

GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE



Ministry of Technical and Higher Education

Cabinet Approved

**NATIONAL TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) POLICY
FOR SIERRA LEONE**

September, 2019

Table of Contents

<u>PREFACE</u>	2
<u>DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS</u>	3
<u>1. BACKGROUND AND THE TVET POLICY PREPARATION PROCESS</u>	4
BACKGROUND	4
<u>TVET POLICY FRAMEWORK PREPARATION PROCESS</u>	4
GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY FORMULATION PROCESS.	7
<u>2. STRATEGIC CONTEX OF TVET SYSTEM IN SIERRA LEONE</u>	9
NATIONAL CONTEXT.....	9
SECTORAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT	11
LEGAL CONTEXT OF TVET IN SIERRA LEONE	14
TVET SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: SWOT	16
STRENGTHS	17
WEAKNESSES	17
OPPORTUNITIES.....	18
THREATS.....	19
TVET POLICY AND THE SDGs.....	19
<u>3. TVET SECTOR VISION, MISSION AND POLICY OBJECTIVES</u>	20
TVET SECTOR VISION STATEMENT	20
TVET SECTOR MISSION STATEMENT.....	20
TVET POLICY OBJECTIVES	20
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE TVET POLICY	20
<u>3. TVET POLICY FRAMEWORK: CLUSTERS AND STRATEGIES</u>	21
CLUSTER 1: IMPROVING TVET COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT	21
CLUSTER 2: ENHANCING ACCESS TO TVET PROGRAMMES.....	24
CLUSTER 3: IMPROVING RELEVANCE OF TRAINING.....	25
CLUSTER 4: DEVELOPING SKILLS FOR JOBS	27
CLUSTER 5: PROMOTING PRODUCTIVITY IN THE NON-FORMAL TVET	28
CLUSTER 6: ASSURING SUSTAINABLE TVET FUNDING.....	29
<u>4: TVET POLICY IMPLEMENTATION</u>	31
IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS.....	31
COORDINATION	32
CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING A TVET INSTITUTION.....	32
CRITERIA FOR GOVERNMENT APPROVAL	33
CRITERIA FOR GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	33
<u>5. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, BUDGET AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION</u>	34
<u>6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION</u>	35
FORESEEN RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES	36
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY	37
<u>7. TVET POLICY WORKSHOP COMMUNIQUE</u>	38

Preface

This TVET Policy was prepared by a Task Force, established by the Minister of Technical and Higher Education. The Task Force was assisted by the Lead Consultant, Dr. Patrick M. Kormawa. This Policy defines the major actions intended to revitalize and develop TVET in the coming years. The main thrust of the policy is that TVET development relies on a TVET system which is relevant, flexible, effective, efficient, accessible and sustainable. It is also based on the need that TVET is developed as an integrated part of the educational system of Sierra Leone. Thus, this unified TVET policy will stimulate the development of structured market-oriented training and strengthened institutional ability to adapt quickly to changing market needs, provide high quality teaching through comprehensive and continuous teacher training and curricula development. Most importantly, the policy has identified sustainable sources of financing the TVET system provided for the participation of disadvantaged groups.

I am glad that my team at the MTHE and myself succeeded in meeting the challenge in the presentation of this TVET policy. A major difference between this policy and previous attempts is that its emphasis is on implementation and results, thus the policy document is accompanied by an implementation plan. An entire policy cluster is dedicated to how this policy can be financed. The policy is also in line with President Bio's commitment to develop the human capacity needed to transform the economy of Sierra Leone into a medium income country. Thus, this TVET policy will also engender professional insurance and serve as one of the key interventions to Government's response in terms of youth employment and poverty reduction.

In terms of the training environment, most of the TVET institutions presently lack the basic standard facilities, infrastructure, tools and equipment. Workshops and laboratories are also ill equipped. This policy and its funding mechanism has paid special attention to addressing this and other binding constraints identified through analysis and stakeholder consultations.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all stakeholders who participated in the development of this policy. I also express appreciation to the Technical Working Team and Belvedere SL as well as all those who participated in the regional consultations and the national validation workshop during the development of this policy document. It is my sincere conviction that the policy will spur the development of a strengthened TVET system in Sierra Leone that produces quality skilled labour that meet regional and international standards. It is also my hope that this policy will facilitate the development of both the formal and informal TVET and the wider participation of all stakeholders in the TVET sector.

Professor Aiah A. Gbakima.
Minister of Technical and Higher Education

Definitions and Concepts

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

TVET is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work. In the past various terms have been used to describe elements of the field that are now conceived as comprising TVET. The Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education held in Seoul in 1999 decided that the best, most comprehensive term to use is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Therefore, TVET encompasses any education, training and learning activity leading to the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills which are relevant for employment or self-employment. TVET serves here as an overarching term to describe all kinds of formal, non-formal and informal training and learning provided by or in all different institutions, providers and learning locations.

Vocational training

Vocational training is a system which aims at providing recipients with the necessary knowledge and skills to exercise a profession in order to be integrated in the labour market as employees or self-employed. Vocational training includes initial Vocational Training and continuing Vocational Training.

Technical Education

Technical Education is a structured system aimed at providing recipients with the necessary knowledge and skills to continue their studies at tertiary education level or to exercise a profession in order to be integrated into the labour market. Technical Education, on the other hand puts more emphasis on theoretical education.

Continuing TVET

Continuing TVET refers to training activities in which people take part in order to obtain knowledge and/or learn new skills for a current or a future job, to increase earnings and to improve carrier opportunities in a current or another field.

1. BACKGROUND AND THE TVET POLICY PREPARATION PROCESS

Background

1. This National Technical Education and Vocational Training (TVET) Policy framework document is aligned with the Government of Sierra Leone's (GoSL) new Medium-Term National Development Plan (NDP) 2019-2023. The plan provides a roadmap for Sierra Leone to achieve the goal of attaining a middle-income status by 2039 through inclusive growth that is sustainable and leaves no one behind. In this respect, the GoSL is implementing as flagship a "Free Quality School Education Programme" to provide a solid base to enhance human capital development and to facilitate the transformation of the economy within the next five years.
2. In addition to macroeconomic measures being taken to transform the economy, the GoSL is focusing on key productive sectors - Agriculture, Mining, Tourism, Marine resources and Manufacturing sectors. These sectors have the potential to contribute significantly to economic growth and job creation in the country. TVET plays a major role in providing the necessary quality skills to accelerate and contribute to the competitiveness of the economy as well as promote sustainable and inclusive development. Thus, a TVET policy framework is needed to:
 - (a) Address inadequate key skills responsible for market failures which prevent private sector firms from increasing productivity and maximizing economic benefits in the sectors prioritized by government
 - (b) Address the major challenges confronting TVET System in Sierra Leone with the aim of transforming and positioning it to contribute to economic development through demand driven skills for employment.
 - (c) Produce a highly skilled workforce to support economic transformation objectives of the government with focus on the key sector as stated in the National Development Plan 2019-2023.

TVET Policy Framework Preparation Process

1. In March 2019, the Minister of MTHE set up a TVET Working Group comprising of representatives from key line Ministries (MBSSE, Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED), private sector representatives and

key institutions in the TVET system. The Working Group was charged with the responsibility to produce this National TVET Policy Framework. The Minister of MTHE assigned the research work and drafting of the policy document to the Lead Consultant. The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Lead Consultant involved the following:

- Guide the TVET Working Group in the production of the working document
 - Review the working documents produced by the TVET Working Group
 - Lead the research process, analysis and validation workshops
 - Review and incorporate relevant comments and inputs from TVET stakeholders, interested persons and regional workshops
 - Produce a draft National TVET Policy in collaboration with the TVET Working Group and present at a National validation workshop for further inputs and endorsement
 - Assist in any other assignment in the TVET Working Group.
2. In carrying out these tasks, the Lead Consultant and the TVET Working Group Consulted widely in addition to reviews of the formal and non-formal TVET system. Special attention was paid to refocusing the TVET system in the country with a view to addressing the high unemployment, particularly amongst the youth, the low level of productivity and how the TVET system can meaningfully contribute to improving the country's Human Resource Capacity, based on market demand for national, regional and global market demand and competitiveness. In addition to the key informant interviews, the TVET Working Group requested and received inputs from all MDAs concerned with TVET, private sector representatives, Heads of TVET Institutions, NGOs, GIZ, and representatives of youth organizations.
3. This National TVET Policy framework document has therefore been developed by the MTHE. A participatory and inclusive research approach was used in the preparation of this document. The research technique adopted included, desk reviews, focus group and key informant interviews. The MTHE also organized press briefings to facilitate broad-based and inclusive participation in the policy formulation process. A secretariat was set up to receive inputs from the public that were considered by the

Technical Task Force constituted by the Minister of MTHE for the preparation of the same .

