



Inter-Governmental International Organization
COLOMBO PLAN STAFF COLLEGE FOR TECHNICIAN EDUCATION
for Human Resources Development in Asia and the Pacific Region



**UNESCO-UNEVOC Regional Seminar on
TVET Teacher Education for Sustainable Development
RMIT International University Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City
5-7 October, 2009**

BACKGROUND PAPER

Rationale and Purpose

The major challenge in the world today is to find ways of living and working sustainably, so that the reasonable needs and wants of people from all walks of life and in all countries can be satisfied without so over-exploiting the natural resources upon which all life depends that the ability of future generations to meet their need and wants is threatened.

Finding approaches to development that balance economic and social progress, address cultural differences, and respect ecological values and limits is the key to sustainable development. Moving towards this goal requires fundamental changes in human attitudes and behaviour – in our personal lives, in our community activities, and in our places of work. Successfully making these changes is critically dependent on education and training.

TVET takes on a complex and distinctive character with regard to sustainable development. This is because – both directly and indirectly – TVET produces and consumes resources, as well as affects attitudes towards sustainability held by future workers. The manner in which production and consumption is managed can either contribute to sustainability or to practices and conditions that are not sustainable. During education and training, the greater the exposure of trainees to sustainable concepts, practices and examples, the more likely the desired workplace *culture change* will take place in the future.

As both a consumer and a producer of resources, or more accurately a sector involved in the transformation of resources, TVET has multiple concerns about sustainability. The over-exploitation of natural resources, ill-health and poverty can threaten the ability of future generations to satisfy their needs and wants. The challenge for TVET is to re-orient and re-direct its curricula to imbue students and trainees with respect for the conservation and sustainable use of resources, social equity and appropriate

development, plus with competencies to practice sustainable tasks at the workplaces of today and tomorrow.

Similarly, in a labour market undergoing the transition from the Industrial Age to the Information Age – involving considerable job shift, re-training, and dislocation of workers – the maintenance of currency in the labour market also assumes importance with regard to the sustainability of employment. In some advanced economies the proportion of workers with less than secondary school completion and those with diplomas has reversed during the past decade. The adult and continuing TVET provided to workers in jeopardy of job loss can result in sustainable employment that will also impact upon their children's futures.

In addition, the growing significance of sustainability is having major impacts upon business and industry. Many companies are now not only reporting the results of their economic achievements to their shareholders and community stakeholders, but also the impacts of their social and environmental record through a system known as “triple-bottom-line” reporting. Many new industries and employment opportunities are also being developed, e.g. in ecotourism, environmental monitoring, sustainable community development, eco-design, recycling, land rehabilitation, pollution control, waste water treatment and reuse, etc. All require skilled workers who have knowledge of – and commitment to – sustainability, as well as the requisite technical knowledge. This is creating new roles and courses in TVET.

These trends lead to questions about the curriculum changes needed to integrate sustainable development into TVET. Three potential strategies are:

- To include sustainable development concepts in all courses for everyone (“TVET for All”)
- To enhance focus upon sustainable development in occupationally relevant areas, e.g., water, auto repair, fabrication, carpentry, forestry, mining, ICTs, service sectors, etc
- To indicate that new jobs will become available in sustainability industries.

The inclusion of sustainable development in all courses can be built upon the *traditional* TVET practices in which skilled tradespeople taught apprentices to *repair, re-use, and re-cycle* materials and components at all levels in both developed and developing nations. Rural TVET has always operated upon these principles, especially in developing nations. Some TVET institutional practices and procedures require re-orientation to foster sustainability. The purpose of this seminar is to address the import of these three strategies within the context of teacher education for TVET. The seminar will build on the outcomes of earlier UNEVOC meetings on Innovation and Excellence in TVET Teacher / Trainer Education (Hangzhou, China, November 2004), TVET for Sustainable Development (Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, July 2006), and TVET Teacher Education for Sustainability (Chiang Mai, Thailand, August 2007) – and the reports from these meetings will form part of the background reading for the seminar, together with the report of the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development – Moving into the Second Half of the UN Decade” which is to be held in Bonn, Germany, from 31 March to 2 April 2009.

Objectives:

- To map contemporary issues for inclusion in TVET teacher education programs

- To identify current and new approaches to TVET teacher education that address issues such as international workforce mobility, sustainable development and the global financial crisis.
- To elaborate strategies for strengthening the contribution of TVET teacher education programs towards international workforce mobility, sustainable development and the global financial crisis.
- To advise the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Office on future regional activities to support TVET teacher education international workforce mobility, sustainable development and the global financial crisis.

Draft Programme Outline

Sunday 4 October		Participants arrive in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Monday 5 October		<p>Opening ceremony</p> <p>Thematic address – <i>Teacher Education and TVET, Shyamal Majumdar</i></p> <p>Morning tea</p> <p>Country Reports – Synthesis and workshop discussions</p> <p>Lunch</p> <p><i>Keynote address 1 – Sustainable development, climate change and TVET, John Fien</i></p> <p>Discussion groups on the implications for TVET and teacher education</p> <p>Afternoon tea</p> <p>Country Reports – continued</p>
Tuesday 6 October		<p><i>Keynote address 2 – Curriculum reform of TVET for SD in China, Huang Chunlin</i></p> <p>Discussion groups on the implications for TVET and teacher education</p> <p>Lunch</p> <p><i>Keynote address 3 – Trends in the world of work and international labour mobility, Rupert Maclean</i></p> <p>Discussion groups on the implications for TVET and teacher education</p> <p>Working groups to identify needs, issues and recommendations on TVET teacher education</p>
Wednesday 7 October		<p>Presentation of group reports</p> <p>Morning Tea</p> <p>Action planning</p> <p>Lunch</p> <p>Closing ceremony</p>