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# Career Guidance World-Wide

Experiences of the GIZ Community of Practice Career Guidance

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Counsellors providing  
job information in Serbia



## List of abbreviations

CC	Competence Centre
CG	Career Guidance
CoP	Community of Practice
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HR	Human Resources
LM	Labour Markets
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
S2WT	School to work-transition (Career Orientation Programme in Egypt)
SED	Sustainable Economic Development
TiPO	Local Team for Professional Orientation (in Serbia)
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
VET	Vocational Education and Training

## Preface

In spring 2013, two projects implementing career guidance activities in *Indonesia* and *Serbia* started a lively exchange among themselves on tools, scope and objectives of their work. The exchange, joined by *GIZ Egypt*, resulted in an expert discussion in GIZ headquarters, where the idea of establishing an expert network took shape. The GIZ Competence Centre Technical and Vocational Education and Training and the Labour Market (CC TVET & LM) supported the initiative and in December 2013 the expert network was formally launched as “Community of Practice Career Guidance (CoP)”. As from January 2015 the CoP comprises of seven member projects from *Egypt, Indonesia, Kosovo, Mongolia, Palestinian Territories, Rwanda* and *Serbia* as well as *German* network partners. Technically the majority of member projects have either a TVET background (e.g. *Kosovo*), combine TVET with LM interventions (e.g. in *Palestine*), or follow the Integrated Approach to Employment Promotion<sup>1</sup>. Such an approach combines parallel interventions in education and training (supply side of the labour market), in private sector development (demand side of the labour market), and in intermediary information, guidance or counselling, and placement services (e.g. in *Rwanda*). The project “Professional Orientation” in *Serbia* is an example for a homogenous career guidance project.

Information, guidance and counselling services are needed before, during and after general and technical education or training to empower graduates and job seekers to make strategic use of existing learning opportunities and to translate acquired qualifications and work experiences into initial employment that provides career development prospects. These services carry different names like “vocational orientation”, “school to work-transition management”, “employment counselling”, “career education”, or “professional orientation”. Career guidance is used as an overarching term to cover all of them. Placement services might be an exemption as they are sometimes included, sometimes excluded, depending on the context. Career Guidance is provided by educational institutions and training centres,

labour market institutions and job- or youth centres. It always combines a broad range of different activities and instruments to support individuals to make informed educational and occupational decisions, to better manage transition from school to work, and to develop prospective labour market entrance and career development strategies.

For most of the partner countries, career guidance is an entirely new notion. In Germany and many other EU and OECD countries, career guidance underwent a paradigm shift in the last decade. What used to be ‘innovative’ approaches in the early 2000s<sup>2</sup> is about to develop into an integral yet specific working field cross-cutting other sectors like education, labour market, economic development, youth promotion, or social work. The purpose of the Community of Practice Career Guidance is to multiply state of the art know-how for the mutual benefit of the participating experts and their programmes as well as for the central GIZ knowledge management.

This brochure marks the first anniversary of the community’s existence. It aims at presenting its and the member projects’ work to a broader audience of career guidance practitioners, social and youth workers and other stakeholders of related fields to share experiences. It also intends to raise awareness for career guidance as an important element of employment promotion, solid and efficient technical and vocational education and the personal development of youth.

The publication starts with a theoretical introduction about the significance of career guidance as part of designing the transition from school or unemployment to work. The second chapter will present selected instruments implemented by member projects of the CoP. The success factors and challenges of implementing career guidance modules are discussed in chapter 3. Chapter 4 is dedicated to an ongoing work-in-progress: the issue of monitoring and measuring the impact of career guidance with examples from Indonesia and Serbia. Last but not least, chapter 5 will present the model of CoPs and the mode of operation of the CoP Career Guidance as an example for replication and exchange on different topics.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on the Integrated Approach to Employment Promotion, please see: <http://www.giz.de/expertise/html/4479.html> (21.01.2015, English)

<sup>2</sup> Michaela C. A. Henn (2010): “Employability and Employment’ – Innovative Policies and Measures in German TVET Cooperation”. In: Felix Rauner/ Erica Smith/ Ursel Hauschildt/ Helmut Zelloth (Eds.): Innovative Apprenticeships. Promoting Successful School-to-Work Transitions; 2nd edition, Berlin.

# 1 Why Career Guidance Matters

Labour markets in today's globalised world are changing rapidly and constantly. Men and women have to learn new abilities throughout their lives, adapt to personal and professional changes and work to earn a living. In all market economies this is connected to choosing a career as an occupation and to progress in terms of skills development, responsibility, job security, and income. It seems that the more economies are formalised and allow for social and geographical mobility, the more individuals find themselves overwhelmed with the huge range of opportunities and the frequency, with which they are forced to decide about their future.<sup>3</sup> Managing the transition from the world of education into the world of work poses a critical challenge to school leavers. Especially families from poor socio-economic backgrounds cannot afford educational detours or dead-end employment routes but often lack access to information and the awareness that there are, in fact, opportunities available and choices to be made. The vast majority of both, the less and the more privileged, have to deal with career-related crises and major career decisions also after initial school to work-transition<sup>4</sup>. Impartial career guidance and counselling services support such decision-making and in many cases impart career management skills that empower individuals to make well-informed decisions and to independently manage their careers.

In European and other OECD countries career guidance was given a prominent place on the national policy agendas during the early 2000s<sup>5</sup>. This relates to the recognition that career guidance contributes to several policy goals – based on the fact that individuals will be able to decide for a well-suited career and herewith

- improve the efficiency of the education and vocational training system,
- improve the matching between supply and demand on the labour market,

<sup>3</sup> See Watts, A.G. (2013): Career Guidance and Orientation. In: UNESCO-UNEVOC: Revisiting Global Trends in TVET, p. 239–274

<sup>4</sup> Anuradha J. Bakshi (2011): Past adolescence, into and across adulthood: career crises and major decisions. In: International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance

<sup>5</sup> The Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies (21.11.2008) marks a milestone in this development: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/104236.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/104236.pdf) (English, 02.12.2014)



Young woman working as a car mechanic in Rwanda – career guidance can lead women into male dominated occupations

- increase productivity through higher satisfaction of personnel with the work environment,
- release pressure from public employment services as individuals are able to retrieve their career management skills during their entire lives, and
- challenge gender or job-related stereotypes and promote social inclusion.

The international definition of career guidance shared by the European Union, the OECD and the World Bank refers to career guidance as “services intended to assist individuals of any age and any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers.”<sup>6</sup> These services can be delivered by educational institutions, public employment services, by civil sector organisations or the private sector.

In practice, career guidance programmes are usually made up of a few fundamental and interrelated elements:

- Career Guidance usually begins with **self-awareness**: Individuals explore their talents, interests, values, as well as distinctive skills and abilities using specific methods. These important resources for career development are usually unknown to the bearer. What am I good at? What's my mission in life?

<sup>6</sup> OECD 2004 "Handbook for Policy Makers": <http://www.oecd.org/education/innovation-education/34060761.pdf>

Which of my skills are useful in the labour market? Which talents of mine should I develop further? This is a highly individual process of self-exploration which requires specific facilitation methods and an appropriate setting.

- **Opportunity awareness** in terms of understanding the realities of the world of work (which is so distinct from the world of education) and by gaining an overview of existing education and career opportunities: What is the local economy and labour market like? Which companies hire staff when and in which occupational fields and levels? What are the tasks, the daily routines and the working conditions like? What does it mean to be self-employed or to set up a business? Where can I acquire knowledge and certificates? What kinds of study or training programmes are available and what do they cost?
- Developing **career ideas and alternatives** and career development strategies: Clients relate their individual profile gained from the self-awareness exercises and experiences to available work and learning opportunities, thus creating a number of suitable career ideas. These are further examined: What are the entrance requirements for my desired career? Are there related work places close to my place of living? Where and at what costs can I obtain the necessary qualification? What are the development prospects? How competitive is the labour market? Are there other options? What are the PROs and CONs of alternative options? While the first two elements encourage clients to think out of the box, beyond stereotypes and traditional pathways, and to recognize the huge variety of existing occupations and livelihoods in the formal and informal economy, the third one is narrowing down options again by plotting them into career plans.
- After having produced and reality-checked a number of career ideas, classical job application trainings are useful to equip clients with job-search, self-presentation and application techniques. Some programmes (Egypt, Indonesia) include additional topics like 'the first days at work' or 'dealing with difficult situations at the workplace'.