4. The National TVET Policy Framework builds on two earlier draft TVET Policy documents prepared in 2010 and revised in 2013. In addition to these, a desk review of key documents including - the Education Sector Plan 2018-2020; the Medium Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019-2023; Report of the Diagnostic Study of the TVET Sector in Sierra Leone by GIZ, 2017; various Laws of Sierra Leone relating to TVET and other relevant reports were undertaken.
5. A draft TVET policy framework document was prepared by the Lead Consultant following both the desk reviews and consultations and presented at five regional workshops organized by the MTHE in Bo, Kenema, Makeni, Port-Loko and Freetown from May 7 to 15, 2019. These workshops brought together District level officials conversant with TVET, TVET institutions including Centres, local opinion leaders, youth and women organizations at the District levels, Civil Society Groups, private sector representatives in the district in each region. Through these consultations, regional specific issues were captured and included in the National draft TVET policy framework document.
6. On May 20, 2019 a National validation workshop was organized by the MTHE in Freetown. This workshop was attended by representatives of key MDAs concerned with TVET, representatives of the TVET Coalition in Sierra Leone, TVET institutions, Civil Society Groups, Youth Groups, Women's Groups and academic institutions. The objective of the National validation workshop was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to review the final draft TVET policy framework document, with a view to obtaining further inputs to fine-tune the document to gain their support so that the document when finalized becomes the basis for TVET Policy.
7. In each of the consultations, the current economy of the country, that comprises of a large informal sector and a thin industrial and formal private sector were kept in view. In that same direction, the TVET system can better be positioned to provide the needed skills and workforce to contribute to the transformation of the economy to a competitive modern industrial and manufacturing sector.

Guiding principles of the policy formulation process.

The formulation of this national TVET Policy framework was guided by the following principles:-

1. *Participatory and inclusive:* This approach ensured that all stakeholders involved in TVET participated in the process. They provided inputs that were considered in this document, with the objective of coming up with a unified TVET Policy Framework. The document is meant to revitalize the TVET sector and prepare the labor force with the necessary skills for economic growth, ensuring quality and standardization through a unified National TVET Certification System. It will also provide equal opportunities for female students and those with special needs to participate in the TVET system.
2. *Relevance of TVET to socio-economic development of Sierra Leone:* The need to reposition the TVET system to be more relevant to the socio-economic development of the country was considered in all discussions. This requires that training at TVET institutions should deliver adequate technical, vocational and entrepreneurial skills to students. In this respect, the TVET policy framework will guide the development of a strategy for a unified and demand-driven TVET system; comprising all TVET institutions, and incorporating relevant labor market needs, teacher training and education curricula development, quality, standardization and coordination of the TVET system.
3. *Facilitating partnerships:* Noting that TVET is multi-sectoral, and that the demand for TVET and its attendant costs are huge, no formal or public system alone can adequately provide the necessary resources to revitalize and reposition TVET for the socio-economic development of the country. Therefore, the policy framework is to provide guidance that facilitates and coordinates the efforts of both the formal and informal sectors in skills development.
4. *Financially Secure TVET System:* Financial support to the TVET sector has been one of the major hinderances to the development of an effective and efficient TVET System. In preparing this policy framework, special attention has been given to securing sustainable sources of finance.
5. *Quality and Relevance:* The policy framework should place emphasis and promote demand driven programmes and training. This is with the view to largely promote

technical performance, and less on the theoretical, thereby promoting professionalism, knowledge and qualifications needed in the various sectors of the economy.

6. Incorporating *lessons from TVET Systems from other countries*: In preparing this document, lessons from some countries that have made commendable progress in the TVET sector like The Training of Trainers (ToT) and Career Guidance Counseling system of Germany; Curriculum development approach of Belgium, and Skills for Employability Scheme for the United Kingdom were referenced. In each of these countries, there are laws, regulations and mechanisms to regulate non- governmental TVET institutions at all levels to ensure standardization and quality in the system. Lessons from these countries informed, among others, that for a national TVET system to be effective and contribute significantly to national socio-economic development, it should: -

- Be adequately funded and supported at the national level, by integrating and promoting Public-Private Partnerships not only for financial support, but at all nodes of the TVET value chain.
- Facilitate the transition from education to professional stage as a result of understanding of the optimal ways and means to link formal education and TVET from basic to higher institutions, by ensuring unified qualification and certification systems.
- Create awareness and understanding of private sector demand for skills and aligning TVET to provide workforce with the relevant skills for the private industry; as well as facilitating startups for self - employment.
- Encourage development of entrepreneurial skills among young people and prepare them for productivity within small-and medium-sized enterprises. Young entrepreneurs are supported through special schemes and support systems to start up successful businesses.

2. STRATEGIC CONTEX OF TVET SYSTEM IN SIERRA LEONE

National context

1. The population of Sierra Leone is estimated at 7 million of which 85.3% live in rural areas, with the majority (95%) employed in subsistence farming (GoSL 2019: Sierra Leone's National Development Plan 2019-2023). With an annual average population growth rate of 3.2 percent, it is estimated that the population of Sierra Leone will reach 10 million by the year 2026, if the present population growth rate is maintained. Sierra Leone's population is young, with about 80 percent between the age bracket 0 to 34, while the under-five population accounts for 13 percent.
2. About 70 percent of the youth in Sierra Leone are unemployed or underemployed (UNDP Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update). This high proportion of unemployed youth is worsened by the low and relatively no meaningful youth entrepreneurship initiatives at the national level. Another reason espoused in the National Development Plan 2019-2023 is the poor conditions of service in Sierra Leone, which is amongst the worst in the sub-region, thus there is a significant unemployment for both skilled and unskilled workers. The youthful structure of the population of the country provides both an opportunity and challenge. On one hand, if properly managed, the youthful population provides a readily available pool of workforce for economic transformation and diversification. On the other hand, if not properly managed, it could result to many of them unemployment and several social challenges.
3. According to the UNDP (2018), the Human Development Index (HDI), which is a summary measure for assessing long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development: (i) a long and healthy life, (ii) access to knowledge and (iii) a decent standard of living puts Sierra Leone in the 184th position out of 189 countries. This implies that compared to other countries surveyed, Sierra Leone is at a very low level of Human Development Index, requiring that concerted efforts are required to improve on the HDI. Indeed, the TVET system in Sierra Leone can directly contribute significantly to improving the three basic dimensions.
4. According to the 2018 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey, the overall poverty rate is 57 percent, this indicates that out of every two Sierra Leoneans, one is poor, while out of every 11 Sierra Leoneans, one is living in extreme poverty. Most of the poor, about 84

percent live in rural areas, and lowest in Freetown with 18.5 percent. Those doing farming (agriculture) with a poverty incidence of 72 percent are the poorest, followed by petty traders. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MDI) – a summary measure of health, education, living standard, housing and energy, showed that the proportion of people that were multi-dimensionally poor in 2017 was almost 68 percent.

5. The low productivity and incomes in the agricultural sector has intensified the migration of youths to cities and urban areas in search of employment opportunities. Most of the youths still remain unemployed and have joined the ranks of the urban poor. Focus groups from the Youth and Employment Study reported that, while some youth would like increased skill development training (especially in areas such as business development), they tend to experience a gap between skills and available resources: they are trained but lack the tools to start their own business or they lack resources in order to be certified to exercise their trade.
6. Youth unemployment and under-employment is a key factor in the low level of national development and productivity and is therefore priority for both young people themselves and for the Government of Sierra Leone. The World Bank (Country Overview, 2018) estimates that 90 percent of the workforce is self-employed, the majority are concentrated in small-scale agriculture (59 percent) and over 35 percent of wage employment and 88 percent of non-agricultural self-employment is in the informal sector
7. Despite the abundance of natural resources economic development of the country has remained small and undiversified. The World Bank in Sierra Leone estimated the per capita income at US\$506 in 2018 (Country Overview 2018). About two-thirds of the working-age population is engaged in subsistence agriculture. Manufacturing consists mainly of the processing of raw materials and of light manufacturing for the domestic market. The Bauxite and Rutile mines shut down during the Ebola outbreak. Commercial agriculture is largely in the Cocoa, Coffee and Palm oil sectors, while Diamond and Gold mining remains the main source of foreign exchange earner. A major constraint to national development agenda is inadequate human resources capacity especially at the middle and lower levels. Manpower depends largely on Government's support in education and vocational training. There has been a high rate of brain-drain to greener pastures due to poor economic performance and the insecurity of the country during the

previous 10 years of conflict that has worsened the technical and vocational skill base of the country.

