



International  
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► SKILL-UP Ethiopia project and GPSL3

Sector Skills Council (SSC)



► **Textile and Garments  
Sector Skills Committee**

Operational Guide



# Textile and Garments Sector Skills Committee

## Operational Guide

Belinda Smith is a TVET specialist who has worked in many countries across the Asia Pacific, Southeast and South Asia, Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe. Her work has involved policy and research and implementation to support greater access to industry led quality TVET.

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# Foreword

One of the most essential ingredients in quality TVET is industry engagement. Sectoral approaches to skills development are effective in bringing together employers, employers and other social partners to develop labour market relevant TVET.

Successful sectoral approaches typically include an independent platform, through Sector Skills Councils, to create ownership of the issues and solutions to the sector skill development needs.

In many cases the bringing together of industry stakeholders and government leads to new solutions and partnerships that support the development of productive and skilled workforce. For individual workers, these solutions often include access to new and relevant qualification pathways which open up career options.

Sector Skills Councils work to support their economic sector and to strengthen the TVET sector as well. This manual provides guidance to potential and current board members on the establishment and operation of a Sector Skills Council for potential.





# Table of contents

▶	<b>1. Summary of key roles and responsibilities</b>	<b>3</b>
	1.1. Board processes .....	3
	1.2. Board member criteria .....	3
	1.3. Board member induction .....	4
	1.4. Purpose of working groups .....	5
	1.5. Finance and audit committee, if the SSC is a stand-alone organization .....	6
	1.6. Financial controls.....	6
	1.7. Controls and separation of duties.....	7
▶	<b>2. Meetings, agendas, motions and minutes</b>	<b>9</b>
	2.1. Quorum .....	9
	2.2. Agenda planning .....	9
	2.3. Meeting operational requirements.....	9
	2.4. Meeting minutes .....	10
	2.5. Costs associated with meetings .....	10
▶	<b>3. Understanding and functionally mapping your sector</b>	<b>11</b>
	3.1. The sector skills development plan.....	12
	3.2. The industry profile: .....	13
	3.3. Skills development in the SSC's industry sector .....	14
	3.4. Occupational mapping .....	15
▶	<b>4. Communication and network development</b>	<b>17</b>
	4.1. Industry representation and consultation .....	17
	4.2. Stakeholder analysis and engagement .....	19
	4.3. Balancing industry requirements and TVET realities .....	21
	4.4. Capacity-building.....	22
	4.5. Data collection for skills anticipation .....	23
	4.6. Surveys.....	24
	4.7. Models of sector skills committee engagement .....	25



# Introduction

A key driver of current efforts to reform technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Ethiopia is the need to strengthen linkages between industry and the national training system.

The ILO Skill-UP Ethiopia Project is partnering with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MSHE) and the textile and garments sector to improve productivity through skills development and to strengthen the quality and relevance of training for priority occupations in the sector. The four key goals are to:

- ▶ reduce skills gaps and shortages,
- ▶ improve productivity,
- ▶ increase opportunities for all individuals in the workforce, and
- ▶ improve learning supply.

There is common agreement that clear multi-stakeholder governance arrangements, such as sector skills committees (SSCs), lead to better coordination, dialogue and active engagement strategies, which enhances the relevance of skills development systems and underpins economic growth in the sector.

Semi-governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as SSCs, partner with government to achieve mutually beneficial national goals. These new types of partnerships, brought about by the coming together of government and the private sector, lead to new forms of training and, ultimately, higher-quality employment outcomes.

This operational guide should be read in conjunction with, and forms part of, the Sector Skills Committee Governance and Operational Guide.



# 1. Summary of key roles and responsibilities

The key roles of board and executive directors are described in the Governance Guide, which covers the board of the SSC (chair, treasurer, board members), as well as the roles of the executive director and the secretariat, which will vary according to the functions and activities the SSC agrees to undertake.

The purpose of having a board is to provide effective leadership, as well as advice on the skills development needs of the sector concerned. A board should bring independent, evidence-based judgement to decisions made by the SSC.

SSCs act as formal channels for ongoing communication between industry sectors and the skills development system. Over the long term, SSCs develop expertise in skills development, build industry networks and a depth of understanding of their sector, and can facilitate and encourage industry feedback that is relevant in developing quality advice, products and holistic solutions to skills shortages and mismatches.

## ▶ 1.1. Board processes

To meet standards of good governance, the board will follow an annual schedule that:

- ▶ regularly reviews the results of products or activities, policies and relevant strategic issues;
- ▶ provides assurance that all relevant compliance requirements are addressed; and
- ▶ improves board performance by up-dating the board on TVET and skills development, government policy directions, industry data and SSC governance effectiveness.

## ▶ 1.2. Board member criteria

Board members should be leading employers within the sector.

They should be drawn from relevant sector associations, professional bodies and/or unions.

They should reflect the range of company sizes in the sector, including MSMEs, where possible.

They should have the authority and recognition within the industry sector to make strategic decisions on behalf of the sector.

They should have a strong commitment to their industry sector and an interest in skills development.

They should have a sector-wide perspective and an understanding of the skills development issues affecting their sector

Where possible, they should be representative of geographical areas relevant to the sector, though this needs to be weighed against the costs of transport and accommodation. An example of how to overcome this is that, in the textile and garments sector, garment buyers visit many factories in different regions and are thus able to bring a regional perspective to the SSC decision-making process.

### ▶ **1.3. Board member induction**

The number of board members will vary, depending on the cohesion of the sector. Many factors influence the size of an SSC board, such as the age of the organization (in the start-up phase, fewer members may be needed), its geographical scope, activities and funding needs. If the sector is very homogeneous, there can be fewer board members than if the sector has many different subsectors or there are tensions between different sector associations. One size will not fit all. A minimum of eight board members may be sufficient for a small cohesive sector to be fully represented. Although larger boards may ensure a wide range of perspectives and expertise, they can become unwieldy and end up delegating too much responsibility to an executive committee or small group of board members, and so fail to exercise effective control. A board would not normally have more than 15 members, though this will vary depending on the sector's needs and whether the costs involved in regularly bringing together such a large group are affordable.