Research indicates that perceptions about career and occupations start developing during infancy highly influenced by the family, surroundings and the cultural value attribution of society towards certain professions<sup>7</sup>. If not critically reflected, invalid career beliefs can determine educational and occupational pathways.

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<sup>7</sup> See Alrumani, Gideon (2014): The Cultural Preparation Process Model. In: Arulmani et al.: Hand-book of Career Development. International Perspectives.

Career development is a longer learning and reflection process and ideally should start early.

In many OECD countries career guidance is part of the school curricula consisting of lessons, projects, extra-curricular activities, visits to relevant institutions and alike. They are sometimes combined with various types of individual folders (portfolio instruments), which ensure that all students are engaging themselves actively throughout the orientation process and that outcomes are reflected on an individual level.

Nevertheless, career guidance measures cannot be limited only to school education, but have to be available also for drop-outs and individuals above school age that are re-entering the labour market, looking for a career change or are unemployed and in need of guidance and orientation. In these cases, public employment services, labour unions, community service centres, women's clubs, and similar organisations can offer similar services.

Special emphasis needs to be put on the role of career guidance in relation to technical and vocational education and training (TVET). In many societies, TVET has a negative image and is reserved for those who seemingly did not succeed in school by making their way into university. However, a closer look at youth employment statistics shows that in many low and middle income countries youth unemployment is persistently high among university graduates. At the same time, many companies face difficulties to recruit well-trained and suitable workforce – the demand of the labour market cannot be fulfilled adequately. Vacancies that require a TVET qualification, on the other hand, hold significant employment potential. Career guidance can open the students' horizons and present TVET as a viable career option that is actually in line with the needs of the labour market. Internships, field visits, shadowing opportunities and expert talks allow youth and job seekers to experience TVET job profiles in action and maybe use their personal references in a company for a successful transition into the job.

This illustrates how career guidance can fill a major gap between the demand and the supply side of the labour market and prominently contributes to the promotion of employment in all market economies. Within the current GIZ TVET & LM portfolio (December 2014), ten projects integrate career guidance measures, in

most cases as one component of a larger programme. For example, the Employment Promotion Programme (EPP) in *Egypt* includes career guidance as one element within a labour market component, just like the Programme Sustainable Economic Development through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (SED-TVET) in *Indonesia*. Rarely measures are conducted as standalone projects as in the case of the project Vocational Orientation in *Serbia*. Many more projects include activities that can be used for career guidance, like, for example, compiling and providing user-friendly education and training information, organizing internship programmes, combining tracer studies with alumni work, providing placement services, etc.

The next chapter presents eight instruments used in the respective member programmes of the CoP Career Guidance. These instruments are singular elements within a wider range of career guidance activities in each project. Hence they do not represent the programmes' career guidance approaches as such but are showcased to display the wide range of potential activities in the field. The subsequent chapter will discuss some further experiences and implications for the successful implementation of career guidance instruments.



Exploring labour  
market information  
online

## 2 Concepts of Career Guidance and Vocational Counselling among the CoP Member Countries

### Egypt: Opportunity Scouting Camp

#### Background

The Egyptian – German Technical Cooperation has implemented elements of a dual system TVET approach from 1994 to 2007. Already before the revolution (in January 2011) a shift towards youth employment promotion took place. Today, career guidance constitutes one of four components within the current Youth Employment Promotion Programme (EPP). Egypt used to be “(...) the only country in the Mediterranean region that does not yet have career guidance services (...) within its education system to support young people’s aspirations and decisions about their educational and occupational pathways and their future jobs and careers.”<sup>8</sup>

As from 2011 the School-to-Work-Transition (S2WT) Programme has been introduced to technical secondary schools, and technical teachers have been trained as S2WT-Facilitators to deliver a curriculum-based career orientation programme to school classes in order to enable the students to discover their strengths and uncover the hidden opportunities on the labour market as well. “Opportunity Scouting Camps” have been additionally developed and piloted as perfect complement to the S2WT-Programme.

#### Approach

Participants explore employment, training and education opportunities during a two-week “Opportunity Scouting Camp”, preceded by one and a half weeks of interactive training. The camp is set up as a role play about a hypothetical company whose core business is to collect career information and to present it to technical education graduates and job seekers. Participants ‘apply’ for field work or office positions, are given ‘work contracts’ with strict working hours, rules for sick leave, with key performance indicators. They understand the objective of their tasks and

<sup>8</sup> ETF (20. January 2010): “Proposal for Intro-duc-ing Career Guidance in Egypt. The need for a strategic and integrated approach to ca-reer guidance development. Results of the national Task Force on Career Guidance in Egypt”; p. 4.

of the whole ‘business’ and how the work flow is organized. This simulation of a professional environment, despite the game-like character, is an intense (soft) skills development exercise with highly relevant outcomes for students, job seekers, and employers. Moreover it is revealing the hidden labour market and providing up-to-date information on learning and working opportunities in a given area to a relevant target group.

## Target Group

Participants are students in the prefinal year of technical secondary schools. Indirect beneficiaries are final year secondary school students and job seekers with technical education who benefit from the investigation results. Also for teachers (S2WT facilitators) it is an eye opening experience to learn about the number of vacancies and learning opportunities available in their neighbourhood.

## Activities

**8 Days Preparatory Training:** Participants receive training on some core skills needed in the world of work and needed for the hypothetical company. These include:

- Communication and presentation skills,
- Effective group work skills,
- Practical skills to explore the labour market using surveys and interviews
- Technical training on administrative tasks like data entry or accounting, depending on the respective ‘job’ assigned during the role play, in addition to taking pictures for documentation and building photoprofiles.

**14 Days Field Work:** Application of the theoretical knowledge gained during the trainings.

The participants are divided into different teams, each one comprising of five to six persons, responsible for

- Searching for **vacancies** with companies and factories through direct interviews with HR managers,
- Searching for **training and education opportunities** available for graduates of technical education streams in the areas surrounding the schools,
- Collecting **service opportunities** from NGOs and development foundations,
- Inviting **young job seekers** and fresh graduates of TVET institutes to the opportunity exhibition event and registering them in the database,
- **Administrative tasks**, e.g. data entry, attendance check, picture taking, catering etc.

Some of the appointments with the companies and different organisations are being arranged for by the supervising team of the camp. The participants are accompanied by the S2W-facilitators at the beginning to smoothen the approach to the companies they are visiting.

**2-Day Opportunity Exhibition – Forum for Employment, Training and Education:** The camp participants present the collected information on employment and training opportunities to jobseekers and TVET graduates they had invited beforehand. Furthermore, several companies are invited to hold job interviews with interested participants on the spot. The exhibition locations were prepared and styled by the participants themselves, who were also assisting the HR representatives in the job interviews, observing and learning the procedures of such assessments.

## Monitoring

One year after the first pilot, a *qualitative impact assessment* was carried out interviewing (almost) all participants and camp facilitators in *focal groups*. The feedback among all participants was positive about the skills and experience gained, such as improving their understanding of the labour market and its requirements, incentive models, concepts of the job descriptions and key performance indicators, developing their skills needed for job interviews, working with the other sex, critical thinking and problem solving etc. All of this has been reported to give the participants great self-confidence and to add hope to their future prospects.