8. The country's industrial capacity is relatively weak. Government places emphasis on small and medium-scale enterprise development and on capacity building for small and medium-scale entrepreneurships. The country has a huge potential of harnessing clean energy from its numerous water sources for the production of electricity. Much of the energy needs of the population is being satisfied by the traditional use of biomass-fuel such as wood and charcoal which ironically contribute to the degradation of the environment.
9. A key factor in addressing the unemployment problem and shortage of manpower for the labor market is the prioritization of TVET in the country. An analysis of TVET and Tertiary education in the country points to a disturbingly poor quality of learning conditions and learning outcomes, as well as an outdated curriculum with low relevance to the labor market. These issues need to be addressed in a comprehensive and coherent manner, including the development and implementation of a holistic National TVET policy, that brings together the formal TVET (including Tertiary) and non-formal TVET education and training.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

1. In the past various terms have been used to describe several fields relating to skills development and systems relevant for employment that are now conceived as comprising TVET. In this respect, the 1999 Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education held in Seoul decided that, the most comprehensive term to use is TVET - which is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work. It encompasses any education, training and learning activity leading to the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills which are relevant for employment or self-employment. Thus, TVET serves as an overarching term to describe all kinds of formal, non-formal and informal training and learning provided by different institutions, providers and learning locations. TVET makes a distinction between Technical education and Vocational Training.

2. Technical Education is a structured system aimed at providing students/trainees with the necessary knowledge and skills to continue their studies at Tertiary education level or to exercise a profession for employment and self-reliance. Technical Education, on the other hand, puts more emphasis on the theoretical, whilst vocational training is a structured system which aims at providing students/trainees with the necessary knowledge and skills for employment and self-reliance. Vocational training includes both initial and continuing training.
3. Information from the Education Sector Plan 2018-2020 (GoSL, Education Sector Plan 2018-2020, no date) indicates that there were 380 (three hundred and eighty) institutions registered with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of which 154 (one hundred and fifty four) received salary for staff and subventions from the Consolidated fund, while 226 (59%) though registered with the Ministry were not receiving salary and subvention from the Ministry due to financial constraints. The total enrolment of students in 2019 is 27,055. Of these, 9,848 (36%) are males and 17,207 (64%) are females. In addition, there are 1,718 teachers of which 611 (36%) are males and 1,107 (64%) are females. Western Area has the highest enrolment and the number of institutions, whilst the northern region has the least.
4. TVET in Sierra Leone is comprised of formal and non-formal programmes, delivered by different providers at various qualification levels, in a fragmented and uncoordinated manner. In non-formal TVET programmes, public institutions, NGOs and private schools offer employment-oriented TVET programmes to various target groups: school leavers, people in employment, school drop outs and marginalized groups in the labour market. Unlike formal TVET, these programmes are not yet systematically delivered. Informal (on-the-job) training is widespread, but due to the absence of a systematic assessment and certification system there are currently no mechanisms to recognize informal occupational learning. Traditional apprenticeships in the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) sector constitute another presumably important, yet entirely un-researched, training environment.
5. Skills are defined as abilities enabling workers to carry out tasks and duties associated with a given task. As skills are related to jobs, employers value the following skills types:
(a) Cognitive – the ability to understand ideas and concepts; (b) Technical – the ability to

perform production processes related to a product or services; (c) Team work – the ability to manage one’s emotions and work effectively with others. Generally, the quality, standards and usability of the skills obtained in these institutions and centers both for employment and self-reliance cannot be assured because of several factors: few qualified trainers/teachers; low to zero entry qualifications of the students enrolled in these institutions; weak accreditation and certification system and issues related to standardization and validation of curriculum.

6. Labour market institutions, for example, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security whose role is to facilitate and transition those with the requisite skills to gainful employment, have over the years been less active in providing public employment services. Public vacancy placements, guidance and counselling systems to help youth find their way into the labour markets are neither in place nor visible. The absence of a vibrant manufacturing and private sector base in the country has further constrained the demand side of the labor market.
7. Increasing youth employment is one of the government’s priority. In this regard, TVET can serve as a vehicle to accelerate youth employment, empowerment and poverty alleviation. Thus, several Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the government are engaged in programs relating to technical and/or vocational education and skills training. Some of the MDAs include MTHE , Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs , Ministry of Defense (IMMAT) , Ministry of Development and Economic Planning, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry; Commission for Democracy and Human Right, Ministry of Tourism and Culture and National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA). Also, some national and international development partners have shown strong commitments to TVET and/ or related youth employment and development programs.
8. The TVET sector is poorly financed by government and is unable to adequately address its stated objectives. Government financial support to TVET institutions is in two categories: salary or grants. Qualified institutions receive monthly payment for their teachers according to the conditions of service for teachers, and those on grants receive quarterly allocations as running costs. Government’s financial support is largely targeted to meeting its recurrent funding to public TVET institutions. Development of curriculum, upgrading

and maintenance of training facilities are poorly funded by government. Private TVET providers rely largely on tuition fees to meet their operations cost. As a result, many institutions lack key tools, equipment, and machinery and some may even be outdated.

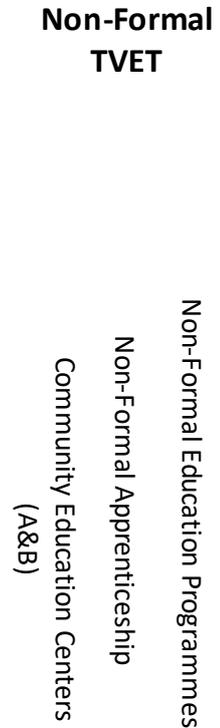
Legal Context of TVET in Sierra Leone

1. Several existing Policies, Acts and Plans have addressed issues of TVET: the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991; the Tertiary Education Commission Act (TEC) 2001; the National Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards (NCTVA) 2001; The Polytechnic Act 2001; the Education Act 2004; the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2007-2015; the Local Government Act 2004 and the National Youth Policy 2003. In all these, the emphasis is on self-reliance and actualization for the development of the economy through TVET in all areas of urgent need especially in Agriculture, Industry and Commerce. These Acts largely recognized the role of the private sector initiative in the form of financial contributions, skills training and employment creation

2. The Education Act 2004 is one of the key legislative instruments that addresses TVET issues. It provides for the structure of the 6-3-3-4 education system including Technical and vocational Education, adult and non-formal education as well as the control of education (and training). Figure 1 below provides the structure of education, training and qualification system in Sierra Leone. The Act further makes provision for the function of local Community Education Centers “with a view to providing a place of learning and skills acquisition for children and adult learners” primarily for the promotion of functional literacy and post-literacy activities (Paragraph 28). The Education Act 2004 makes provision (Paragraph 9 (2) for National Council for Technical and Vocational Education (NCTVE) as a body to run and coordinates technical and vocational education in the country.

3. The Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan (2018-2020) mentions Literacy and Technical skills for the vulnerable groups such as women and children, the physically and mentally challenged with no schooling and those with education below the tertiary level. It is also responsible for the provision of examination and validation services for the certificates at Senior Secondary Schools Technical and/vocational option. The NCTVA Act did not make provision for accreditation and certification of Non-formal and formal institutions like the Technical and vocational Institutes.

Figure 1: Overview of Sierra Leone Education, Training and Qualification System



4. The national Council for Technical, Vocational and Other Academic Awards Act, 2001 (NCTVA Acts 2001) makes provisions for the award of certificates and diplomas to only tertiary institutions. It did not make provision for accreditation and certification of non-formal and formal institutions below Technical and Vocational Institutes. This is to a large extent has resulted in the granting of diplomas and certificates from unaccredited institutions.

5. The Polytechnic Act 2001 fails to create a link for students from formal and non-formal TVET institutions from gaining access into the polytechnics. The Local Governments Act 2004 devolved the management of Basic Education to the local Councils. The Act did not specify the role of the local council for TVET institutions. This has serious policy implications since the current thrust on decentralization requires local authorities assume greater responsibility for young people in their areas of jurisdiction.