The board will provide all new directors with a thorough induction into the affairs of the board and the work of the SSC.

All new directors will be provided with an overview of the Ethiopian TVET reform agenda.

All prospective directors will be provided with all relevant information.

Prior to attendance at their first board meeting, new directors and alternate directors will:

- ▶ receive a letter of appointment from the executive officer laying out some of the specific requirements of the board, including legal requirements;

- ▶ receive a copy of the SSC Governance and Operations Guide, policies and other relevant legal-governance documentation, current and recent meeting papers, an organizational chart, contact details for other directors and key staff, a glossary of key terms, definitions and acronyms, and the current year's meeting schedule;
- ▶ receive a briefing by the executive officer on the SSC, its structure and operations. The briefing will include familiarization with the SSC Governance Guide, as well as the operations of the board and the various sub-committees, and an overview of national TVET and skills development issues;
- ▶ meet with the chairperson, where possible, before their first meeting to be made familiar with general board proceedings and governance. This meeting may be held as a group session or on an individual basis.

Individual directors will be asked to identify any areas where they would like further instruction to enable them to better fulfil their role on the board of the SSC.

#### ▶ 1.4. Purpose of working groups

The SSC establishes working groups to assist the SSC in achieving its goals. They are established by the board and provide advice to the board. They focus on the short-term project work they have been appointed to oversee and provide greater oversight and input than the board itself can be expected to provide. Members of working groups are appointed by the board to provide relevant and appropriate expertise. This may be by applying knowledge and skills, as well as by giving advice and facilitating access to industry expertise. In general, committees and other groups chaired by a board member may be formed to:

- ▶ oversee a project, activity, service or function, including all aspects of the assigned work or function or scope of work involved;
- ▶ meet with sufficient frequency to enable them to carry out the purpose for which they have been established in an orderly and timely manner;
- ▶ provide an interchange of ideas and debate/discussion to support the project or activity (meetings may be via any medium, including face-to-face);
- ▶ provide advice and other input as appropriate;
- ▶ contribute to reports and the final products/outcomes of the project or activity;
- ▶ work cooperatively with other SSC committees and groups;
- ▶ make recommendations to the SSC board.

## ▶ 1.5. Finance and audit committee, if the SSC is a stand-alone organization

This is a sub-committee of the SSC board and is comprised of three people drawn from the board. Its purpose is to assist the SSC board in fulfilling its responsibility to oversee and exercise due care and diligence in financial and audit matters. The work of the committee will span:

- ▶ financial reporting practices,
- ▶ business ethics, policies and practices,
- ▶ accounting policies,
- ▶ management and internal controls, and
- ▶ risk management.

In particular, the committee will focus on:

- ▶ the system of internal controls over financial processing and reporting established by management with a view to minimizing risk and increasing efficiency and effectiveness,
- ▶ the integrity and transparency of the SSC's financial statements,
- ▶ the SSC's compliance with legal and regulatory requirements,
- ▶ the independent auditors' capability and independence,
- ▶ the performance of the independent auditors.

## ▶ 1.6. Financial controls

The executive officer is responsible for the day-to-day financial management of the organization. In carrying out this duty, he or she must ensure that nothing is done, or authorized to be done, that could in any way cause financial harm or threaten the organization's financial integrity. In managing the day-to-day financial affairs of the organization, the executive officer must not:

- ▶ use any organizational funds, or enter into any contracts or accept any liabilities, other than for the furtherance of board-approved purposes and priorities. All should be done in consultation with the chairperson and treasurer, where there is a treasurer;
- ▶ expend more funds than have been received in the financial year, unless offset by approved borrowings or approved withdrawals from reserves;
- ▶ allow undisputed invoices from suppliers of goods and services to remain unpaid beyond trade credit terms agreed with those suppliers;



- ▶ fail to pay staff in accordance with their employment contracts;
- ▶ authorize expenditure beyond the level established by the board;
- ▶ fail to meet all government-imposed compliance requirements or fail to make payments on time and to standard.

The executive officer must work with an independent auditor, where necessary.

## ▶ 1.7. Controls and separation of duties

In order to reduce the risk of error or fraud when payments are made, it is an important to separate the duties of the different officers involved in the order/payment process. The table below sets out an example of how such separation might be ensured:

Placing and signing orders	Clerical support/ Executive officer
Checking goods/services received	Person receiving the goods/services
Checking invoices	Clerical support
Authorization of invoices/payments	Chairperson/ Executive officer
Signing of cheques	Chairperson/ Board member (Treasurer) Sometimes the executive officer, if board members are not available



## 2. Meetings, agendas, motions and minutes

### ▶ 2.1. Quorum

An SSC is a decision-making forum and, as such, a quorum of board members must be present for the meeting to commence:

- ▶ A quorum will be half the SSC board members plus one.
- ▶ Attendance via teleconference or videoconference qualifies as attendance for the purposes of a quorum.
- ▶ If proxy attendance is agreed beforehand, the chair must be notified of the nominated proxy by the secretariat at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

### ▶ 2.2. Agenda planning

The agenda will include:

- ▶ items concerned with progress in meeting performance targets agreed in funding MOUs or set by the SSC board,
- ▶ scheduled time for strategic thinking,
- ▶ consultations with key stakeholders as appropriate,
- ▶ scheduled reporting by convened working groups,
- ▶ specific board discussion relating to projects currently under way,
- ▶ information concerning financial status and budget requirements, including audits,
- ▶ all other matters that the board can plan for.

### ▶ 2.3. Meeting operational requirements

It is expected that the SSC will meet at least every quarter, subject to industry priorities and the activities undertaken.

Meetings may be held face to face. However, to minimize operational costs, it is expected that the SSC will also use such options as teleconferencing, Skype, Zoom, videoconferencing or other electronic formats. where appropriate.

Additional meetings may be called by a quorum of members and held as required, subject to available budget.

If a member fails to attend three consecutive meetings, without the approval of the chair, the SSC may terminate that individual's membership and invite a new member from the same stakeholder group to attend.