## Success Factors

- Intensive hands-on training course, covering practical issues, which ‘staff members’ of the virtual company will encounter during these virtual (and prospective real) employment situations.
- Purpose: The objective of the company is meaningful to the students. It is not a mere exercise; the information gathered is very relevant for their peers and has to be reliable.
- Timing: The tight sequence of training, fieldwork, presentation of results and reflection of processes in the beginning of the summer break is intensely fostering skills development. At the same time, it is catering for the short-term recruitment interests of employers. Students in the prefinal year, on the one hand, are already aware of their due transition into the world of work and understand the seriousness of the issues at hand. They are, on the other hand, still relaxed



enough to not confuse the interviews conducted for the sake of exploring information with job interviews for their own employment interests.

- Students as actors: Students themselves actively map the learning and work related environment. Teachers and external human resource staff 'only' provide means, know-how and encouragement. Thus, the accomplishments reached leave participants with a sense of achievement and self-confidence.
- Staff: Students enjoy comparatively good relations with "School to work-transition facilitators". Facilitators are trained technical education teachers, who conduct the career guidance programme in technical pilot schools and who are capable of "facilitating" processes (as opposed to 'teaching' contents). They are also equipped to relate to and to encourage students. Additional private sector human resource specialists were involved as 'managers', who gave the simulation the necessary professional business flair.

### Challenges

- While the S2WT-Programme covers all students of a class, the Opportunity Scouting Camp has only limited places. Positive outreach can be increased to the extended target groups benefitting indirectly from the mapping and the job placements.
- Though the cost-benefit relation is fair, there needs to be considerable budget available (in particular for transportation, external trainers and equipment) that eventually has to be covered by local institutions.

### Contacts

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## Germany: TREASURES ... believing in my strengths!

### Background

During the last 15 years, career guidance has become increasingly important in all 16 German federal states – in schools, universities, employment agencies, ministries, and even in private companies.

Taking the ongoing demographic change towards the ageing of the German society and the urgent need for well-trained workers into consideration, career guidance is important for informing girls and boys about a broad range of career opportunities and fostering smooth transition from school to work.

The career guidance process often starts with developing the self-awareness needed to discover the students' potentials as the basis for vocational orientation.

**Treasures** is the most popular instrument of the "Seven Pillars Vocational Orientation Concept" of the Mohnesee-School<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> The Mohnesee-Schule is a secondary school, covering grades 5 to 10. It is located in the district of Soest in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany



Identifying strengths  
through practical  
experiences

Discovering and developing the students' strengths in a student-friendly manner has been part of the first pillar "Potential Analysis" since 2004 and won three federal awards for school-based vocational orientation.

## Approach

A school-based portfolio of exercises was developed, through which students are being enabled to identify their strengths and individual potential – as a basis for recognizing occupations that match their interests and skills best. The exercises are not graded and allow to experience and express the students' positive characteristics.

## Target Group

Students of lower secondary schools, starting from grade 5. The instrument is also suitable for children and youth in primary education, youth centres, vocational schools, and at high schools. An adaptation of the exercises for preschool children in kindergartens is under preparation.

## Activities

**The Portfolio:** It contains working sheets allowing the students to playfully reflect on themselves with the support of their environment, e.g. parents, teachers, sport trainers, peers, etc. Among others, the portfolio contains:

- A fairy tale illustrating the joy of discovering individual strengths,
- A letter to the users,
- A treasure map,
- A guided treasure hunt for skills and strengths with parents, teachers, sport trainers, etc.

**The Presentations:** Students regularly present the outcomes of the treasure hunt in front of their classmates. They talk about their strengths and show their talents, using illustrative materials, if possible. They answer the questions of classmates and get appreciative feedback. Jointly, the students identify skills behind the strengths, using skills-cards. During the session, the classmates are only allowed to give positive feedback. Watching their skills-cards, the students discover occupational fields with references to their future working life.

Twice a year, students present their specific abilities to a broad audience of students, teachers, and parents in the "Arena of Strengths" – a mix of show, interviews, sports, and music to present the students' strengths.

**The Projects:** Students can voluntarily carry out project work that is connected to their strengths in a team, at the school or at home. An adult supports them (e.g. teacher, parents, tutor) using the project plan. The team is responsible for organising itself and presenting the results in school after finalizing the project. They reflect on their learning outcomes in writing and receive a certificate from the teacher.

## Key Messages:

- Everybody can do something well or very well!
- Everything you do well reveals hidden strengths and talents!
- The awareness of your talents gives you power, a sense of pride, motivation and self-confidence!
- Identification of strengths is fundamental for vocational orientation!

## Monitoring

Two years after the students started their treasure hunt, they complete a questionnaire about the programme itself and its impact. After 10 years of implementation many positive effects can be stated:

- Improved students' self-confidence, integration, learning motivation and the further development of talents,
- Improved social climate within the group,
- Improved contact to parents,
- Improved awareness about the connection between one's strengths and possible job-profiles.

"Treasures" has been integrated into other career guidance programmes like the ones in *Egypt* or *Indonesia*.

## Success Factors

**Treasures** has become an integral part of the school curriculum, anchored in the school's vocational orientation concept and supported by all stakeholders. Implementation is easy with little means (paper sheets, coloured pencils, a folder and trained teachers). School organisation: During the introduction-phase it is recommendable to teach about 10 lessons within two to three weeks in a row. After that, there are good experiences with monthly **Treasure** lessons.

## Contact

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Info: <http://www.starke-seiten.net>

An English version of all teaching material can be ordered on a DVD against factory costs.

## Indonesia: Kompas Masa Depan – the Career Choice Pass

### Background

Over the last years, Indonesia's economy grew by about 6% annually and is in urgent need of qualified workforce, especially in the manufacturing industry. At the same time, youth between ages 15-24 are facing unemployment rates of 19%. Graduates from secondary schools are the group most affected by unemployment. They are usually lacking employability and their training is not matching the needs of the labour market. At the same time, career guidance in Indonesia is so far underestimated. School management is usually focusing on the national exams and is providing only limited and low-quality resources that help students prepare their transition into the world of work.

### Approach

A portfolio of exercises is distributed to students. It is guiding students through all stages, from self-awareness to transition planning. Students receive a personal folder, in which they can write, paint, etc. to express themselves and identify their skills, needs and interests.



Effective career guidance builds on the students' skills and abilities

## Target Group

Students of upper secondary TVET schools aged 15 to 18

## Activities

### Berburu Harta Karun (Treasure Hunt):

- Students reflect on things they like and frequently do during their spare time (self-assessment), inspired by the German “Treasures” concept
- Students ask other persons (parents, friends, teachers) for positive feed-back on their strengths (foreign-assessment)
- Comparison of the “treasure lists” and then selection of the one strength/ treasure to be further developed

### Menilai Kekuatanku (Assessing my Professional Strength):

- Students assess their own work-related strengths using a list of core employability skills (originating from the German “Berufswahlpass”)
- They ask other persons to rate them with regards to the same skill set
- Students compare the results of their self-assessment with those of the foreign assessments

### Profesi di sekelilingku (Professions in my Surroundings)

- Students identify professions of people in their environment (family, neighbours, acquaintances etc.)
- They conduct research in groups on the most interesting professions and present the results in front of the class

### Pekerjaan impian (Dream Job):

- Students conduct research on their dream profession: through interviews, online research etc.

### Visi Karir (Career Vision):

- Students develop their career vision

### Peta Karir (Career Map):

- Students develop a career path on a career map (a detailed version of the career vision exercise)

- The map is a display of career development over a time horizon of 30 years Rencana Belajar (Study Plan):
- Based on their career vision and career map, students identify strengths or competencies needed in order to achieve their career aspirations
- Students develop a plan for self-development to improve their competencies

## Success Factors

- As long as career guidance is no policy priority, successful implementation requires particularly engaged teachers, who drive and advocate for it and a supportive school management.
- The constructed portfolio needs to firstly incorporate existing activities at the schools (e.g. internship schemes, placement services, counselling, etc.) that can be made use of for orientation, information and career development purposes and, secondly, add missing elements (like self-awareness exercises).
- Using symbols and a language that is known to youths is advised.