6. Though the Sierra Leone National Youth Policy 2003 identifies skills training as one of its strategic areas of priority, it fails to show the linkages with the MTHE. Table 2 below shows the provision of some of the existing Policies, Acts and Plans on TVET and their gaps.

Table 2. Selected existing Policies, Acts and Plans that refer to TVET

Policy Status	Provision Relating to TVET	Gaps
The Education Act 2004	9. (1) State definition aim: and objectives of Technical vocational Education (2) Establishment for NCTVA and its composition (3) Certification and awards at various levels in Technical and vocational Institutes and Secondary Schools	1. Functions of the NCTVE 2. Categories of TVET 3. Supervision of TVET institutions through Board of Governors
The National Council for Technical and Other Awards 2001 (page 31-32)	(1) To provide validation and certification services for specialized and professional programs in tertiary education institutions	1. No provision for accreditation and certification of Non-formal and formal institutions below TVET's in TVET institute
Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan 2007-2015 (chapter 6 page 61)	To provide more and improve literacy and skills training in TVET institutions below the polytechnic level	1. Provision of funding
Sierra Leone National Youth Policy 2003-4.5	The policy identifies skills training as one of its areas of priorities	1. No linkage to sector Ministry responding for TVET to actualize skills training activities for youths
The Polytechnic Act 2001	Makes provision for the establishment of Polytechnic institution and polytechnic Councils in the country. It makes provision for one member of the council of TVET institutions in Sierra Leone to be a member of polytechnic councils and the academic boards In part 4, the Act stipulated that among its numerous functions a polytechnic should grand diploma and certificate through the NCTVA	1. No link to incorporate students coming from formal and non-formal TVET institutions 2. No clear formal entry requirements for students graduating from formal and non-formal TVET institutions into polytechnics
Sierra Leone constitution 1991 chapter 11 section 9	Ensuring that every citizen is given the opportunity to be educated to the best of his ability, aptitude and inclination by providing educational facilities at all levels and aspects of educational facilities at all levels and aspect of education such as primary , secondary, vocational , technical college university	1. TVET not emphasized as done for general education 2. Low priority when allocating budget 3. Inadequate staffing 4. No linkage and support to world of work
Local Government	Devolution of the management of Basic Education to Local councils	All of TVET institutions including the non-formal ones are not devolved to Local Council

TVET Situational Analysis: SWOT

1. The weak TVET policy or the lack of a holistic one has created unclarity of the coordinating roles in the country's TVET system. Even though there have been some related Acts of Parliament addressing some aspects of TVET, the lack of common understanding and clear policy describing the mission, objectives and direction, has hindered the coherent development of the TVET system in the country. In this respect, there has been some interventions to improve on the foregoing related to TVET system in Sierra Leone leading to some achievements. However, there is still much to done in positioning the System to

significantly contribute to the transformation of the economy as required by the Government.

2. An analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the current situation of the TVET system was carried out. The purpose of the analysis was to contextualize the TVET Policy framework so that it focuses and build on existing strengths and opportunities and at the same time address current and anticipated weaknesses and threats. Based on the SWOT analysis, the current situation can be summarized as follows:

Strengths

- High political will to strengthen TVET: The GoSL has prioritized education and economic transformation to provide a solid base to enhance Human Capital Development and to facilitate the transformation of the economy within the next five years, focusing on key sectors for which quality skills development is urgently needed. To demonstrate emphasis on TVET, MTHE was created to focus on Technical and Higher Education.
- TVET recognized as a national priority: TVET is recognized in the Medium Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019-2023 and other existing related policies and strategies e.g. the NCTVA Act 2001 established the NCTVA; The Polytechnics Act 2001 that established polytechnic institutions and the polytechnic Councils; the Education Act 2004 that outlined the structures of the entire education system of the country; the Education Sector Plan 2018-2020, etc.
- There is an existing TVET Directorate in the MTHE mandated to coordinate and monitor TVET policy implementation.
- Commitment of partners to support TVET development: There is a strong interest from partners to develop the TVET sector. Partners have organized themselves into a body called TVET Coalition Sierra Leone, whose membership comprises of training providers, the private sector, government, development partners.

Weaknesses

In summary, the major challenges facing the TVET System in Sierra Leone includes:

- Inconsistencies in the existing Acts leading to the limited and ineffective legal mandate for TVET coordination, organization and delivery of programmes in the country;
- Inadequate Skilled and Qualified Manpower for labor market due to poor linkages between training institutions and industries, inadequate/or obsolete training

equipment and facilities at TVET institutions, and quality of instructors/teachers and training methods;

- Few women are enrolled in technical areas in TVET Institutions and inadequate or non-existence of TVET facilities to cater for the disabled especially for the Blind;
- TVET system not well Integrated in the 6-3-3-4 School Programs and weak articulation of the TVET in the Education system;
- Inappropriate scope and quality of formal and informal TVET programs, curricula as well as a weak system of testing and certificate of skills and competencies;
- Inadequate Capacity of TVET institutions to cater for growing number of students;
- Weak partnership and cooperation among TVET delivery institutions, MDAs and development partners (DPs) in the country, leading to poor private sector participation in TVET and also the poor perception of TVET by members of the public;
- Low human resource capacity for TVET planning, policy and M&E at MTHE leading to weak governance structure and coordination amongst TVET institutions.
- Inadequate and poor funding of the TVET System.
- Absence of prioritization: Technical Education and Skills Development training is not giving due prominent to address the needs of industries. Studies highlight that Vocational Education Training in Sierra Leone does not provide readily employable persons, primarily because of limited practical work done at training institutions, which may also explain the high unemployment rate among TVET graduates.
- Poor image of the TVET sub-sector: The reputation of TVET is poor. In many cases, school-leavers decide to enroll in TVET institutions only if they do not qualify for senior secondary or higher education. Failure to offer quality programmes, poor quality staff and outdated curricula have made TVET unattractive, especially where it is rarely a first choice.

Opportunities

TVET system in Sierra Leone provides both national and regional opportunities that are summarized as follows:

- Supporting TVET related policies/Acts are in place.
- The quality free education programme is leading to increased enrollment in primary education.
- Local Content Act 2016 supports employment of skilled Sierra Leoneans by local and foreign firms.

- Low regulatory obstacles in setting up formal and non-formal TVET institutions.
- Sierra Leone is well integrated in ECOWAS, which facilitates free movement of people and labor.

Threats

- Low funding of TVET due to competing demands on education budget with other sub-sectors such as Basic Education, Higher Education, etc.
- Stigmatization of TVET as the last resort for students with poor academic performance and school drop outs as well as low recognition of TVET graduates in the labor market.
- The lack of common understanding and clear TVET policy describing the mission, objectives and directions.
- The lack of/or limited appreciation by the public sector, members of the political class and opinion leaders of the role of TVET in a national economic transformation and growth

TVET Policy and the SDGs

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to the SDGs. In this respect the Sierra Leone TVET Policy Framework is crafted in cognizance of the fact that the SDGs vision of “leaving no one behind” and several of the SDGs have placed prominence on the need to enhance the role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in sustainable development. In particular, SDG 4, 6, 8 and 13 all have specific targets for TVET to strive to achieve. Also, the TVET policy acknowledges that a solid basic education followed by inclusive and quality TVET can unlock the potentials of millions of youth, women, girls and people leaving with disability. Thus, among others, this TVET policy will prove the necessary framework for the development of an efficient, effective and sustainable TVET system as a significant part of the response to the SDGs.

3. TVET Sector Vision, mission and policy objectives

TVET Sector Vision Statement

TVET's vision is to contribute to the enhancement of human capital and economic development, through training and the provision of competent, skilled and reliant workforce that contributes to improving the livelihoods and wellbeing of all concerned.

TVET Sector Mission Statement

TVET's mission statement is to provide quality and equitable technical and vocational education and training that is sustainable, inclusive and responsive to the requirements of the national economy and global market demands.