All agenda and meeting papers are to be distributed at least five working days in advance of the meeting.

Observers/visitors may be invited to attend the meeting by agreement of a quorum.

The SSC will provide secretariat services for the meeting.

The board must agree on a formal and orderly decision-making process that suits the circumstances and scope of the SSC. Decisions made according to the established process must be recorded in the minutes.

An item or motion should be clearly put to the meeting and have a seconder.

All members should be given the opportunity to speak for or against the item or motion.

Where possible, members should in good faith aim to arrive at a consensus. Where consensus cannot be achieved and a vote is taken, a two-thirds majority of those in attendance should be regarded as the minimum requirement for adopting a motion, unless extenuating circumstances apply.

## ▶ 2.4. Meeting minutes

Unless the SSC chair rules otherwise, the executive officer and other secretariat employees will be present at SSC meetings for the purpose of taking minutes, answering questions from members about agenda papers, and advising on agenda items and/or the status of work being undertaken on behalf of the SSC.

Minutes must be made available to all SSC members, present or absent, as soon as possible after the meeting (and in any case no later than 10 business days). The SSC will provide a copy of the minutes of each meeting to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education TVET Secretariat.

Minutes will normally include:

- ▶ names of those present,
- ▶ apologies received,
- ▶ an outline of substantive discussions, and
- ▶ details of actions agreed and decisions made, including numbers for and against.

## ▶ 2.5. Costs associated with meetings

Costs associated with SSC meetings will be borne by the SSC. These may include the reimbursement of reasonable travel and accommodation costs to support the attendance of SSC members.

### 3. Understanding and functionally mapping your sector

Sector skills committees perform a variety of essential functions, in particular:

- ▶ Analyzing labour market information and identifying skills shortages and gaps
- ▶ Identifying career pathways and qualifications that meet skills needs
- ▶ Determining skill standards or learning outcomes for qualifications
- ▶ Facilitating partnerships between enterprises and training institutions
- ▶ Facilitating a two-way dialogue between industry and government on the industry's current and future skills development needs
- ▶ Promoting the value of skilled workers, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and lifelong learning to industry
- ▶ Providing strategic advice to government, sector bodies, employers and unions.

SSCs have additional functions, but the above are the core functions common to most countries. To perform these functions successfully, the SSC must have a clear understanding of the sector it represents, so that priorities for the sector are based as far as possible on objective facts, rather than the interests of particular groups.

One of the first activities a SSC will want undertake is to scope their industry sector, collecting and analysing information to identify the size and range of the sector, and the stakeholders to be considered.

This scoping, or industry-profiling process, involves analysis of the industry or sector with a view to mapping its extent and gathering relevant data, identifying priority areas and ensuring that all areas of the sector are considered.

In many cases quantitative data will be unavailable or out of date. Research can be conducted drawing on a range of sources, such as industry associations, government agencies, employee associations, enterprises, international donors, NGOs and the Internet.

Once this information has been collected, the SSC can begin to identify the key stakeholders: employers' associations, industry associations, professional bodies, unions, non-governmental organizations, economic development groups, cluster development agencies, and private and non-private training organizations working across the sector.

### ▶ 3.1. The sector skills development plan

One of the key documents that SSCs generally produce is a skills development plan for their sector. This may go by different names: a “sector workforce development plan”, a “sector TVET strategic plan” or a “TVET plan for the sector”. Regardless of the name, the document serves the same purpose: identifying current and future skills needs, strategies to overcome skills shortages, and the conditions and activities that are necessary within the TVET system to address the skills development requirements. Strategies are developed through industry consultation and may draw on a mix of methodologies: skills for trade and economic development (STED), labour market observatories, analysis of data from labour market information systems, sectoral skills analysis by skills development organizations, and forecasting future trends. Cost will often be the main factor in the choice of methodology. The information developed for the sector workforce development plan is forwarded to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education for planning TVET delivery for the sector and to the Federal TVET Agency for prioritizing resource and qualifications development. This document is regularly updated, usually ever three years, with monitoring and minor updates at intervals in between.

The information gathered in this way becomes the base resource for many different activities, such as identifying skills shortages and skills gaps, developing occupational standards and qualifications, careers guidance, and industry preferred models of implementation. The industry scoping and analysis process helps provide evidence and a justification for focusing on particular subsectors or occupational areas and is updated over time as new information is made available.

The purpose of the information brought together in a sector skills development plan is to ensure that SSCs understand the range of advice they can provide to government, including information based on high-quality evidence for determining the skills development priorities of the sector.

A sector skills development plan analyses existing and emerging trends in the sector represented by the SSC and provides government with advice on the industry profile, skills gaps and shortages, occupations in demand and training data.

A sector skills development plan should be strategic and evidence-based, and should address current and future trends in the industry sectors or subsectors covered by the SSC. It should not be limited to present operational or administrative details, such as worker numbers entering and leaving the sector, student numbers, details of individual course provision and so on. As a guide, a sector skills development plan is likely to be approximately 40 pages in length.

SSCs require transparent processes that ensure that they are an objective and representative voice for their industry. The development of an industry profile provides the foundation for transparent decision-making.

A sector skills development plan is often the basis for decision-making on:

- ▶ the priority sectors/ subsectors of the skills-development system;
- ▶ the geographical location of support initiatives;
- ▶ priority sectors/subsectors for occupational standard (OS) and qualification development, and careers guidance information;
- ▶ the composition of subsector consultation and working groups;
- ▶ proposed skills development initiatives to overcome skills mismatches.