## Challenges

- Due to the low priority given to career guidance as a policy field, there is no time allocated for the exercises in class. Hence, they have to be implemented as extra-curricular activities.
- Career guidance requires the collaboration between internal school units and external partners (particularly employers, further and higher education institutions and others).

## Monitoring

From the outset of the project work, studies have been conducted to trace students' whereabouts after graduation. See chapter 4 for more information.

## Contacts

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# Kosovo: Wiki Platform – Digital Career Information for Vocational Education and Training

## Background

During the last decade, Kosovo is continuously striving to improve its TVET system in terms of quantity and quality. The matching between supply and demand, availability of labour market information and counselling for youth when preparing for the school-to-work-transition, however, is not yet seen as satisfactory

## Approach

The project (Promotion of Competence Centres in the Context of Vocational Education and Training Reforms in Kosovo) has supported the establishment of an interactive and IT-based information tool: A wiki 2.0 interactive platform that allows users to inform themselves about occupations, the labour market, events and related activities, create and edit pages, share information as well as serve as a communication tool for certain groups and portals entailed within the platform.

The platform is called VET Wiki Platform and goes beyond career information for Vocational Schools. It also encompasses information on occupations of the Kosovo as well as the international labour market, trends in the VET terminology and access to text books and other kind of learning materials.

## Target Group

Direct: Policy makers, donor organisations, teachers, students, parents.

Indirect: the entire society in the country and other Albanian, English and Serbian speaking countries (given that the platform is translated into English and is in the process of translation into Serbian language).

## Activities

The wiki platform [www.vetkosovo.org](http://www.vetkosovo.org) has been established to meet the high demand for an umbrella online platform providing information, data, relevant documents, policy papers, reports and updates from the developments of VET in the country.



Tasting practice at school in Kosovo

Today, the VET Wiki Platform in Kosovo hosts three portals that seek to provide information and development from schools, donors including policy makers and the labour market.

Aside from the portals it also consists of:

- Information on profiles offered by the vocational schools across the country,
- Documentary films of 50 job profiles that are offered within the country and abroad,
- A glossary of career guidance and legal framework documents on career guidance in the country.

The platform is a user-based source and editable by all its registered users. Every user has the opportunity to create a page, enrich it with information and documents to make the platform an interactive tool for all relevant stakeholders of the TVET sector.

Trainings on how to use the platform have been offered to all vocational teachers as well as several policy makers. So far, the platform has been advertised to political stakeholders and for donor coordination. As soon as the content has been finalized, it will be available to everybody in Kosovo with expected spill-over effects to Albania, given that both countries speak the same native language.

## Monitoring

The site is monitoring user data (number of active viewers and active contributors): The more users it attracts, the higher the impact and enrichment with news and information.

Up till now the platform has had 54,810 views of existing Wiki pages. The school portal marks the highest view rate with 4,798 viewers, whereas the Sidebars consist of: Occupations Database and films as well as the Glossary which includes the translated (in Albanian) VET – Cedefop and the ELGPN Career Guidance Glossary.

An online questionnaire will be built in the platform with the aim to identify and further develop further users' requirements as well as for impact monitoring purposes.

## Success Factors

- It is an interactive tool
- A unique umbrella platform that includes “all in one” in terms of information, data, development of the sectors, event coordination in the entire VET system (through integrated calendars)
- A flexible support instrument for career guidance as usage is individual and the site available at any place.

## Challenges

- The platform needs maintenance, which should ideally be conducted by the local education authorities or other career guidance stakeholders. Lack of staff and infrastructure present limitations.
- Many users are needed to contribute to keep the platform active and attractive. Insofar, no official launching campaign has taken place given the continuous development towards enabling a ‘rich in content’ and tangible platform for all users and potential ones.

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## Mongolia: Girls' Days

### Background

The Girls' Day is a well-known concept that was first implemented in Germany in 2001. To date, it is implemented in 19 countries all over the world<sup>10</sup> with some 1.5 million participants worldwide, but not yet from Mongolia.

TVET has a low reputation in Mongolia. Whilst the economy is based primarily on mining, construction and agriculture, 70% of the Mongolian youths attend university compared to only 30% studying at a TVET institution. Notably, girls are hardly found in technical professions, despite the fact that this sector provides very good employment opportunities. As in many countries, cultural perceptions and prejudices influence girls' career decisions, even though the gender gap is comparatively low in Mongolia<sup>11</sup>. The prejudices even reach into the administration of TVET schools. For example, girls wanting to register for a technical apprenticeship were rejected by the administrative personnel of a TVET school saying: “This is nothing for girls. You should become a cook or a hair-dresser.”

<sup>10</sup> See also: [www.girls-day.de](http://www.girls-day.de)

<sup>11</sup> 2013, Mongolia was on rank 33 of 136 as-sessed countries. See [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GenderGap\\_Report\\_2013.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2013.pdf)



Career development involves long-term thinking

The project supports twelve TVET schools to help improving their quality, while putting a special focus on gender and inclusion. This includes building up career guidance services at the TVET schools, addressing male and female students and job seekers. Additionally, the project started to support the implementation of Girls' Days at TVET schools in order to encourage girls to be trained in technical professions and to promote TVET in general.

## Approach

The Girls' Days are implemented by TVET schools, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, school board members, companies and various external stakeholders. Among the school staff, the events are organized by personnel responsible for public relations or gender, and are implemented with the involvement of TVET teachers and TVET students. By involving different stakeholders from industry, civil society and government, the day is an occasion to enhance exchange and cooperation between them.

Currently, each Girls' Day is implemented with approximately 80 students from secondary schools in marginalized suburbs. The days are implemented at the TVET schools, not at companies, because the cooperation between schools and private sector is just at its very beginning. Different approaches, such as conducting the Girls' Days in smaller groups with half days at TVET schools and half days at companies, are under discussion. The leading question is how to organize the day with the least time investment and the highest impact.

## Target Group

The current target groups are girls from secondary schools in grades nine and twelve. In grade nine, students need to decide whether to continue with secondary school or to start vocational training. In grade twelve, students need to choose between higher education and vocational education. Also, including girls from grade eight is being discussed, as career paths are often decided at earlier age.

## Activities

The participating girls get information about technical professions and the opportunity to experience their practical abilities in workshops. The participating companies present their entrepreneurial activities, characteristics of technical professions and career opportunities. The agenda includes the following:

- Introduction by officials, including an occupational safety and health briefing.
- Round tour to see information desks run by various companies (e.g. school board members) to learn about companies and career perspectives.
- Show of rooms and workshops at the vocational school (in small groups).
- Small practical projects in the workshops (by vocational teachers, e.g. land measurement of school compound, manufacturing small aviaries, exercises with heavy machinery simulators).
- Presentations by role models (e.g. female WorldSkill<sup>12</sup> participants), career guidance services and other actors (e.g. youth centers, women groups).
- Reflection about the day.
- After the event, girls relate their experiences to classmates and distribute information leaflets.

The event is also a good occasion to involve media representatives in order to place newspaper articles and thereby inputs on TVET in the local media.

## Monitoring

The Girls' Days are evaluated based both on pre- and post-evaluation questionnaires filled out by the girls and reactions from all other participating groups. The reaction to date is extremely positive from all people involved, requesting a country-wide implementation of such Girls' Days. Correspondingly, the impact on the girls is significant: The percentage of participants who consider technical vocations as suitable for women increased from 49% to 91%, and the percentage of girls who consider choosing a technical profession increased from 33% to 52%.

