

Looking for new initiatives in Sustainable Vocational Learning

By Jos Hermans

A group of colleagues has last year developed a new initiative to promote vocational schools and training centers (TVET) by a new approach. Members of the group are Jos Hermans, Zinaida Fadeeva, Detlev Lindau Bank, Jos Rikers, Roger Petry, Charles Hopkins, Abel Barasa Atiti. The approach is based on the principle of demand-drive to ensure that the vocational learning institutes will match perfectly with local/regional needs and visions.

Now, at the end of the DESD and the Millennium Development Goals it can be concluded that worldwide the attention for primary education has achieved remarkable attention. A lot of progress has been made. It is time however to focus on next stages of the educational column. In many countries young men/women follow the common line of secondary and university education, while vocational training gets much less attention, both in governmental policies as well as in people's minds. Nevertheless it is precisely this vocational training/education which is at the basis of people's personal development to gain a decent livelihood. And for sustainable regional development, also outside big cities, vocational education that supports local chances and opportunities is even a prerequisite.

Under the theme of Sustainable Vocational Schools (SVS), we have envisioned a stepwise approach that is for use of every town/region in the world that has the ambition to develop a matching and supporting system of vocational training. The approach is based on a number of steps that start with a thorough regional survey of local/regional strengths, weaknesses, demands and visions. The aim is to encourage the establishment of new local schools but also to support regional policies and existing schools/training centers at all stages of development. For more details of this methodology please visit the RCE-Portal (www.rce-network.org/portal/).

To advance strategies and practices in this area we need new SVS-projects. In February 2014 a project group under the lead of RCE Oldenburger Munsterland (Detlev Lindau Bank) has submitted a project proposal to Europe Aid. Purpose of this proposal is to support six TVET-initiatives in Nigeria, Kenya and Bangladesh. Co-partner of this project is the Dutch Open University with its UNESCO Chair and Charles Hopkins with his UNESCO chair in Teacher Training.

Likewise, another group, under the lead of Alimullah Miyan of RCE Greater Dhaka, has submitted an application for the new USAID Call. Purpose of this submission is to encourage a group of vocational training centers in Bangladesh to grow and attain sustainability.

If you are inspired by the idea of new SVS-initiatives, please consider the following. New Calls for Proposals are published in funding websites regularly. For instance see the website

of FundsforNGOs (www.fundsforngos.org/). The problem with new calls however is that deadlines are usually very tight. It is hardly impossible to decide on building a good team and writing a perfect proposal within the given time. That is the reason why we would like to stimulate new project-teams to be formed around a specific initiative already BEFORE the announcement of a Call for Proposal. For instance two universities/NGO/RCEs together with one or two local/regional TVET initiatives. Reflections on visions, targets, methodology and ways of working could be prepared and the search for funding could run along with this. If you would need support for this idea you can always rely on the initiating group on Sustainable Vocational Schools. It would all make it possible to be alert and react fast and targeted in the case of new funding-openings.

For more information on the Europe Aid project proposal please visit the RCE Portal (www.rce-network.org/portal/). For more explanation of the possibilities of new SVS-initiatives please write/mail to:

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