### ▶ 3.2. The industry profile:

This section of the sector skills development plan usually covers the following types of information, which is often hard to find. However, as the SSC network strengthens over time, the following information is more likely be available:

- ▶ Data on the size, diversity, and complexity of the subsectors as measured by available statistics on total employment and shares of employment; and labour productivity trends
- ▶ The occupational composition of the subsectors
- ▶ Modes of work (full time, part time, permanent, informal, contract) in the subsectors
- ▶ Types of work performed (brief descriptions of tasks and duties)
- ▶ Coverage of sectors or cross-industry functions, horizontal and vertical differences
- ▶ Geographical dispersion of the sector and subsectors
- ▶ Breadth of the sector: the significance of global value chains, export markets, domestic markets and levels of regional integration
- ▶ Demographic data on the labour force (gender, age, cultural background, literacy and numeracy, and levels of educational attainment)
- ▶ Data on under-represented groups in employment (women, people with disabilities)
- ▶ Culture and context of the sector (formal, informal, mixture of both, tradition of workforce training, etc.)
- ▶ Key stakeholders, such as employers' associations, industry associations, unions, NGOs, economic development groups, cluster development agencies, and professional groups
- ▶ Legislation, policies, tariffs, trade agreements and so on that have an impact on the sector or particular sub-sectors

- ▶ Strategies and processes that ensure the SSC is informed about the needs of all parts of the sector it covers
- ▶ Major economic trends in the sector the SSC covers (e.g. in employment, production and exports)
- ▶ Industrial relations issues that have an impact on skills or skills demand (such as low wages, location of the sector, insecure work, lack of career progression, poor health, safety and environmental record);
- ▶ Other factors that significantly affect employment and skills development in the sector the SSC covers;
- ▶ Areas of skills and knowledge that are currently in short supply
- ▶ Details of the movement of workers within and out of the sector and subsector
- ▶ Groups of workers disadvantaged in their access to, or participation in, employment and promotion.

### ▶ **3.3. Skills development in the SSC's industry sector**

The TVET sector and other skills development providers must be considered as they are part of the services supporting the sector. The sector skills development plan should provide information on:

- ▶ current unmet skills development needs (new skills) of workers in the sector, taking into account:
  - all subsectors,
  - all occupational groups and workers at all levels, including operational level and supervisors,
  - firms of all sizes;
- ▶ new or additional areas of skills and knowledge likely to be required by the sector in order to meet future demands;
- ▶ the implications for the TVET skills development system of current and predicted skills needs and knowledge requirements as detailed at national and regional level for each subsector, where relevant;
- ▶ details of unique or extraordinary skills development needs in particularly relevant regions;
- ▶ oversupply of training in the sector and subsectors;



- ▶ an approximate projection of the numbers to be trained for employment and the type of skills to be developed (on-the-job, off-the-job, part-time and full-time training) by public providers, private providers and companies;
- ▶ a brief description of the volume and nature of training supplied by private providers and by enterprises themselves;
- ▶ details of the appropriateness of the current mixture of public, private and industry training provision, and suggestions for improving the mix;
- ▶ suggestions for improving the quality of skills development provided by all training institutions, assessment centres and employment agencies;
- ▶ details of possible modes of delivery for workers in the subsectors the SSC covers, including willingness of actors in the sector and subsectors to engage in on-the-job training;
- ▶ any other recommendations for improving the quality of skills development for the industry.

The above information is not always immediately available or reliable but as more information becomes available and the document is reviewed, SSCs can build and strengthen their industry networks.

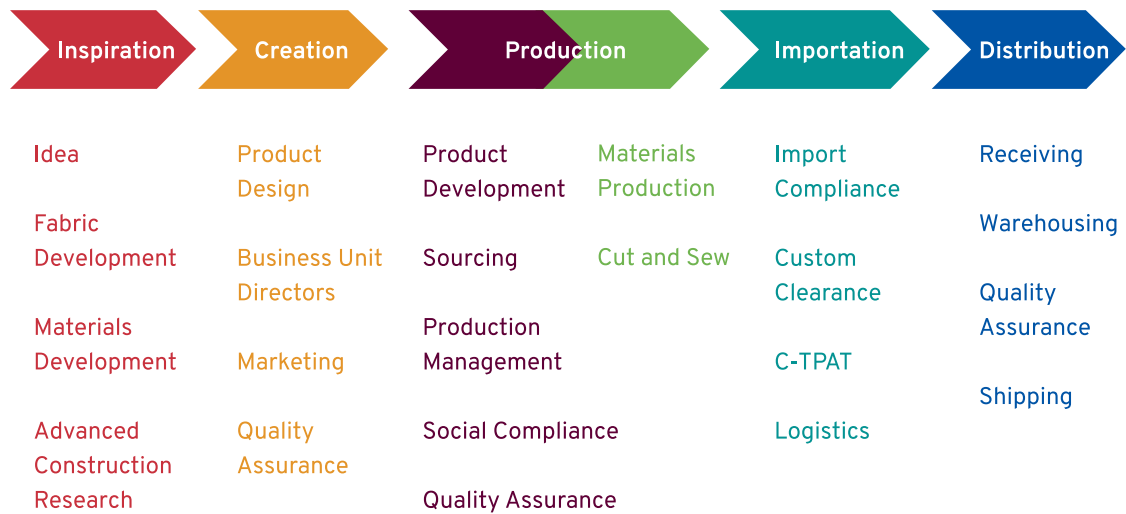
### ▶ 3.4. Occupational mapping

Once all the subsectors and their various occupations have been identified, the SSC can start to develop an occupational map of the sector, identifying common occupations, functions and career pathways. This information can be used to:

- ▶ prioritize occupations for occupational standards development, as common occupations will be relevant to a larger number of companies;
- ▶ identify common occupational standards for different qualifications, to reduce resource use in developing occupational standards;
- ▶ develop qualifications pathways to match career pathways;
- ▶ use the information on career pathways in the industry sector to develop careers guidance for schools, colleges and HR managers.

The following occupational map (Figure 1) identifies some of the occupations in the garment sector. This map can be used as a careers advice tool to ensure that labour market analysis covers all occupations in the sector, or to identify pathways for qualifications and assist in designing qualifications for more than one occupation - qualifications that can accommodate vertical and horizontal pathways and articulate arrangements to support lifelong learning.

► **Figure 1: Basic occupational map of garment sector.**



[https://shenglufashion.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/021313\\_moongate\\_assoc\\_global\\_value\\_chain\\_report1.jpg](https://shenglufashion.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/021313_moongate_assoc_global_value_chain_report1.jpg)

Once a map of career progression has been developed, the next phase is to develop the standards that are required for each occupation. By developing an occupational map, you can:

- ensure that you cover all the skills required within an industry sector;
- begin identifying possible structures for meaningful qualifications, in other words qualifications that can be understood by employers and workers and that reflect what actually occurs within an industry sector.