## Success Factors

- The Girls' Day lives through the involvement of several stakeholders, such as companies (information desks), media (news items in press, on TV and the internet), gender groups (e.g. for presentations), national or local leadership (representatives from national ministries, representative from local government).
- The different stakeholders are easy to motivate, if each one benefits in some way from the event and understands its value.
- Conducting the Girls' Days during the low season of construction or production makes it easier for companies to engage.
- The Girls' Day is not cost intensive.

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<sup>12</sup> See: [www.worldskills.org](http://www.worldskills.org)

## Challenges

- The challenge is to get the understanding and ownership of all involved stakeholders. In Mongolia, the involvement of the Ministry of Labour boosted the commitment of all other actors.
- Ownership of TVET school management is important. If the management has a good understanding of the event and its opportunities, the Girls' Day does not need much external support.

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## Palestinian Territories: Community-Based Training for Self-Employment and Enterprise Creation

### Background

In Palestine, the government faces a specific set of challenges in improving the socio-economic situation. With more than two third of the Palestinian population under the age of 30, the youth unemployment rate of 41% is very high (World Bank 2014).

At the same time, the private sector and the domestic market are very limited and offer little employment opportunities. Self-employment and small enterprises provide a promising alternative for youth and traditionally disadvantaged groups to gain access to income generating activities and to productive and decent employment opportunities. The Palestinian government supports this by giving the highest priority to the development of small-scale industries, self-employment schemes and a relevant entrepreneurship environment. The Programme “Promotion of TVET and Labour Market in the Palestinian Territories” supports the ‘Community-Based Training for Self-Employment and Enterprise Creation’ (CBTSEC).



Creating jobs in the Palastinan Territories: paving the way for self-employment and enterprise creation



## Approach

Since the Palestinian private sector job market is very limited, only a small number of youth will be able to be absorbed there. In order to boost employment, job-seekers get information about options for self-employment and receive support in setting up their own businesses using the following steps.

## Target Group

The activities target jobseekers, unemployed youth or adults as well as fresh graduates, who are seeking self-employment and small enterprise creation opportunities.

## Activities

The different steps of activities are shown in the flow chart:



All activities are implemented together with associations of the private sector and training institutions.

The initial training takes 120 hours in total. It provides skills in

- Accounting, bookkeeping and reporting
- Cash flow frameworks and financial planning
- Assessment of market demands and business profitability analysis
- Capacity Development on how to gain access to micro credit products
- Work environment health and safety
- Advertisement and business communication skills
- Computer applications
- Business ethics and others

After the training is completed the new entrepreneurs receive support through individual coaching plans and related time schedules. These are personalised for each participant, focusing on the special needs of the individual business-idea. The coaching is often done by successful local entrepreneurs.

## Monitoring

The training institutions undertake regular and systematic site visits for a period of up to three months to check and resolve operational problems. The objective of conducting these visits is to supervise and document the participant's progress. In particular:

- Review the status of the participant's business in the areas of start-up, production, marketing, and finance activities,
- Ensure that the participant keeps the following business records accurately: Simple cash book with records of transactions; inventory list of manufactured products; summary of banking transaction records,
- Identify and correct problems,
- Provide advice/support to ongoing activities (e. g. marketing assistance)

## Success Factors

- Stakeholder coordination: Involvement of stakeholders from governmental, private sector and non-governmental institutions on local level that address the particular challenges of their region.
- The private sector representatives are relevant partners in the approach and bring in their knowledge, including one-to-one coaching to the young entrepreneurs.

## Challenges

- Cultural constraints (in particular religious restrictions and regulation towards the loans and interests), especially for young women entrepreneurs
- Stakeholder coordination (civil society, private sector, government, ministries, NGOs, educational institutions)

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## Rwanda: Kigali Employment Service Centre

### Background

With 80% of Rwanda's employable population working in the agricultural sector and 120,000 graduates entering the labour market each year, the Rwandan Government is focussing on promoting employment and employability within the country in order to achieve economic growth until the year 2020. National strategies target the creation of 200,000 off farm jobs annually. The German Development Cooperation through GIZ supports this approach through the Promotion of Economy and Employment Program (Eco-Emploi), and has supported the City of Kigali to open the country's first public job centre, the Kigali Employment Service Centre (KESC), which provides services to job seekers, TVET students and employers.

### Approach

The KESC offers a range of services to jobseekers and TVET students including career guidance (identifying strengths, interests and abilities) and training (e.g. application and CV writing, entrepreneurship training), to actual job and internship placement. Employers can post vacancies at the centre, and request candidates for open positions.

### Target Group

Job seekers, TVET students and employers.

### Activities

The centre offers the following services to bridge the gap between jobseekers and employers:

- Computer workplaces for internet job searches and application writing
- Information on vacancies, training and internship opportunities, and career paths
- Job search strategy training
- One-to-one and group counselling sessions
- Opportunity Scouting (using an adjusted version of the Egyptian model)
- Job fairs
- Information sessions with employers on job requirements and career paths
- Women mentorship program



Starting a career development path at an early stage in Rwanda

Starting early on a career development path in Rwanda

- Internship and job placement
- Entrepreneurship training
- Piloting of a career coaching course at TVET schools

While jobseekers decide for themselves which services they would like to access, employers have proven more likely to select candidates who have successfully completed one or more career guidance services.

Employers can register their vacancies on the database platform for free, and receive shortlisted and trained applicants upon request.

The KESC aspires to become the centre of competence for career guidance in Rwanda, supports the development of school-based career orientation, and jointly with the Rwandan TVET regulator Workforce Development Authority implements career guidance activities at TVET schools.

### Monitoring

The employment centre conducts regular tracer studies of trained and counselled jobseekers. The first two tracer studies show, that 44% of the 601 jobseekers included in the studies were able to enter the labour market. 36% (271) have found jobs, and 8% (46) have begun internships. KESC services are much appreciated,

with up to 87% of the participants stating that they found the services to be helpful in the process of finding a job.

### Success Factors

- Developing of innovative approaches, such as job scouting and mentorship schemes.
- Involving the private sector, which is essential for effective career guidance and placement.
- Internships have proven to be an effective tool for jobseekers to gain professional experience, build networks, and develop work-related skills in order to find employment.

### Challenges

- The private sector in Rwanda is still relatively small, and it has proven difficult to convince employers to cooperate on vacancies and recruitment.
- KESC is currently the only public job centre in the country and job seekers from all over Rwanda use and request its services.
- Career guidance is a new approach in Rwanda and important preconditions such as occupational profiles are currently being developed but are not yet available.

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## Serbia: Real Encounters of Youth with the World of Work

### Background

Serbia's youth unemployment is among the highest in Europe. The economy looks for a dedicated and skilled workforce, but faces difficulties in recruiting them – a mismatch between demand and supply. In 2010 the Serbian government issued a national strategy for the implementation of career guidance and counselling in order to create the system and services, which will support individuals to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. The project Vocational Orientation in Serbia (GIZ BOSS) supports the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and the Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia in implementing the career guidance strategy and to develop a sustainable career guidance system in both sectors, primary education and youth. The developed, tested and accredited program is implemented in more than 1,000 primary schools and in almost 120 local youth offices across the country. During the project implementation, the supporting institutional structure has been created to enable conditions for learning, exchange, introductions of innovation and creating local capacities and knowledge. The goal is to enable access for every student and youth in all municipalities to gain skills to manage their career.



Vocational orientation helps students choose a vocational track in Serbia

“Professional Orientation” is delivered in both sectors, based on a comprehensive programme that focuses on forming the personality of young people: strengthening their decision making capacity, readiness to perform, persistence – and to engage in relationships. It comprises five modules:

- Self-awareness
- Information on occupations and career: learning about different occupations, their content, what skills are needed for a successful career, and actual needs of the labour market.
- Education pathways: possibilities for further education and the schooling process required for the preferred career. In addition, students compare their interests and aspirations with the knowledge required for a certain occupation.
- Real encounters of youth with the world of work
- Decision making regarding school and occupation: acquiring specific techniques and methods for decision making, planning and adapting plans if needed.