TVET Policy Objectives

The overall objective of TVET's policy is to develop an effectively coordinated and harmonized system capable of delivering high-quality market demand training and skills development programmes. Hence providing the economy with qualified skilled workforce able to contribute to national economic development and growth in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

Specific Objectives of the TVET Policy

The following are the specific objectives of the TVET Policy:

- Create an efficient and responsive TVET system that produces quality skilled workforce to transform Sierra Leone into a medium income country by 2039
- Ensure effective planning and implementation, as well as policy coordination, monitoring and evaluation of TVET activities
- Provide quality trainings and skills development that conform with the needs of enterprises in line with international standards and best practice
- Supply adequate number of qualified skilled workforce for the relevant areas of study needed by the priority sectors of the economy;
- Facilitate professionalism, employability and self-reliance of graduates from TVET institutions.
- Promote Public-private partnership in developing TVET policies, programmes and activities.

3. TVET POLICY FRAMEWORK: CLUSTERS AND STRATEGIES

1. The GoSL has put education at the heart of its development agenda. In this respect, the government is putting in place policies, programmes and structures to develop human capital and improve academic performance. As a result, the government has made access to free quality education its flagship programme. The aim is to further ensure that education is modernized and made relevant to the development needs of Sierra Leonean society, thus the need to develop a TVET policy framework.
2. The TVET Policy Framework Clusters have been formulated based on a careful analysis of data and information received from several stakeholders and secondary sources. Thus, the following TVET policy framework clusters have been proposed to address the binding constraints of the system:-
 - Improving TVET Coordination and Management
 - Enhancing access to Quality TVET programmes
 - Improving Relevance of Training
 - Developing skills for Jobs
 - Promoting Productivity in the Non-Formal TVET
 - Assuring Sustainable TVET Funding.

Cluster 1: Improving TVET Coordination and Management

1. TVET is delivered by both public and private sector partners. The TVET delivery institutions constitute Polytechnics, Technical/Vocational institutes, Secondary schools and Community-based training centers in the public (formal) sector and traditional apprenticeship enterprises and artisanal centers (non-formal). The latter includes Road-side auto mechanic repair garages, Welding, Carpentry/joinery, Hair-dressing salons, computing secretarial centers, Cookery, Soap making, Agriculture, Micro-enterprises and Fishing. These areas of skills offer the largest opportunity for the acquisition of employable skills in the informal sector (private) and accounts for majority of all skills in the country.

2. However, the lack of a holistic TVET policy and clear organizational structures has contributed to the ineffectiveness of the sector as a whole. Although there are several Policies, Acts and Plans geared addressing such issues in TVET, they are not holistic and are incapable of addressing the inefficiencies in the entire system. As a result, there is a growing number of private institutions that are delivering all kinds of uncoordinated training using curricula and competence assessment mechanisms that are not standardized.

Strategic Objective

The strategic objective of the policy cluster is to ensure that existing TVET system, and related policies and Acts are reviewed, leading to the restructuring and efficient functioning of the TVET system at national levels.

Key Policy Actions

1. **Review existing Acts that have implications for TVET system**, particularly review the NCTVA Act 2001; the Polytechnic Act 2001 and the Education Act 2004. The review should be done for the purpose of aligning the provisions in the aforementioned Acts with this new TVET policy framework in order to promote holistic and coordinated implementation of the TVET policy.
2. **Establish a National TVET Agency (NTA) as the apex body** responsible for the implementation, coordination and management of TVET programmes in the country. This will require a review of the Education Act 2004 with the purpose of strengthening/or transforming the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education (NCTVE) into the National TVET Agency through an Act of Parliament. The NTA when established shall be responsible for coordinating, revitalizing, re-organizing, rationalizing the provision of skills and vocations required to meet the country's present and future socio-economic needs. The NTA shall perform the following functions:
 - Revitalize, reform and expand the provision of skills, vocations, science and technology to meet the country's present and future socio-economic needs
 - Develop a National Qualification Framework for TVET (NQF), that include examination syllabi for all subject areas for each category of qualification
 - Establish a National Accreditation system for TVET, and accredit training institutions/or programmes and issue certificates of accreditation

- Define and periodically review the criteria for the establishment and approval of TVET institutions
- Define national objectives to be achieved by TVET system, conduct regular monitoring, evaluation and prepares reports on the levels of achievement
- Develop a system of certification/or licensing of trainers in conformity with existing Acts and maintain a register of all license trainers;
- Regularly inspect TVET institutions, with the aim of promoting access, assure quality and relevance of all TVET programmes
- Develop and implement TVET teacher capacity development programmes which ensure both quality and quantity
- Encourage and support the establishment of business incubation centers as a means of promoting entrepreneurship acumen and self-reliance in TVET institutions
- Establish, mobilize and manage a National TVET Fund sourced from different agencies/partners for the development of the sector .
- Develop a TVET Management Information System and regularly publish information relating to TVET
- Provide advice and make recommendations to the Minister, MHTE on all matters relating to TVET.

3. Decentralize TVET Coordination to Regions and Districts. This should be done in accordance with both the Decentralization Act and Education Act. The purpose of the decentralization process is to facilitate and improve efficiency of service delivery of the TVET system to the market and local needs.

4. Review and support capacity needs and building of national, regional and district level public TVET managers.

5. Review existing TVET institutions, with the aim of streamlining; standardizing programmes and their durations in tandem with the training and the certification to be earned. It must also upgrade established TVET institutions into specialized tertiary institutions focusing on developing critical, technical and vocational skills: TVET research, Pedagogy, Technology and Entrepreneurship.

Cluster 2: Enhancing Access to TVET Programmes

1. Improving the access to TVET programmes at all levels is a central challenge to the TVET system and its contribution to national development. The limited available formal and non-formal TVET programs, institutions and centers do not provide adequate opportunities for women, girls and the disabled. There is a need to increase access to all gender and the disabled. A review of the distribution of TVET higher level institutions indicated that the majority are located in the Western Area. There is therefore need to decentralize higher level TVET institutions so that those offering qualifications up to HND level are evenly distributed across the country rather what obtains currently.
2. Most of the TVET institutions lack the basic standard facilities, infrastructure, equipment and programs to produce the requisite skills manpower for today's labor market. As at now, program and curricula in TVET institutions and centers are designed to give opportunities to those who did not make it at the purely academic arena to learn some trades. Yet, the capacities of the institutions to meet these objectives are limited because many of these institutions are dilapidated .

Strategic Objective

The strategic objective of the policy cluster – Improving Access to TVET Programmes is to improve access to all, equity and employability of trained and skilled workforce, through upgrading/or establishing modern workshops, laboratories, facilities and structures.

Key Policy Actions

1. Remove all economic and physical barriers to access to technical and vocational education and training services ensuring equity, and promoting equal access to all men and women, persons with disabilities, as well as rural and urban areas.
2. Provide specialized facilities and structures in TVET institutions that meet the needs of the vulnerable, especially girls and students with disabilities.
3. Review and standardize TVET curriculum and certification for institutions.
4. Review and expand the students' Grants-in-Aid and scholarship programs to include deserving students in TVET institutions across the country.

5. Develop a National Apprenticeship Scheme through the engagement of Public–Private Partnerships in technical and vocational education and training.
6. Establish additional Universities/Colleges with focus on technical and vocational training and improve on workshops and labs in existing Universities/Colleges offering engineering and technology programmes; and standardize entry requirements of graduates from TVET institutions into higher and tertiary institutions.
7. Improve and expand partnerships with regional and international TVET institutions through coordinated exchange learning and the establishment of centres of excellence for research and technology development.
8. Establish Public–Private Partnerships for promoting private sector involvement in TVET, particularly in support of establishing at least one formal Vocational Training Institute/ Center or Technical College (TC) in each District.
9. Strengthen the capacity of TVET institutions to deliver competency-based programmes and provide support to strengthen the affiliation TVET institutions to tertiary institutions for the purpose of intensifying research for TVET development.

Cluster 3: Improving Relevance of Training

1. The current scope and quality of TVET training programmes and curriculum in the formal and informal settings is inadequate and in many cases too outdated to meet the changing needs of the labor market. TVET in many institutions and centers places undue emphasis on theory and certification rather than on skills acquisition and proficiency. This problem is worsened by the shortage of trained and qualified trainers and instructors. In addition, the lack of modern instructional materials negatively affect the effectiveness of trainees and their ability to attain the required knowledge and practical skills required by the job market. The systems of testing and certification of skills and competencies are grossly inappropriate/unsustainable and incapable of meeting the requirements of employers and resulting in large numbers of graduates of the formal and non-formal TVET structures being unemployed, although opportunities for skilled workers exist in the economy.

Strategic Objective:

Is to provide quality assurance arrangements for training organizations, improving the links between industry and TVET, quality and relevance of TVET training to the socio-economic development of the country.