Developing qualifications based on the actual movement of workers within a sector also serves the purpose of ensuring equity and access. As women are often in the workplace for only a short period of time and move in and out of the workforce, streamlining what a person needs to learn reduces the learning time, which is one of the barriers to formal TVET.

## 4. Communication and network development

The key function of an SSC is to facilitate a two-way dialogue between industry and government on skills development within its sector. It is vitally important that the SSC spend time developing strong networks in its sector and subsectors. Proactive stakeholder engagement is necessary for effective skills-development consultation, feedback and implementation.

### ▶ 4.1. Industry representation and consultation

SSCs must strive to ensure that the information collected from key stakeholders and industry representatives for analysis reflects the demographic profile and composition of the SSC's sector(s) and/or subsectors. This will mean taking into account a number of large, medium and small-sized companies, as SSCs must provide evidence-based recommendations on behalf of their sector, using information gathered from a wide range of sources.

A further significant role of SSCs is to provide information to their industry sector on skills development matters. Industry representation and consultation is the key to the development of high-quality products and advice.

The objectives of industry representation and consultation are to:

- ▶ provide industry sectors and subsectors with accurate, relevant and objective information and advice with regard to skills development;
- ▶ obtain high-quality information from industry on its skills needs;
- ▶ obtain feedback and recommendations on occupational standards, sector skills development plans, on-the-job training models and other matters;
- ▶ obtain feedback, recommendations and agreement on priority areas for SSC projects and activities;
- ▶ build strong relationships with industry and other stakeholders;
- ▶ raise awareness of the importance of skilled workers for productivity improvements;
- ▶ ensure stakeholders are listened to and have appropriate avenues for providing feedback and raising issues and concerns.

In bringing together different stakeholders, SSCs need to achieve a balance among them and so to ensure that the SSC is impartial and truly representative of the sector. As an SSC represents its industry, it is vital to its success that it be seen to be objective, basing its recommendations on evidence gathered from as wide a range of industry sources as possible.

Consultations are conducted for the development of all SSC products, information leading to recommendations, subsector priorities, the development and implementation of projects and activities, and review and feedback on the SSC's performance in meeting the sector or subsectors' needs.

Depending on available funds, consultation workshops, meetings and information sessions are held in areas corresponding to the geographical location of the sector or subsectors. This is important to ensure that regional issues are identified.

Evidence should be collected to show that appropriate consultations have been held during a product development process or when gathering, analysing and validating information with a view to making recommendations. This evidence should include the name, title, company name and contact details of the employers involved in the development process. This is to help maintain transparency and to demonstrate that the SSC is operating as an even-handed, non-biased voice for the sector.

Feedback is only as good as the indications given to people to explain what information is needed and why. The use of structured feedback tools that pose key questions about the products under development or the information being collected will help improve the quality of the feedback received.

The use of a register recording issues raised and the actions taken to ensure that they are tracked, resolved and reported back to industry stakeholders, will improve transparency and build trust.

Evidence of support for a product that has been developed, in the form of letters of support, evaluations, and other forms of feedback that incorporate the name, title, organization and contact details of the supporting entities, confirms that the product is meeting the expectations of the stakeholders.

## ▶ 4.2. Stakeholder analysis and engagement

SSCs have a critical role to play in explaining the value of skills and skilled workers for the competitiveness and productivity of their industry. This serves to accelerate the take-up of skilled workers and to identify ways in which the skills development system can engage more fully with industry.

A stakeholder engagement strategy may be transformative, requiring a fundamental change in how skills development is viewed, planned for, designed and implemented, in the sector itself and in training institutions.

Successful stakeholder engagement requires dedicated, two-way communication with stakeholders, developing long-term relationships and responding to their advice and feedback. Good communications strategies build robust relationships with industry, employers and workers, and improve the relevance of skills and the employability of graduates who have acquired them.

The SSC should aim to develop a range of communication channels, for example newsletters, a website and online presence, articles in trade magazines and presentations at industry conferences or network meetings. The SSC should develop and maintain an up-to-date database of contacts and issues, so it can quickly connect with individuals from different subsectors for consultation and to provide information updates.

Effective communication with your industry sector and other stakeholders, such as training institutions and government, is also beneficial because it:

- ▶ assists the SSC in building a positive reputation;
- ▶ strengthens networks and relationships with stakeholders;
- ▶ generates sector support and involvement;
- ▶ improves customer satisfaction levels;
- ▶ provides a strong platform from which to manage consultations and call on support;
- ▶ stimulates business and worker interest in skills development;
- ▶ reduces workload in gaining industry participation; and
- ▶ reduces costs and increases sector support.

Where stakeholder communication activities are concerned, it is important to consider:

- ▶ the reasons for the need to move to greater private-sector participation in skills development, as some stakeholders might block the push for more private-sector involvement;
- ▶ current attitudes to greater private-sector participation in skills development; and

- ▶ the current capacity of the skills development sector for improving private-sector engagement.

After completing a stakeholder analysis, the SSC will be able to devise appropriate messages for each group. Typically, stakeholders fall into four groups:

- ▶ Those who can influence the success of the SSC (the FTVETA, sector associations)
- ▶ Those who are affected by the work of the SSC (companies, TVET institutions)
- ▶ Those who are involved in the activities of the SSC
- ▶ Those who are not currently involved in the activities of the SSC

After all key stakeholders and their interests have been identified for each subsector, the SSC can identify the strategic skills issues affecting or prioritized by the various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholders can be rated according to their influence on their sector or subsector and their interest in skills development within their subsector. The SSC should clarify stakeholders' views of the SSC and of skills development in the country.

The SSC can then develop a plan for stakeholder communication/participation based on its stakeholder analysis and assign each stakeholder group a level of engagement when it comes to provision of information, consultation, involvement and collaboration.