## Approach

The concept of real encounters of youth with the world of work at primary school level was an innovation in the education in Serbia. In the real encounters with the world of work, young people meet representatives of different occupations and working environments, they spend some time in companies and inquire about the occupation and required qualification and try out some occupation-related tasks. They expose their preferred occupation to reality testing and tasting before making career choices.

## Target Group

Students of the final years (grades seven and eight) of primary school and young beneficiaries serviced by local youth office

## Activities

The real encounters comprise of diverse types of contacts with the world of work, like:

- Company visits, job shadowing, intern shadowing, internships, practical tryouts,
- Interviewing experts visiting the schools and answering the students’ questions,
- Visiting employment centres and receiving labour market information,
- One-day events, such as occupation information fairs, “Girls and Boys Day” or secondary school information days.

Through the real encounters the students gain first-hand insights into the world of work and specific occupations. During the encounters, students apply methods that enable interactive learning in reality-like work situations.

During the school year 2013/2014, 2,035 real encounters with the world of work took place, including 51,280 young people from primary schools and 15,000 young people from secondary schools.

## Monitoring

See additional information in chapter 4.

## Success Factors

- Stakeholder coordination at community level: The encounters are organized and coordinated by *local teams for professional orientation (TiPO)*. These teams consist of representatives from local youth offices, national employment services, primary and secondary schools, local authorities, and companies. The members meet three times during a school year in order to organize and coordinate the career guidance activities and real encounters and in order to avoid doubling efforts thus improving their efficiency.
- Capacity building of teachers and practitioners for creative and innovative teaching and networking with different stakeholders from local communities.

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### 3 Implications for Implementation

The examples presented above are career guidance instruments anchored at very different levels of implementation, for different target groups and with different success factors and challenges for implementation. They are selected tools that have to be seen in their combination with other instruments. Career guidance is always a tailor-made and sequenced combination of a number of instruments and activities. Nevertheless, this chapter intends to summarize some key aspects and to provide guidance about a few general implications for implementing career guidance in partner countries of German technical cooperation.

#### Cultural Transferability of Career Guidance Instruments

Career guidance as implemented in most OECD countries is supposedly fitting a social culture putting the uniqueness of the individual and the self-determination of the worker at its centre. Alrumani<sup>13</sup> points out that this perception does not apply to other societies with a collectivistic society organisation. Therefore, one has to be careful when transferring concepts of career guidance instruments from one culture to another, expecting it to work the same way. This relates for example to the strong impact that the community as a whole and the family structure in particular have when it comes to youth choosing a career. Other goals might be more important in this regard than considerations of self-realisation. These can be safeguarding, social prestige of and value attribution to certain professions, family traditions, or the like. Career guidance practitioners have to take cultural differences and prevalent career beliefs into consideration and to adjust models and materials transferred from other cultural contexts accordingly. They also have to consider the clients' family networks as well as the prevalence and instable dynamics of informal labour markets.

#### Special Target Groups

The ILO (2011) points out that career guidance in countries with low or middle income should focus on certain priority groups when designing the content and availability of instruments: Youth represents a large part of the population, has

<sup>13</sup> Gideon Arulmani (2014): „The Cultural Preparation Process Model and Career Development“. In: Arulmani, G.; Bakshi, J.B.; Leong, F.T.L.; Watts, A.G. (Eds.) "Handbook of Career Development. Inter-national Perspectives". P. 81-103



Creating career opportunities for girls in Mongolia

major work-life decisions to make and is therefore in specific need for career guidance. This also counts for women, who face restrictions in many countries in terms of freedom to choose their occupation. Persons, who are migrating or intending to do so should receive special attention because they make major work-life decisions and are in need of information to avoid exploitation. German Technical Cooperation has a long tradition of supporting partner countries' developments of TVET. In this context, career guidance before, during, and after TVET are of particular interest for attracting practically gifted students into fields that match their interests and skills and to support the graduates' transition into employment or higher education.

#### Gender Mainstreaming

A focus on gender is of special importance in two ways when talking about career guidance; first, women are frequently restricted from a free choice of career or heavily influenced towards typically female occupations. Schools in *Mongolia* have been reluctant to accept girls for technical apprenticeships. In *Egypt*, the participation rate of women in the labour market is generally extremely low<sup>14</sup>, while divorce rates are increasing, putting Egyptian women and their children at high risk of becoming impoverished. They are at special risk of exploitation, especially when being the only breadwinner of the family and might need professional options that

<sup>14</sup> The labour force participation rate of women in Egypt is stagnating on a level between 23 and 25 % (2010-2013) (World Bank Databank)

allow for the combination of domestic work or parenting with income generation, often as small-scale entrepreneurs.

Boys and girls are influenced through their families and cultural value attribution towards certain typical professions that hinder a balance of gender representation or the self-realisation of many individuals. Germany does not feature as a role model, as the gender segregation there is still significant and enduring: More than one half of all occupations are 'male' in the sense that 70 or more percent of all employees in that specific occupation are men. Around ten percent of all occupations are 'female' (with less than 30 percent men carrying out this occupation). Only 30 percent of all occupations are defined as "mixed" occupations. 70 percent of all 7.8 million German women employed in 2008 are in 'female occupations'. And vice versa: 70 percent of the 9.6 million men were employed in 'male occupations'.<sup>15</sup> Roughly 10 percent of employed men worked in 'female occupations' and vice versa. Looking back to what used to be male and female work in the past or having a look in neighbouring countries reveals how much these patterns are based on social convention.

It is the task of career guidance to open up the same career opportunities for both sexes and to sensitise teachers, school management, companies and other stakeholders about gender stereotypes. The Girls' (and Boys') Day implemented on a regular base in *Germany*, *Serbia* or *Mongolia* give examples for an instrument specifically dedicated to challenge gender stereotypes (see the instrument example from Mongolia). Yet, cultural perceptions change only slowly. Career guidance practitioners and related information and training materials have to make sure to not unintentionally perpetuate traditional perceptions. Instead, they should use gender neutral language, symbols and images and make sure to also involve successful women entrepreneurs or professionals as role models.

### Career Guidance during TVET and Secondary Education

As mentioned in chapter 1, ideas and visions about a career start developing during infancy; this process is best to be supported as early as possible with self-awareness activities and occupational information and continued through the steps of career choice development before graduation and the transition to university or TVET.

<sup>15</sup> Matthes, B.; Biersack, W. (2009): Frauenberufe Maennerberufe. Karten neu gemischt. Institut fuer Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung (IAB); IAB-Forum 1/2009

This is the bestcase scenario. However, in many countries practitioners report resistance to the idea of career guidance as one part of the human development of youth or as a task of the education system. When allocation of students within the education system is based solely on academic performance at lower secondary stages and the outcomes of teaching processes are not fed back into the education system, there is no apparent need for additional measures. When, in contrast, graduates of reformed TVET systems or higher education fail to translate acquired qualification into employment after a long and expensive education or training process, chances are that policy makers are more inclined to invest in school-to-work transition measures to cure problems that have been caused earlier on.

Often, career guidance can only be implemented in the TVET schools as part of TVET system developing projects – a point where most students already made their first career choice. For a lot of students, TVET does not represent a viable career option so they prefer university education, despite the fact that the labour market cannot absorb this number of university graduates and is in urgent need for skilled technical workers. Career guidance is urgently needed to compensate the mismatch between supply and demand in many countries and to balance 'social' and 'economic' benefits of various educational pathways. Ideally career guidance should be offered before and after TVET.

### Integration in Formal Education

Projects report difficulties in integrating career guidance instruments into the curricula or extra-curricular activities of schools and training institutions. Generally, the pedagogic and didactical methods differ heavily from regular classroom teaching. Empowering youth to make informed decisions and to actively engage in self-development needs time. It yields different outcomes for every individual and requires the facilitation of reflection processes (as opposed to mere teaching of contents). This calls for activities that allow students to express themselves, organize their own projects, take over responsibility, ask questions, focus on their strengths and talents (instead of weaknesses and deficits). Training in teaching methods and perception change of teachers and trainers is one of the most essential steps in the implementation of career guidance instruments. Gaining the support of the school management is another.