Key Policy Actions

1. Train technical education personnel have qualifications that are at par with international standards and are adequate to deliver technical graduates with the skills and competencies necessary to respond to the needs of the development of Sierra Leone,
2. Support the establishment of TVET Institutions/centres of specialization that are fully equipped and serviced by well trained and motivated staff to offer training programmes in core areas that are of national importance.
3. Ensure modularization and efficient and flexible service delivery of TVET programmes, noting entry and exist points, continuous learning and progression towards gaining the requisite qualifications in accordance with occupational standards.
4. Support the relevant institutions to design and implement strategies to ensure proficiency requirements, qualification levels, and certification standards and the portability of TVET qualifications within and across national frontiers.
5. Establish mechanisms for expanding the scope and quality of TVET programs and curricula in the formal and non-formal settings to meet the changing needs of the labor market and technology
6. Support the development and standardization of courses on Entrepreneurship in business as well as courses on Starting/Expanding Your Own Business
7. Improving the programs for TVET in the formal institutions, sectors and centers and ensuring improved quality of training through:
 - Introduction of competency based training in all the formal and non-formal TVET institutions and centers using standardized training strategies and modules
 - Supporting and enhancing private sector enterprises in the provision of on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs
 - Aligning TVET programs and curricula to the national, regional and global labor market
 - Establishment of specific training centers for emerging skills in environment, alternative sources of renewable energy
 - Provide necessary equipment and machinery and modernize training workshops, laboratories, etc. to public TVET institutions and introduce outcome-oriented assessment through practical tests and inspections
8. Standardization of skills training and certification through
 - Ensuring that testing and certification of TVET training are standardized for reliability and compatibility across levels/course and skills demand areas

- Programs in business centers supported in carrying out standardized on-the-job training and apprenticeship in different skills areas.
- Ensuring that internship/apprenticeship training is of good quality, with effective quality assurance and contractual framework for students/apprentices

Cluster 4: Developing skills for Jobs

1. This strategic direction of this is to support the diversification of the economy and promote economic development and growth. The GoSL is committed to revitalize the TVET system in order to adequately train and provide the required workforce. The government has identified five broad results areas – all of which are germane to a well-functioning, effective and efficient TVET system. Therefore, a special focus of TVET is accorded to the following priority sectors among others:-
 - Agriculture and agribusiness
 - Tourism and Hospitality
 - Fisheries and Marine Resources
 - Engineering (including Building and Construction, renewable energy, etc.)
 - Mining, Oil and gas
 - Manufacturing and services
 - Information and Communication Technology
2. While a focus on these key results areas will simultaneously be addressing the unemployment problem in the country, particularly for the youth, it will also address the gaps in meeting the shortages of manpower for the labor market.

Strategic Objective

The strategic objective of the Cluster – Developing skills for jobs is to support the training of a well skilled workforce that is employable and contributes to accelerate productivity and competitiveness in key growth-oriented domestic sectors and value-chains.

Key Policy Actions

1. Support a comprehensive study of the country's human resources development priorities and labor market needs, through a skills gap assessment in the priority areas and value chains and review such study every 5 years.

2. Develop and implement a Human Resource development plan that will include a review of the current TVET curriculum for skilled work force that is aligned to emerging job markets and entrepreneurship opportunities in priority sectors for socio-economic development.
3. Establish a formal apprenticeship system in partnership with the private sector to allow TVET graduates gain practical experience whilst in school
4. Support TVET at the tertiary level to collaborate with universities to intensify research for development.
5. Encourage partnership between private companies on one hand and TVET institutions on the other in the exploitation, processing and utilization of natural resources in an effective and efficient way so as to optimize benefits to local industries in collaboration with public sector.
6. Implement a special initiative for jobs with focus on modern and emerging job markets and entrepreneurship opportunities in priority sectors for socio-economic development.
7. Invest in skills development to promote commercialization and self-employment in key priority sectors.
8. Support and promote innovation and technology with focus on developing skills sets in priority sectors for national and international job markets
9. Define and standardize occupational titles and support formation of professional associations.

Cluster 5: Promoting Productivity in the Non-Formal TVET

There are several centers and structures (public and private owned) operating to provide technical and vocational training in Sierra Leone. These include the Community-based centers, Apprenticeship-based centers, Artisanal trade and skills centers, Enterprise-training centers and Rural agricultural training centers. Majority of the rural-based centers are informally organized and provide the only means for the rural poor and the economically disadvantaged to learn a trade. The rural centers mostly marginalized, unregulated, and lack adequate facilities, structures, regulations and do not receive assistance from public funds.

Strategic Objective

The strategic Objective of the TVET Policy Framework – Promoting Productivity in the non-formal sector is to increase access of the underprivileged groups to skills development by

organizing and supporting the non-formal TVET sector for enhanced productivity in key growth oriented non-formal sector.

Key Policy Actions

1. Enumerate and create a database of the non-formal TVET providers and facilitate registration, certification and accreditation of non-formal training providers
2. Devise a mechanism to link non-formal to formal TVET institutions for upgrading of skills and competencies
3. Develop a scheme of professionalization, associations and recognition of non-formal TVET providers
4. Provide career/ occupational guidance/counseling for the informal TVET sector
5. Provide support for the establishment of specialized centres of excellence for specific trades and access to non-formal TVET providers for skills upgrading
6. Review the traditional apprenticeship system with the view to standardize and introduce competency-based training and certification linked with the formal training institutions and the National Qualification Framework;
7. Develop and implement guidelines for non-formal TVET institutions and for the participating development partners in the establishment of non-formal TVET institutions;
8. Promote and support trade and professional organizations/associations.

Cluster 6: Assuring Sustainable TVET Funding

1. The current situation of TVET funding shows three distinct categories: the government, bilateral and multilateral agencies and the private sector. The government budgetary allocation to TVET is 3%, which is grossly inadequate for the sector. There is therefore an urgent need to be review the funding of TVET system to ensure reliability, accountability and sustainability within the national financial rules. Most institutions are funded by their proprietors although some institutions registered within the ministries also receive either the payment of salaries for their teachers or the provision of grant/subvention as an aid in running the institutions.
2. Underfunding and the near neglect of the TVET sector is a fundamental structural problem in Sierra Leone. As with several other countries, cost of TVET is usually more expensive than general education and requires lower than average teacher (tutor) to student ratio.

TVET also requires substantial capital and recurrent expenses due to practical trainings, thus several of the TVET institutions in Sierra Leone are hampered by poor facilities and shortage of training materials. Adequate funding is therefore urgently needed to revitalize the sector.

3. Investing in TVET has a price, but the high private, economic and social returns in the medium and long-term outweigh the costs. New funding mechanism shall be developed in order to improve the quality of TVET and ensure its sustainability. The government has the primary responsibility for TVET. The existing resource constraints will be addressed through a combination of cost saving by: increasing efficiency in the TVET system, such as cooperative schemes; stimulating private investment in TVET, and; generation of other financial resources through income-generating activities. The financing sources are very important. It pursues the objective to supplement gradually funds from foreign donors by contributions from direct beneficiaries of TVET. The TVET Authority shall supervise this development and ensure that the burden for trainees and companies is affordable.

Strategic Objective

The strategic Objective of the TVET Policy Framework Cluster – Sustainable Financing of TVET is to establish a multi-partner TVET Basket Fund and resourcing mechanism to guarantee sustainable funding to the TVET sector.

Key Policy Actions

1. Support feasibility study for the establishment of a National Skills Development Fund(SDF)
2. Develop and introduce TVET financing framework including criteria to access government grants and subventions agreed upon by all stakeholders
3. Establish a national funding framework that provides a mechanism for increasing government budget allocation to TVET sector to accommodate the needs of the system.
4. Establish a SDF by giving legislative backing for the establishment of the Fund. A Skills Development Fund is being implemented under the World Bank funded Sierra Leone

Skills Development (SLSD) Project. Lessons and experiences from the SLSD project which shall end on 31 October 2023 should guide the institutionalization of the fund.

- a. Upgrading labs and workshops, equipment, and training materials.
 - b. Training and upgrading of skills of TVET teachers and provision of incentives.
 - c. Monitoring and Evaluation of TVET Policy Implementation and advocacy.
 - d. Support the establishment of at least one Technical College/University per region.
5. Involve private sector and create conducive environment for enterprises to invest in TVET and mobilize citizens to support TVET.
 6. Encourage TVET institutions to establish business incubator centres and income generating units within the institutions.
 7. Encourage District Councils to support skills training in the district.
 8. NSDF management; regular M&E and Reporting system established.