Key messages and communication strategies can be targeted to each stakeholder group based on the findings of the stakeholder analysis. For example:

- ▶ Stakeholders who can influence the success of the SSC include sector associations, the FTVETA, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MSHE), leading companies and international donors. Keep them updated on SSC progress through reports, newsletters, participation in conferences, workshops and network meetings, and articles in sector association newsletters. Provide them with information on SSC research findings and other activities for their use.
- ▶ Those who are affected by the work of the SSC include companies, TVET institutions, BoLSAs, industrial park services, HR managers and other government agencies. Keep them updated on SSC progress through reports and newsletters. Provide them with information on SSC research findings and other activities for their use.
- ▶ Those who are involved in the activities of the SSC include sector associations, companies, the FTVETA, the MSHE and leading companies. Keep them updated on SSC progress through reports, newsletters, participation in conferences, workshops and network meetings. Promote their participation in SSC activities and skills development.

- ▶ Those who are not currently involved in the activities of the SSC include companies, TVET institutions and students' parents. Inform them through newsletters, case studies, the website, articles in sector association newsletters.

The SSC should promote opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities and consultations. SSC consultations should be used as opportunities to inform industry of the value of hiring skilled workers and explain current training reforms. In this way, employers will understand the importance of being involved in improving the TVET system and the quality of graduates.

In short, the SSC should:

- ▶ identify communication objectives for each stakeholder group,
- ▶ select the stakeholders to be targeted,
- ▶ design key messages,
- ▶ select the most appropriate communication methods, whether newsletters, emails or attendance at industry events.
- ▶ plan for two-way communication,
- ▶ establish a timeframe - usually a year - for the life of a project,
- ▶ draft a budget,
- ▶ implement the plan,
- ▶ monitor the results and look for ways to improve.

## ▶ 4.3. Balancing industry requirements and TVET realities

### 4.3.1. Expectations

Meeting employer expectations of skilled workers is a difficult but central aspect of a good skills development system. Many employers, when asked what type of skills they want from TVET graduates, say they want workers who are immediately productive, on a par with their existing workers. This is an unrealistic expectation as the skills of existing workers have been honed on the job and they have had time to practice and consolidate their skills. When discussing the types of skills needed, it is important to emphasize that graduates will be new entrants and will need to practice their newly acquired skills. Discussing the importance of access to the workplace during institutional learning to enable new workers to adjust to the workplace environment will help to manage unrealistic expectations.

At the same time, it is important that the TVET system partner and align with industry to give TVET students access to the best possible workplace conditions and so facilitate a smooth transition between school and work. It is also important that teachers gain an

understanding of the workplace and current skills. SSCs can play an important role in developing industry connections and facilitating partnerships between industry and TVET institutions, thus ensuring that TVET graduates have relevant, high-quality skills.

### 4.3.2. Equipment

It is not always possible to have access to equipment that would enable students to develop competence because of the expense of maintaining it and paying the running costs and costs of consumables. Using a piece of equipment once or twice, or watching a demonstration, will not develop a student's competence. Adding equipment to a training facility may be an exciting prospect but there can be hidden and ongoing costs, and pieces of equipment have limited lifespans. Discussing the pros and cons of purchasing equipment with industrial players can lead to the identification of other solutions, for instance work-based learning, access to equipment in vendors' sales rooms, donations of equipment and resources, and industry agreement on alternative training priorities.

### 4.3.3. Cost-shifting

It is important when collecting information from industry to make sure that training traditionally undertaken by industry is not pushed onto the public TVET system. There is no need to change the provision of training that is already taking place in industrial settings, whether in up-skilling existing workers or arranging for the induction and training of new workers. Rather than shift such training into the public TVET domain, SSCs can aim to improve the quality of workplace-based learning and formalize the outcomes. This can be achieved by training and certifying workplace trainers and arranging for their courses – and both existing and new workers - to receive formal recognition.

## 4.4. Capacity-building

Teachers, trainers and assessors all need to be aware of industry trends and changes in processes and technology. Even at an early stage, SSCs may be able to provide support by organizing industry familiarization for teachers, with activities ranging from access to trade fairs and industry conferences to workplaces visits and return-to-work programmes. SSCs can identify knowledgeable people from different sectors to participate in workshops or conferences, thus enabling teachers to develop their knowledge of industry and learn about current trends and technology. This is valuable in stimulating the process of bringing teachers closer to industry. SSCs can also inform the wider skills-development sector of industry conferences and trade fairs, where teachers might get to see demonstrations of new equipment or hear about new trends and production processes.



## ▶ 4.5. Data collection for skills anticipation

Understanding labour market skills needs is important for all training decisions, therefore identifying and anticipating skills needs must precede any such decisions. However, forecasting the skills requirements of industry is a difficult exercise which usually relies on a mix of qualitative and quantitative data. The quality, consistency and amount of data will determine the accuracy of estimates. This in turn is determined by the quality and comprehensiveness of the data-collection mechanisms adopted.

One approach to this problem is the ILO's Skills for Trade and Economic Development (STED) methodology, a six-stage programme that provides sector-level technical assistance in identifying the skills development strategies required for future success in international trade. It is designed to support growth and decent employment creation in sectors that have the potential to increase exports and so contribute to economic development. Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification: A Practical Guide is available at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---ifp\\_skills/documents/publication/wcms\\_549925.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_549925.pdf)

Another widely used approach is the establishment of labour market observatories (LMOs) at the regional or sectoral level. LMOs comprise SSCs, employment services, education planners, training providers, careers counsellors, small to medium-scale enterprises, and employer and employee organizations, as well as NGOs and civil society groups involved in human resources development, skills formation and employment issues. LMOs work closely with industry, national training organizations and universities and research centres in considering current and future skills needs. Because of their close industry links, they are able to collect qualitative information and, by analysing it alongside the available quantitative data, can produce information on current and anticipated changes in work organization. LMOs aim to raise awareness and understanding of the state of the labour market, as well as likely labour market trends. SSCs can play a major role in facilitating this process as, over time, the partners in the process collect more relevant information. The European Training Foundation (ETF) provides an overview of LMOs at [https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/m/F8E652156F4C0E9FC12580E60049A5CE\\_Observatories.pdf](https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/m/F8E652156F4C0E9FC12580E60049A5CE_Observatories.pdf).