## Stakeholder Cooperation and Coordination

As mentioned above, bureaucratic structures can be very static and averse against changes. Despite the fact that huge modernization and reform endeavours are announced for boosting economic growth, for improving employment services, education and TVET systems or even for improving the school-work-transition itself, many policy makers belittle the importance of career guidance. It is also perceived as a resource and reform-intensive process and a concept that seems alien to the culture. In addition, career guidance is proving its impact sometime after beneficiaries received the services, which makes impact monitoring difficult (see the discussion in the following chapter). In order to increase the outreach, cooperation with and support by different governmental levels is needed, e.g. for executing a national strategy, providing personnel and material resources, allocating time for the curricula, etc. If this is not achievable, one could consider implementing career guidance in the non-governmental sector among youth organizations, private schools and similar organisations in order to develop fitting instruments, implement them and use positive results to start a perception change.

The same applies for the private sector: Its involvement is highly needed for the practical exercises (field visits, expert talks, shadowing, internships), but the benefits are mutual. Young people that have experienced career guidance are less likely to drop-out from training, higher education or even jobs themselves. They are also more aware of the requirements of the labour market. Through practical encounters, companies have the chance to meet future employees, who will be motivated and productive. As companies have a business to take care of at the same time, a coordinated integration of the private sector into the instruments is advisable.

In general, different stakeholders from the government, private sector, local organizations, education institutes and others should come together at round tables to discuss urgent issues and agree on a joint strategy for career guidance that is demand-driven and achievable with the resources available. The project in *Serbia* in that regard achieved to set up a unique form of stakeholder coordination on municipal level: a coordination team called TiPO (Local Team for Professional Orientation) consisting of representatives from primary and secondary schools, companies, local youth offices, national employment services and local authorities. They meet up to three times during a school year to coordinate and optimise their services and to jointly set up new career guidance activities or events.

## Sustainability and Institutionalization

Sustainability and institutionalization represent two major challenges for career guidance systems. A cross-sector topic like career guidance requires cooperation and coordination at national and local levels. Facilitating a cross-stakeholder dialogue is challenging when diverse partners from government, private sector, and society are brought together with each partner having its own culture, rationale and work pace. As stated before: For most countries, career guidance is an entirely new concept. Capacities have to be built from scratch. There are only a few experts and training institutions.

The less governments – across various ministries – recognize the significance of career guidance to achieve common policy goals, the fewer resource investment and political support take place. This leads to several issues:

- Services (for different) target group(s) and the capacities of respective service providers need to be built up, improved, or increased;
- Mechanisms for governance, quality assurance and innovation/ response to changes are required (including research);
- Programmes and institutions for training practitioners for the respective institutions (education, labour market, human resource management) are necessary;

The projects in *Serbia* and in *Egypt*, for example, had to use cascade train-the-trainer approaches to pilot and scale up career guidance services. The ministries of education of both countries support the integration of career guidance in lower secondary general (*Serbia*) or upper secondary technical (*Egypt*) education. Trained and experienced career guidance practitioners have formed an association (*Serbia*) or have become certified teacher trainers (*Egypt*). For the moment, however, there are not yet national institutions training practitioners and issuing recognized qualifications in career guidance and counselling.

In *Serbia*, the inclusion of career guidance measures into the education system succeeded on a general basis; the services are financed through the education budget. The career guidance services provided by the local youth offices and their sustainability, however, vary widely as they are under the municipalities' authority and each municipality handles the offices and their financing differently. However, the private sector in *Serbia* is increasingly involving itself, realizing and appreciating

the benefits of “professional orientation” and thereby also contributing to a continued service delivery and development, particularly on municipal level.

### Promotion and Advocacy

Several projects mention that investing efforts into advocacy for career guidance among stakeholders and especially governmental representatives is important. Especially when political support is missing, the positive results and success stories of career guidance activities should be displayed to a broad audience to raise awareness and slowly allow for a bigger implementation base. *Serbia* is very successful in attracting media to cover events organized by TiPOs, like, for example, a work wear fashion show. The training package for TiPO coordinators also includes public relations as a topic.

### The Informal Labour Market

The economies of many low and middle income countries are for a big part informal with small and medium-sized enterprises, precarious and family labour, but also big companies do not always provide contracts and social security for new entrants. Working conditions, payment and social security may be better in the public or formal private sector jobs. In many cases, the formal private sector is small and weak, while public employers are overstaffed, prefer higher education graduates and are decent, stable, with social insurances, but poorly paid. It is part of reality that the majority of youth starts working life in the informal sector. Students should be (made) aware that this is only the beginning of career development. Career guidance can support expectation management and help youth in developing mid- and long term job search strategies throughout all sectors jobs. It can raise graduates’ awareness for the importance of lifelong skills and career development, and help prepare them more effectively for salary and contract negotiations. And also on the employer side, career guidance activities can be part of raising awareness for decent working conditions.

## 4 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is being considered as highly important within GIZ as the company has to ensure that the project’s progress is examined on a continuous basis. It builds the basis to learn from success and failure and gives orientation on how to adapt program activities to changing conditions in the country. Assessing the effectiveness of career guidance activities is a difficult task as there are often no quality standards for counselling and guidance. One major question is how to define success of career guidance; furthermore it is not easy to exclude external factors influencing career decisions and to isolate the efforts of the intervention.

Career guidance practitioners provide rich anecdotic evidence for the value of career guidance. They know the changes these services bring to the classroom and into the family from own experiences: The father of one of the participants in the school-to-work-transition programme in Egypt stated in an interview: “I never was thinking about my son’s strengths as I always have been preoccupied with attending to his weaknesses”<sup>16</sup>. Or the employer who knocked on the door of the GIZ project

<sup>16</sup> The video clip on the career guidance approach of the Employment Promotion Programme in Egypt can be seen on the Youtube channel ‘Egypt at Work’: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6jbr\\_j6\\_ps](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6jbr_j6_ps)



Measuring effects of career guidance services is highly important for policy-makers



office in Cairo to find out about what might have caused the inexplicable changes in the social behaviour of technical education students that he happened to witness.

It is amazing to see the countless hours of voluntary work that teachers and other trained semi-professionals invest in the development and implementation of services and to see the financial or in-kind contributions by various stakeholders, including companies. However, field experiences and scientific research point to the same fact: “adolescents consider practically all measures of vocational orientation on average positive”<sup>17</sup>. That is why the mere target group’s acceptance of and appreciation for the services as such does not suffice as evidence base. The questions of how the results and impacts of career guidance can be measured by economic means and what the facts and figures are that capture these effects is subject to a vivid and ongoing discussion, (not only) amongst the CoP members. This topic has been set as the community’s main topic of exchange for 2015.

One challenge for monitoring and evaluation is to capture all impact dimensions or – at least – to define the core one(s). The differences for the individual, for example, cover a broad range of changes:

- The beneficiary is ‘better informed’ (e.g. gives plausible reasons for his or her choices or career development strategy, outlines alternatives, knows which kind of information is crucial, distinguishes ‘factual information’ from ‘opinion’),
- has (re-)gained a joy for learning (e.g. has set him/herself learning goals and follows them up, uses informal learning opportunities/ practical learning),
- has developed explorations and presentation skills (e.g. seeks out, obtains, processes and presents relevant information),
- is reflective (e.g. observes him-/ herself, compares self- with foreign assessments, asks for feedback, analyses information and experiences and draws personal conclusions from it),
- enjoys increased self-respect and -confidence (e.g. knows his/ her strengths, is choosing deliberately, approaches adults in a self-confident/ affirmative way),
- is proactive (e.g. is not waiting to be provided by others but is actively seeking or even creating opportunities),
- and is optimistic (confidently looking into the future).