4: TVET POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Arrangements

1. MTHE has the mandate to organize, manage and control the establishment of Higher Educational and Technical institutions and their operation in the country. However, there are many types of TVET institutions established and operating outside the control of the MTHE but under the management of other Ministries, Agencies and the Private Sectors. Several of these institutions and centers organized by the national and international NGOs, private sector and small and medium and organization are mostly based on exigencies or demand and are run without reference to the Ministry
2. The present state of organization and management of TVET nationwide appears fragmented, uncoordinated, under various authorities, agencies and organizations and using diverse objectives, standards and procedures for testing and certification. One objective of this TVET Policy framework is therefore, to streamline the organization, management regulation, coordination and control of TVET in the country. This will ensure adherence to the national goals and priorities, labor market demands, equitable access and acceptable standards in the formal and non-formal settings.

Coordination

1. The MTHE is the key Ministry responsible for the implementation of this TVET policy framework, planning, coordination, providing support to and supervision of TVET institutions nationwide. It is also responsible for securing budget for the public TVET institutions and those private TVET institutions recognized and approved for government grants. However, such functions will gradually and consistently be decentralized to the regions and districts in accordance with the decentralization Policy and Education Act.
2. The MTHE will establish TVET Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee (IMCC) including other ministries that have components of TVET and the ministries in charge of finance and economic planning and represented at the level of Permanent Secretaries. The purpose of the TVET-IMCC to promote and integrate the provisions of this policy by ensuring synergy and coordination in the implementation of this policy framework.
3. The MTHE will constitute a Donor Coordination Group (DCGT) on TVET. The role of the DCGT is to share information and promote synergy amongst donor supported projects as well as to provide a coordinated support to government to implement this policy framework. Membership of the DCGT is open to donors providing financial and/or technical support to the TVET sector.
4. A TVET Working Group (TWG) shall be established by the MTHE. This will comprise of representatives of MDAs and development partners providing technical support to TVET. The role of this group is to provide technical input to the MTHE based on research and analytical work.
5. The actual planning and delivery of TVET programmes will be the responsibility of the TVET institutions themselves. However, the MTHE will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation and determine the success of the program delivery by the institutions. The actual management of the public TVET institutions, will follow the guidelines provided in the Education Act 2004.

Criteria for establishing a TVET Institution

In addition to other criteria established for the establishment of educational institutions consistent with the Education Act 2004, particularly paragraphs 15 (1 to 3) and 16 (1 to 4);

and the Polytechnic Act of 2001 paragraphs 2 (1) and 2 (2), any person who aspires to establish a TVET institution should satisfy the following criteria:-

- Submit to the MTHE a business plan for the proposed institution clearly:-
 - stating the type of institution (center or institute)
 - stating the vision and mission and how this is aligned with the National TVET Policy
 - statement of how the mission, vision and strategic plan of the institution will be accomplished
 - attach curriculum for all courses to be offered by the institution
 - submit a list and CV of qualified and relevant teachers for all courses to be offered/or being offered
 - description of the location of the institution and how conducive it is for learning (physical location, space for class rooms and workshops/laboratories, permanent structures, etc.)
 - list of available tools, equipment and teaching materials for courses offered
 - cash flow and statement of sustainability of funding for a minimum of three (3) years
 - staff capacity building and in-service training plan
 - CV and certified copies of the Head/ principal of the institution, who must possess the required qualification and experience (HTC/HND with a minimum of five (5) experience for TVET centers and relevant academic degree for institutes).
- Must have evidence of registration with other entities, such as Cooperate Commission as may be applicable to the institution.

Criteria for Government Approval

- Submission of a complete Business Plan for the institution as described above
- Confirmation of availability of adequately trained and qualified teachers/tutors for all courses offered
- Confirmation of appropriate curriculum
- Confirmation of a functioning Board (in accordance with the Education Act of 2004)
- Confirmation of appropriate workshops and laboratories with basic tools and equipment relevant to courses offered
- Conducive learning environment with infrastructure to suit purpose of learning and practical

Criteria for Government Financial Assistance

- Must have been approved/recognized and registered with the MTHE
- Must have operated for a minimum of three (3) years after approval/recognition by the MTHE

- Must have met 80% minimum standards and quality assurance measures as stipulated by the MTHE.

5. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, BUDGET AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

1. An implementation plan for translating the policy cluster and activities into actions and results. The plan covers the first five-years of implementation (2019-2023). The implementation plan is attached as Appendix 1. It also identifies the roles and responsibilities of the key actor involved in the translation of the policy clusters into results. The action plan is intended to be a dynamic document; thus, it is recommended to review it based on implementation lessons and experiences during the implementation phase.
2. The total estimated cost of the new plan is US\$ 37,780,000 for a period of five years (2019–2023). This is distributed across the six policy clusters as shown in the Table 2. The sources for financing this policy as identified are as follows:- the government of Sierra Leone; (b) international financial institutions, international NGOs, bi-lateral and multi-lateral organizations, the private sector, and other groups with interest in TVET.

Table 2: Five Year (5) Budget Plan by Policy Cluster

POLICY CLUSTERS	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
IMPROVING TVET COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT	20,000	860,000	940,000	865,000	745,000	3,430,000
ENHANCING ACCESS TO TRAINING PROGRAMMES	1,530,000	1,130,000	2,030,000	2,020,000	6,710,000	13,420,000
IMPROVING RELEVANCE OF TRAINING	70,000	1,940,000	2,320,000	2,750,000	2,740,000	9,820,000
DEVELOPING SKILLS FOR JOBS	100,000	1,660,000	1,660,000	1,760,000	1,800,000	6,980,000
IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY IN NON-FORMAL SECTOR	110,000	680,000	780,000	690,000	790,000	3,050,000
ASSURING SUSTAINABLE FINANCING OF TVET	20,000	200,000	245,000	200,000	415,000	1,080,000
TOTAL	1,850,000	6,470,000	7,975,000	8,285,000	13,200,000	37,780,000

3. The Minister, MTHE shall be responsible for the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the TVET Policy, Strategies and Programmes. The Ministry shall ensure that TVET strategies, programmes and projects are effectively linked to the annual national budget. This should be done in close partnership with the Ministries responsible for finance and planning and economic development. In support of this role, the Minister, MTHE shall establish a Resource Mobilization and Management Board (RMMB). The RMMB, shall be responsible for mobilizing resources from other sources in support of the financial base of the NSDF. The Board shall also play an advisory role for management of the fund. A resource mobilization strategy shall be developed to resource and strengthen the financial base of the SDF.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. This TVET policy framework shall be accompanied by a detailed implementation plan of 5-year implementation period starting 2019 towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030; AU Agenda 2063, and the National Development Vision for 2039. The Government will ensure that the institutions and initiatives that have a bearing in the implementation of these provisions are in place and properly functioning. Facilitation of smooth implementation of the policy will depend on the consultative mechanisms and on clarity of stakeholders and their corresponding roles and responsibilities.
2. The MTHE shall be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of implementation of this policy framework. The Ministry shall regularly assess and report on the outcomes of programs implemented in the TVET sector. Therefore, the MTHE shall establish monitoring and evaluation system. This system shall require all public and private TVET institutions to submit data on the progress in the implementation of specific indicators to be outlined in the M&E System from time to time.
3. Establish a national database and management information system for the effective monitoring of all TVET programmes.
4. The key indicators for measuring success of the TVET policy implementation are as follows:
 - Efficient managed and result oriented TVET system
 - Increased enrolment of students in TVET Institutions
 - Quality middle level man power trained and in the job market
 - Improved perception of TVET
 - Reduced unemployment
 - Reduced hiring of foreign skilled labor
 - Increased government funding to TVET
 - Fund Created and financed adequately
 - Increased contribution of TVET sectors to GDP