Identifying the future needs of a sector is as important as identifying the current needs, as workers with the skills to adapt to future work requirements make the sector more competitive. There are several ways of doing this. One is set out in the ILO's Skills for Future Technologies Guide, a new tool for skills needs anticipation designed to guide experts and practitioners in anticipating future technological change and related changes in work organization, job tasks and skills needs. [https://www.ilo.org/skills/areas/skills-training-for-poverty-reduction/WCMS\\_534225/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/skills/areas/skills-training-for-poverty-reduction/WCMS_534225/lang--en/index.htm)

It is important to develop an aspirational scenario for the sector to take into account the skills that may be needed to meet future demand. In all scenarios, attention should be paid to a) replacement demand, that is the new labour required to fill the places of those

who move between occupational groups, and b) up-skilling demand, in the case of existing workers who will be required to acquire new skills sets. For this purpose, the European Foresight Platform, acting under the European Commission, has developed a methodology that includes easy-to-use tools: <http://www.foresight-platform.eu/community/forlearn/how-to-do-foresight/>

Using more than one approach for collecting and analysing data not only improves the quality of the exercise but also provides opportunities to validate the data and its analysis. For developing and transition countries, skills matching and skills anticipation are complex tasks, given the limited labour market information – vital for any education and employment strategy – that is available. At the same time, even limited evidence can be more efficiently used, given suitable methodological tools. To respond to this challenge, the ETF, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the International Labour Office have developed six methodological guides to help in anticipating and matching of skills supply and demand. They are very useful and include a range of information and suggestions. They include:

- ▶ Volume 1: Using labour market information
- ▶ Volume 2: Developing skills foresights, scenarios and forecasts
- ▶ Volume 3: Working at sector level
- ▶ Volume 4: The role of employment service providers
- ▶ Volume 5: Developing and running an establishment skills survey
- ▶ Volume 6: Carrying out tracer studies

These guides can be found here:

[https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Projects/WCMS\\_534345/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Projects/WCMS_534345/lang--en/index.htm)

## ▶ 4.6. Surveys

Surveys involve the collection of data, usually by distributing questionnaires via email, website or structured face-to-face interviews. The major advantage of surveys is that they make it possible to solicit the opinions of large numbers of people and to quantify the results. Their downside is that the information gathered is sometimes limited by the technique adopted: to simplify data collection and interpretation, questionnaires are usually multiple-choice, thus restricting the depth and level of detail.

Although conducting a survey may appeal because of its straightforward nature, a low response rate will cast doubt on the validity of the findings. Introducing surveys through sectoral associations may increase the response rate, as association members tend to exhibit a higher level of loyalty and involvement where activities undertaken by their associations are concerned. Volume 5 above has some very good suggestions on developing surveys for companies.

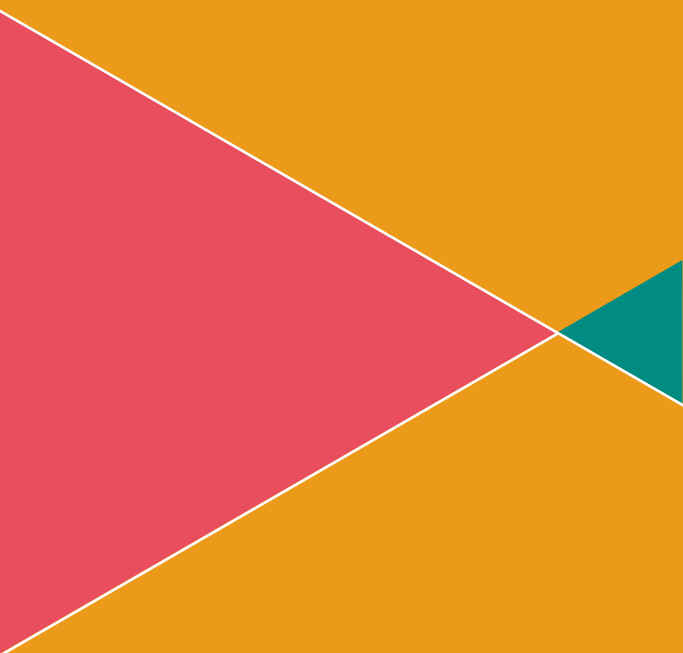
## 4.7. Models of sector skills committee engagement

Country	Involvement of government	Involvement of industry	Source of funding	SSC activities undertaken
Sri Lanka Industry skills councils 4	Government oversight through contract, housed in government building	Board members and staff from industry	Government funding for five years then self-sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competency standards development</li> <li>• Qualifications</li> <li>• Skills-gap analysis</li> <li>• Careers advice and career-pathway information sharing</li> <li>• Developing industry/TVET institution linkages</li> <li>• Developing learning and assessment materials</li> </ul>
India 38 SSCs	<p>Minimal government involvement, which mainly revolves around the requirement to produce particular goods and services. Government provided the National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) with a funds to grant soft loans to establish SSCs</p> <p>Contracted to meet targets tied to national targets</p>	<p>Industry-owned and in some cases, industry-financed</p> <p>Government</p> <p>Academia</p> <p>PSUs</p>	<p>Most are still operating with the grant money provided by the NSDC and fees charged for affiliation and administering assessments and placements. In the longer term, the SSCs are required to become financially self-sufficient by raising funds for specific projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of skills development needs, including preparation of a catalogue of types, range and depth of skills to assist individuals in choosing from them</li> <li>• Development of a sector skills development plan and maintenance of a skills inventory</li> <li>• Determining skills/competency standards and qualifications and getting them notified as per the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF)</li> <li>• Standardization of affiliation, accreditation, examination and certification process in accordance with the NSQF as determined by the National Skills Quality Council</li> <li>• May also conduct skill-based assessment and certification for Qualifications Packs /NOS-aligned training programmes</li> <li>• Participation in the setting up of affiliation, accreditation, examination and certification norms for their respective sectors</li> <li>• Planning and facilitating training of training, together with the NSDC and states</li> <li>• Promotion of academies of excellence</li> <li>• Paying particular attention to the skilling needs of ST/SC, differently-abled and minority groups</li> <li>• Ensuring that persons trained and skilled in accordance with the established norms are assured of employment at decent wages</li> <li>• To facilitate employment, SSCs have been encouraged to develop their own placement portal and mobile apps</li> <li>• Enabling industry engagement, e.g. participation in job meals</li> <li>• Focus on placement and boarding of apprentices by industry</li> </ul>