<sup>17</sup> Rahn, S., Brueggemann, T.; Hartkopf, E. (2012): Berufliche Orientierungsprozesse Jugendlicher in der Sekundarstufe I. Ergebnisse aus dem Berufsorientierungspanel (BOP). In Brueggemann et al (Eds.) „Berufsorientierung. Ein Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch, Münster, p. 112

Every career has a small beginning and the effects of the empowerment of young people to develop and manage careers are realised only in later stages of professional development. Covering this aspect would require longitudinal studies.

Well implemented career guidance does not only impact on the direct beneficiaries. Other intended spin-offs refer to changes in schools or companies. It makes a difference when secondary schools, particularly in TVET and higher education, receive students who deliberately opted for the course they registered for, who know what to expect there and for what reasons they are joining the particular institution. Also companies appreciate receiving targeted applications of motivated young people, who are considering their initial employment as a start, not as the end of a career, and are ready to learn. Decreasing drop-out rates in education, reduced costs for staff recruitment and staff retention are, however, mid- to long-term effects that are measurable only when career guidance services provided by a number of providers of different kinds have succeeded to grow into a coherent system on local or regional level and into a certain scale covering a sufficiently high number of beneficiaries and partners.

So far, asking participants for feedback after career guidance workshops or organizing focus group discussions with representatives from target groups and implementers constitute the most commonly used evaluation method during the testing phase and pilot implementation. Impact indicators used in project management and reporting are ranging from, for example, the amount and type of sources students base their educational choices upon (*Serbia*) to actual employment effects (*Indonesia*). The Professional Orientation Project in Serbia also engaged in a comparative analysis of the differences of a group of students, who received career guidance services (experimental group) in comparison to a group that did not (control group), two years after the intervention.

### Tracer Studies in Indonesia

Tracer studies are another instrument often used to evaluate the impact of TVET programmes and career guidance instruments, monitoring alumni’s social and economic condition pre- and post-graduation. Tracer studies in *Indonesia* are moreover supported by all partner ministries. All activities around the tracer studies are organized and conducted by the TVET institutes, with support of the GIZ project. First, prior to graduation, a pretracer study is conducted in parallel to the national

exams. This pretracer study is supplemented by an awareness-raising event, announcing that graduates will be contacted again after one year to compare the results. The data is collected via phone and face-to-face in interviews conducted by teachers, active students, active alumni or self-administered via email and online surveys.

The indicators are:

- Utilization of acquired skills at the workplace
- Socio-economic impact of the education, like employment status, poverty rate, real income
- Employment by economic sector and occupation
- Satisfaction of graduates with own TVET institute's performance

The data is analysed through a frequency distribution and importance-performance analysis: The underlying assumption is that the duration of the job-search after graduation corresponds negatively with unemployment and job satisfaction rates. It can thus be assumed that the faster graduates find their first job, the better it is, the lower the unemployment rate, the more efficient the programme. Also high degrees of utilization of acquired skills at the work-place contribute to higher job satisfaction and efficiency rates. The results of the tracer study are fed into the programmes after which target values for their improvement are jointly decided upon. Until 2013, the tracer study has been conducted twice in five and once in ten TVET institutes.

Experience shows that the main challenge lies in the participation rate, both of graduates and of TVET institutions. On the one hand, graduates are often not reachable (quickly changing phone numbers and email addresses) and if they can be reached, they hesitate to participate. On the other hand, most TVET institutes do not consider the outcomes and benefits of the tracer study to be higher than its costs. Both problems can be addressed by using short and simple questionnaires, the attachment of the post-graduation tracer study to popular events, like job fairs, alumni-reunions, etc. and by creating incentives for TVET institutes to conduct the studies by making them a pre-requisit for accreditation. Despite these challenges, the analysis method allows for a continuous collection of data about the impact the project activities had on recipients, even in the long term, and can be repeated at any time.

## Propensity Score Matching Analysis in Serbia

After the start of the pilot phase of the five-phases-model of career guidance in primary and lower secondary schools in Serbia, a propensity score matching analysis was conducted to measure the impact of the instruments. Conclusions were based on the comparison of content and quality of communication during focus group discussions with students, who had passed the orientation two years before in elementary school and a class that had not.

The indicators that have been discussed in the focus groups are the following:

- Competent decision-making in further education/occupation
- Relevance of the career guidance programme in developing competencies to make decisions on further education/future occupation for participating students
- Activism, e.g. active participation in various activities, both in and out of school, as well as initiating and organizing them

The focus group discussions were structured using questions related to each indicator and led by two neutral persons who were not related to the students' school or private environment. The discussions have been audio-recorded and then transcribed, qualitatively and quantitatively processed and analysed. The results were unambiguous: the students from the experimental group were far more eloquent and reflective in their responses. The students in the control group were less interested in the choice of further education. It also appeared that they had only one choice in mind or that they had not dealt with the issue at all, that they were not active in collecting relevant information on the available options for education and that they were not dealing with employment opportunities, in contrast to the students that had received the vocational orientation.

This method is very useful in collecting qualitative data about the impact of career guidance modules on its recipients. However, it is best to be used during the piloting phases, where the direct impact is to be checked against the results of the control group. After implementation with national coverage the method of tracer studies might be more applicable.

## Outlook2015: Designing an evaluation instrument in collaboration with universities

For 2015, it is planned to design an evaluation instrument (tentatively as a pre- and post-testing survey based on a questionnaire) in close collaboration with the Westphalian Wilhelms University in Münster. It is foreseen to pilot this evaluation instrument in GIZ Programmes in *Egypt* and in *Rwanda*. It aims at measuring the impacts on the individual before and after the service to specify the dimensions and the extent of 'empowerment' that can be achieved with career guidance services. Results shall help to improve the current services on the one hand, and to advocate for career guidance vis-à-vis political and implementing partners on the other.

## 5 The Community of Practice Career Guidance: Creating innovation through sharing experiences

The Community of Practice Career Guidance considers itself a group of people with the common goal to widen their knowledge in regard to concepts, instruments and views on career guidance in different contexts. The GIZ CoP holds monthly online meetings using the GIZ online platform Global Campus 21. As most members are national experts, the working language is English. Materials and information are being exchanged using the platform. The main mechanism is peer to peer-learning, but sometimes also external guests are invited to give additional input. Specific sessions are additionally organized on request.

The agenda follows the demand: Members propose topics, present 'good practice' examples from their work, and raise questions or 'burning issues', which they would like to get peer feedback or advice on. Usually a GIZ staff member, together with an external coordinator, sets up and facilitates the online sessions. However, all members are invited to organize or facilitate sessions, as has been the case in the past from time to time. Once a year, an in-person meeting is organized, always in combination with trainings or study visits. Participation depends on the financial and time resources of the respective programmes.



Community of Practice members at founding workshop, December 2013

Even though the CoP derives its idea from GIZ projects and came to life with the support of GIZ headquarters, it considers itself a dynamic and open group continuously searching for external experts, who are willing to spread their knowledge. This way, all CoP members can tap a broad network of experts.

As a cost efficient knowledge sharing tool, the CoP is considered very useful by its members. Every member has made the experience of deepening his or her understanding of the matter and of gaining new practical ideas. Hence, the CoP is also a kind of virtual in-house-training with immediate relevance for the ongoing project work. Sometimes it simply reassures colleagues to be on the right track, sometimes it introduces new thoughts or transfers good practice from one country to another. Beginners can benefit from experienced colleagues; experienced national experts can consult other projects, hence broadening and deepening their professional experiences. For GIZ headquarters knowledge management is generally being considered as highly important. Being part of the CoP helps collect good practices from the field and use those for the design of new projects and to further develop the GIZ career guidance toolbox.

Are you interested to join? Then please contact us under [career-guidance@giz.de](mailto:career-guidance@giz.de)

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