increasing, of course in collaboration with the latter; specific roles may

include promotion of diversity of training in line with lifelong learning objectives, identification of competencies, and incorporation of the unemployed in the labour market. A review of the Zambia's Strategic documents indicates that education and training is recognised as an important tool in the building of national capabilities necessary for achieving sustainable and equitable economic development. This is reflected in the vision 2030, and the subsequent national development plans.

On the contrary, implementation strategies, governance and the regulatory framework relating to the Zambian vocational education and training, do not emphasise sectoral participation of social partners. The involvement of social partners is mostly solicited through representation by professional bodies and to a few "known" business associations on the boards and councils or institutions.

In the continuing reforms, government has devolved a good chunk of regulatory functions governing education and training among a number of entities, with new ones being introduced. The development and implementation of a national qualification framework has allowed for clear definition and management of education and training streams; into general education, higher education, and vocational education and technical education. The first stream, covering early childhood, primary and secondary schools, is governed by the Education Act, No.23 of 2011.

One stream at tertiary level, covering College and University education, falls under the Higher Education, Act 2013, which introduced the Higher Education Authority (HEA) the body concerned with the governance and regulation of higher education. HEA is governed by a Board appointed by the Minister. Non-government actors represented on the Board include Zambia Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI), Civil Society (not defined), Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management. Similarly public Universities are governed by Councils appointed by the Minister, on recommendation of the respective institutions, while academic affairs are superintended by Senate of the university as provided for by the Act.

The other tertiary stream, Vocational Education and Training is under the TEVET, Act 1998 (amendment Act 11, 2005); which established the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA), the body mandated to regulate, monitor and co-ordinate TEVET, in consultation with industry, employers, workers and other stakeholders. The composition of the TEVETA Board is comparatively broader in terms of representation by Non-government actors; they include the Zambia Federation of Employers, the Engineering Institution of Zambia, a financial institution, and the Small Enterprise Development Board. Further TEVETA has a number of committees on which stakeholders are represented.

Further, the Zambia Qualifications Authority, Act 2011 entrusts an autonomous regulator, the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA) as the custodian of qualifications as per the national qualifications framework (NQF). Non-government actors represented on the ZAQA Board include the Zambia Institute of Chartered Accountants (ZICA), Zambia Institute of Applied Legal Education (ZIALE), Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management and Civil Society

Organisations (CSOs). Another principal law concerned with training worth mentioning is the newly introduced Skills Development Levy, Act 2016 whose implementation modalities are still being developed. The SDL, Act 2016 provides for the imposition, payment and collection of a skills development levy at the rate of 0.5 percent of gross emoluments, charged to the employer with at least ZMW800,000 worth of annual turnover.

As noted, there is little or no sectoral representation provided for in the principal laws governing education and training. Further, though provision is made for participation of non-government actors, there is no consistence in sector representation or representative organisations selected to work with the various regulatory bodies; though their functions complement each other. In addition, this arrangement does not seem to facilitate effective vertical and horizontal dialogue among the various regulatory bodies and respective sectors. Intra-sectoral dialogue is important for social partners concerned to harmonise their roles, expectations and contribution to the development of TVET at national level.

One of the characteristics envisioned for a prosperous middle income Zambia as espoused by the vision 2030, is a "diversified, balanced and strong industrial sector, modern agricultural sector and an efficient and productive service sector". Accordingly the 7th National Development Plan, government has adopted a multi-sectoral approach and identified the key sectors as drivers of economic growth to achieve the main goal 'to create a diversified and resilient economy for sustained growth and socio-economic transformation'. Given the strategic position education and training it is a legitimate expectation role of social partners would be enhanced if a sectoral approach was given prominence in policy, regulation, governance and management issues. It is difficult to fathom how the involvement of the preferred representative organisations selected to sit on the boards of the various regulatory bodies and implementing institutions embodies sectoral aspirations and facilitates meaningful input; are communication channels and levels of mandate adequate and effective and does the arrangement demand representatives to be accountable to their constituencies let alone the identified key sectors, quite often not, for most representatives nomination to the board and committee is an end in itself, their mandate and links with their "constituencies" are normally limited.

This dilemma can be attributed to the fact that most economic sectors lack organised representation with proper structures to provide meaningful engagement with government. Others legal clout to give them permanency and necessary legitimacy to represent all parties in the sector, true for many key sectors including mining, manufacturing, tourism and agriculture; where representative bodies exist, they do so as voluntary associations, allowing some target companies to operate outside their spheres of influence.

Hence social partners need to rise to the challenge and get involved as organised sectors in a proactive manner. This will require creating effective systems that link company efforts to sectoral levels and subsequently dovetail with national programmes. There are three main categories of Social partners which have been identified where this approach has been used successfully, employers, employees and

government actors.

Conclusion

This paper has provided insights into the Zambian TVET system, from the pre-colonial times, through the post-independence era to current. Vocational Education and Training is regarded as a “Cross Roads”, according the ILO strategy on training; it is a social policy matter, empowering individuals thereby facilitating social integration and cohesion on one hand, while occupying a pivotal position in the productive and labour policies on the other.

Hence, a functional and successful TVET system calls for strong and effective partnerships among social partners, among them employers, employees and government; with clearly defined roles. However, in the case of Zambia, these linkages are weak despite parties acknowledging the need for collaboration. One major contributing factor is the lack of cohesion among employers in most sectors including mining. Companies have a tendency to act in an individualistic manner and mostly their interventions are limited to the pursuit of corporate interests. Consequently, even when government provides opportunities aimed at encouraging social partners to participate meaningfully in TVET, the latter continue to be on the periphery of things, forcing the government to take an domineering role as it is accountable to the people and does not have the luxury to procrastinate.

Learning from highlighted success factors and lessons from international good practices in vocational education and training, it is clear that the country, though improving as evidenced by the scope and frequency of reforms, needs to do a lot more to enhance the participation of social partners; which is critical for strong TVET. Most importantly, the industry needs to strengthen their sectoral arrangements and cohesion to enhance participation and contribution as important social partners in training. Good practice has shown that a sectoral approach, which holds parties and their representatives to account, is an effective vehicle for strong TVET, compared to loose arrangements. In this regard ILO has, identified key building blocks of strong training and skills development strategies, among them the following, Anticipating future skills needs, Participation of social partners, Sectoral Approach, Labour market information and employment services, Training quality and relevance, Gender equality, Broad access to training and financing of training; which all call for effective participation of social partners. For a start, priority sectors such as mining, manufacturing, construction, tourism, and agriculture could be organised and capacitated to participate in skills development effectively.

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