Country	Involvement of government	Involvement of industry	Source of funding	SSC activities undertaken
South Africa – SETAs 21	<p>Service level agreements with indicators and targets. Having learned lessons from the National Skill Development Strategy (NSDS) I and II, this strategy veers away from setting national targets. Instead, each skill education training authority (SETA) has targets which are applicable to its skills set and level to ensure that the programmes and activities of the SETAs are relevant to the sector.</p> <p>Government sets a number of additional social requirements on top of the workplace training requirements</p>	Bipartite – employers and unions	<p>Employer levy collected monthly through taxation - 1% of wages bill</p> <p>Employers can work with their SETA to reclaim up to 70% of the levy payment by engaging in certain approved skills-development activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathering of labour market information</li> <li>• Focus on skills development in the workplace</li> <li>• Development of national skills plans</li> <li>• Development, management and promotion of apprenticeships</li> <li>• Development of qualifications frameworks</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Strategic advice to Government</li> <li>• Assisting companies in implementing workplace learning, including developing workplace learning plans</li> <li>• Disbursing and managing national skills funds grants and funding programmes</li> <li>• Introducing careers guidance initiatives</li> <li>• Accreditation of training providers/employers offering training</li> <li>• Direct funding of training</li> </ul>
<p>Australia – Industry Skills Councils 11</p> <p>now replaced by Skills Service Organisations</p>	<p>Provides a funding agreement with specified outcomes to be delivered. These outcomes are tied to government policy initiatives.</p> <p>The initial concept was for the Australian industry skills councils to become financially independent but the Government pulled back on this requirement to maintain some influence over the national skills agenda</p>	<p>Tripartite – majority employers, unions with 2 training institution representatives</p> <p>Not-for-profit companies</p>	<p>Government funding, with some additional funding received through competitive bids and the sale of training resources</p> <p>Funding provided for specific projects focusing on government initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathering labour market information (LMI) and identification of skills gaps</li> <li>• Skills forecasting</li> <li>• Development of national competency standards</li> <li>• Development of qualifications and frameworks</li> <li>• Keeping employers informed about trends in their industry</li> <li>• Strategic advice to government</li> <li>• Disbursing funding for enterprise funding of training for workforce development activities</li> <li>• Providing funding advice to government and industry</li> <li>• Developing workforce development plans</li> <li>• Development of national training product</li> </ul>
Netherlands - Knowledge Centres - 17	Government contract to deliver outcomes to support national policy	Tripartite - employers, employee representative bodies (e.g. unions) and a government representative	Well-funded by government, with a small amount (0.4%) coming from employer levies. Additional funding for projects and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing training and maintaining qualifications</li> <li>• Raising employers' commitment to training and creating a learning culture within their sectors</li> <li>• Recruiting and accrediting employers to engage in workplace training by taking on trainees via apprenticeships or internships.</li> <li>• Coordinating and promoting sectoral training (e.g. recruiting new vocational education providers).</li> <li>• Collecting labour market intelligence</li> <li>• Increasing apprenticeship and internship numbers</li> </ul>

Country	Involvement of government	Involvement of industry	Source of funding	SSC activities undertaken
New Zealand – 14 Industry Training Organisations	Government recognizes the industry training organizations and has an operational agreement concerning outcomes	Industry representatives	Government and industry funding  Access to the National Skills Fund to fund training delivery  Industry funding is a mix of cash and in-kind support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting apprenticeships</li> <li>• Identification of skills gaps</li> <li>• Development of occupational/competency standards</li> <li>• Development of qualifications</li> <li>• Strategic advice to government</li> <li>• Accreditation of training providers/employers offering training</li> <li>• Direct funding of training</li> </ul>
UK – SSCs 20	<p>Until 2010, the Government provided funding subject to delivery of agreed outcomes. These outcomes were tied to the Government’s policy initiatives.</p> <p>The initial concept was for the UK SSCs to become financially independent but the Government pulled back on this requirement in order to maintain some influence over the national skills agenda, and the quality and ownership of the resulting products. Now SSCs do not receive core funding, although some receive government funding for particular projects, such as apprenticeship standards.</p>	<p>Tripartite – employers, trade unions, and professional bodies<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Representation of leading employers on the SCC boards</p>	<p>Government funding is also channelled through the SSCs to fund some TVET training institutions.</p> <p>Some additional funding is raised through competitive bids.</p> <p>The funding process for SSCs changed in April 2012, when all government funding available to SSCs became contestable. This basically means that SSCs now have to bid for various funds by making proposals (similar to ULF and union bids). There are various funds: EIF (Employer Investment Fund), GIF (Growth Investment Fund). Both the EIF and the GIF are funded by the Government. In some situations, SSCs will bid with funding matched by an employer. More details at: <a href="http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/our-work-and-projects/skills-investment/sector-skills-councils#sthash.n67eEvsy.dpuf">http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/our-work-and-projects/skills-investment/sector-skills-councils#sthash.n67eEvsy.dpuf</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathering labour market information and identifying skills gaps</li> <li>• Development of NOS</li> <li>• Development of qualifications frameworks</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Development of apprenticeship frameworks</li> <li>• Strategic advice to government</li> <li>• National skills academies act as specialist employer-led delivery organizations, many of them as delivery arms of SSCs</li> <li>• Accreditation of training providers/employers offering training</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/sectorskillscouncils/?lang=en>  
<http://education.gov.uk/schools/careers/traininganddevelopment/staff/standards/b00203854/nos-for-stl/other-nos>



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