

Recap of previous day proceedings (13.12.2011)

I Opening Session

The meeting was opened by a music-entertainment group from the Youth Forum of the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO. They represented traditional African songs with an a cappella touch.

Professor John Simiyu from the University of Chepkoilel UNEVOC Centre held a Welcome note. He briefly presented the objectives of the meeting and chaired the Opening Session. Mr. Smiyu kindly requested all participants to introduce themselves shortly.

Professor Elijah Biama, Principal of the Chepkoilel University College reminded of the African Union's vision of a peaceful, prospering Africa in the global community and economy. He pointed out the TVET improvements in infrastructure, agriculture, technology and good governance.

Mr. Joel Ongoto mentioned the challenges TVET is facing in Africa: Many young people do not want to get into technical jobs as they seem not so attractive to them even if these are the areas where the money is today.

Ms. Segi-Vlatchek Yayoi from the UNESCO Office Nairobi highlighted the essential role of TVET in developing skills and helping learners to acquire skills for their professional career and an active citizenship.

Ms. Rachel Ogbe and Ms. And Ms. Roselyn Mwangi-Wabuge gave a short overview about the TVET implementation in ECOWAS and SADC regions.

Mr. Teeluck Bhuvanee gave a short introduction about the UNEVOC International Centre in Bonn and gave details of the objectives of the meeting and its agenda. The next sessions will be constituted of plenary, group and online sessions.

James Onduru, Assistant Director for the Kenyan Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology on behalf of the Minister Prof. Margaret Kamar, called for the further development of TVET to make the education more relevant to the working market, and pointed out that especially the number of females in technical jobs needs to be increased.

II Session 1: Repositioning the UNEVOC International Centre

Mr. Mustafa Trond Smistad talked about the challenges and options presented by the participants at the last UNEVOC Network meeting in Lilongwe.

He also introduced the UNEVOC Activity online services direct on the Website in order to demonstrate some of the weaknesses and strengths of the system.

The major resources are the E-Forum message board and the TVETipedia that will build up a strong network in the future, if the member states will actively participate.

Mr. Teeluck provided information on the way Bonn International Centre is repositioning itself to respond to the TVET priorities in line with UNESCO's TVET strategy, and the related activities for the revamping the UNEVOC Centres.

III Session 2: Country Presentations

The following countries presented the activities of the UNEVOC Centres with regard to the National TVET Plan of Action: Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Swaziland, Uganda and SADC.

The major challenges these countries were facing are:

- Access
- Quality and relevance
- Funding
- Recognition and
- Meeting the labour market needs

All the presentations have been recorded on CDs for all participants.

IV Outlook

At the end of the first day, Mr. Teeluck highlighted some issues that have not been covered enough so far and that hopefully will be raised within the next days:

- The aspect of labour market needs. Do the countries have a labour market information system? Some countries replied that they do have an LMIS that helped them to decide the courses necessary to satisfy the market.
- The informal economy, that is between 60% and 75% of the total economy. Responses from participants demonstrated that the informal economy needs to be facilitated, supported and even encouraged.
- Most of the presentations mentioned the National Qualifications Framework. Is the national qualification framework working? Do we have evidence for the success? One participant expressed serious concern on the bureaucracy of the framework and questioned the framework as being the best solution to solve the problems of TVET.
- An aspect that every presentation has covered was funding since almost all the countries are struggling with financial issues. The question that needs to be raised now is "What lessons can we learn from those countries that have managed to succeed in the funding?"
- How can we involve the private sector, that is very much part of the informal sector, and bring them on board? This was seen as a major issue for all aspects of TVET, since without the private sector's positive involvement TVET will not really be improved
- Problem of stigma: How can we improve the image of TVET?

Way forward

It was agreed that all participants will use the UNEVOC online services better and make contributions. Botswana, Cote D'Ivoire, Sudan, Malawi and Ghana have committed to post messages on the mailing list e-forum created for this occasion. This e-forum will remain dedicated to the issues raised by this group of participants in the near future.

Participants will also post the good practices from the countries that are succeeding in these challenging parts and see if and how we can learn from them.