Foreseen Risks and Mitigation Strategies

1. Policy implementation inconsistency. This includes non-implementation of crucial policy recommendations for reforming and revitalizing the TVET sector, delays in the establishment of coordination and management structures, etc. This risk can be mitigated by approval of the TVET policy framework and translation into an Act of Parliament, and demonstrated commitment for its implementation.
2. Inadequate funding for implementation of policy recommendations, due to inability of government and partners to raise the necessary funding as a result of poor economic performance. Government has to demonstrate its commitment by increasing the budget allocation to TVET and enhance engagement with private sector and development partners to set up a dedicated sustainable fund to support TVET and skills development for socio-economic development.
3. Poor or unavailability of data and information: As TVET is multi-sectoral, data and information on the sector are not readily available in a central database, but are fragmented across the various MDAs and often not in a standardized format and of quality for planning. A mitigation strategy is to strengthen capacities at the M&E division of the MTHE and Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL) to respond adequately to the data and information needs.
4. Inadequate capacity of the MTHE and other MDAs implementing TVET: The capacity for overseeing the planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring TVET policies in Sierra Leone is as well as those incooperating MDAs is weak and mostly underdeveloped. The weakness is both in staff strength and quality, in terms of knowledge and exposure. Failure to address this gap will have negative consequences on the expected outcomes of this policy. It is proposed that an assessment of capacity and training needs in MTHE and related TVET MDAs be undertaken and a short-term capacity building programme implemented for existing staff, actions be taken to build the capacity of the MTHE and MDAs through recruitment of staff nationwide.
5. TVET Governance and Management Structure: The TVET policy implementation governance and management structure has taken into consideration the need to have a harmonized governance system in-lieu of current parallel structures with overlapping

functions. The legal instruments, especially the Education Act 2004 and NCTVA Act 2001 and other Acts that created the MDAs provided conflicting and incoherent mandates. Therefore, the review of the existing TVET Acts is required to pave way for the timely establishment of an Apex TVET Agency and other structures, ensuring transparency, information dissemination, and full participation of all stakeholders.

Communication Strategy

1. MTHE shall support the preparation of a Communication Strategy and Plan to accompany the implementation of the TVET Policy. Cognizant of the fact the TVET sector has not been adequately financed and the negative perception of TVET built up over the past years without actions to rebrand and reposition the sector, the communication strategy shall focus on re-educating the public on TVET and its contribution to national economic and social development. A rebranding strategy and process shall be incorporated into the Communication strategy.

7. TVET POLICY WORKSHOP COMMUNIQUE

NATIONAL VALIDATION WORKSHOP COMMUNIQUE National TVET Policy Framework

MTHE started the formulation of a new TVET Policy Framework in February 2019 in line with the commitment of the “New Direction” of the Government of Sierra Leone. The process of developing the National TVET Policy was guided by the following principles:-

- *Participatory and inclusive*
- *Relevance of TVET to the socio-economic development of Sierra Leone*
- *Facilitate partnerships*
- *Financially Secure TVET System*
- *Quality and Relevance*
- *Incorporating lessons from TVET Systems of other countries*
- *Aligned and contribute to the achievement of the Africa Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.*

We the participants at the National validation workshop for the National TVET Policy Framework held at Hotel Cabenda, Freetown on 17th May 2019, comprising senior level representatives from MDAs, Universities and Polytechnics, Development Partners, TVET Institutions, International NGOs, the UN agencies, Private Sector, NGOs, Youth Organizations, Women’s Organizations, Local Councils and TECVOC Council, that was declared open by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, Mr. Gilbert H. Cooper on behalf of Prof. Aiah Gbakima, Minister, Ministry of Technical and Higher Education of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Noting that the population of Sierra Leone is presently put at 7 million and is expected to reach 10 million by 2030 and that about 70 percent of the youth in Sierra Leone are unemployed or underemployed; worsened by the low and relatively no meaningful youth entrepreneurship initiatives at the national level;

Further noting that the high youth unemployment and underemployment is a key factor in the low level of national development and productivity and that one important approach towards addressing the unemployment problem as well as for meeting the shortage of trained middle manpower for the labor market is the prioritization of TVET.

Recalling that the purpose of the National TVET Policy validation workshop was to discuss, amend and approve the draft National TVET Policy Framework prepared by the MTHE to be presented to Cabinet of the Government of the Republic Sierra Leone for adoption;

Recognizing that the government of His Excellency President Maada Bio has prioritized TVET as a crucial sector for human resource development and as one of the drivers for diversifying and promoting socio-economic development and growth in Sierra Leone;

And further recognizing that TVET is expensive, but an investment with high rate of socio-economic returns to Sierra Leone;

Having read and thoroughly reviewed and discussed the draft National TVET Policy framework document, noted that the present TVET system in Sierra Leone is ineffective, fragmented, uncoordinated and is supply driven and less responsive to labor market demand;

We noted that TVET system requires strong support from government and all other stakeholders to revitalize and reposition it in order to provide quality and equitable technical, vocational, education and training that is sustainable, inclusive and responsive to the requirements of the national economy and global market demand.

We reaffirm that the mission of the TVET policy is to develop an effectively coordinated and harmonized TVET system capable of delivering high-quality market demand training and skills development programmes and providing the economy with qualified skilled workforce capable of contributing to the inclusive and sustainable economic development and growth of Sierra Leone.

We do hereby endorse the following Policy Clusters and the Policy Actions listed under each of the Policy Cluster in the National TVET Policy Framework document-

- Improving TVET Coordination and Management
- Enhancing access to quality TVET programmes
- Improving Relevance of Training
- Developing skills for Jobs
- Promoting Productivity in the Non-Formal TVET
- Assuring Sustainable TVET Financing

We resolve that the Government of Sierra Leone adopt the National TVET Policy Framework prepared by the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education as the legal basis for developing the TVET sector and production of employable skilled workforce for the economy and poverty reduction.

We further resolve that the Private Sector, Development Partners and NGOs be encouraged to actively participate in the development of TVET sector in line with the National TVET Policy clusters and policy action points therein.

We further resolve that an apex body – National TVET Agency (NTA) be established to reform and revitalize the TVET sector in Sierra Leone into an effective and responsive system;

Being aware of the proliferation of new agencies, the creation of the NTA can be achieved by reviewing related TVET Acts, particularly the NCTVA Act 2001 and strengthen the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education (NCTVE) by reviewing its mandate, provision of requisite resources, both financial and human to enable its transformation into the NTA.

We resolve that a National Skills Development Fund (NSDF) be established consistent with international best practices for the establishment and management of such funds.

And recognizing the need to transform the TVET sector that has been neglected for far too long and the urgent need to quickly address the growing youth unemployment and dire need for skilled workforce to drive the economic development and growth objective of the Government of Sierra Leone, **we resolve** that:-

- The Government of Sierra Leone show further commitment by increasing budgetary allocation to TVET;

- All stakeholders particularly donors, bilateral partners of the Government of Sierra Leone, the International Financial Institutions and other partners prioritize TVET in Sierra Leone and provide the needed technical and financial support to revitalize and develop the sector.

Done at Hotel Cabenda
Freetown, Sierra Leone.
17 May 2019

7.2

National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Policy

Appendix 1: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION FRAME WORK

Strategic Outcome	Intervention Name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets					Data Collection		
			2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Frequency	Source	Responsible
Improving TVET Coordination and Management	1. Review Acts: NCTVA, Polytechnique 2001, Education 2004. 2. Decentralize TVET Coordination 3. Review capacity needs 4. Assess and review existing TVET Programmes	1. 3 Acts reviewed 2. TVET Coordination decentralized to 5 regions. 3. 5 Regional managers trained, 10 national staff trained. Fully equipped workshops/Labs in each region 4. No. of TVET Programmes reviewed	1. Deployment of staff and decentralization of functions. 2. Popularization of TVET policy.	1. 1 Act reviewed. 2. Develop and implement communication plan and strategy 3. 15 staff trained; 25% of training equipment provided	1. Act reviewed 2. Deployment of further staff to all the districts 3. In-service trainings for new recruits 50% of training equipment training	1 Act reviewed 2. In-service trainings for new recruits 75% of training equipment training	1. All the foregoing activities completed	Annually	1. NCTVA, Polytechnic and Educations Acts 2. Relevant HR documents 3. Training reports , Procurement reports 4. Review reports	Directorate of TVET and others
Enhancing Access to TVET Programmes	1. Provide disable - friendly facilities and structures 2. Review and standardize TVET curriculum and certification 3. Review and expand the students' grants-in-aid 4. National Apprenticeship Scheme 5. Establish Technical universities/colleges 6. Improve and expand partnerships	1. # of accessible facilities for person with disabled 2. Reviewed curriculum 2.1 Qualification and Certification reports 3. Reviewed Policy reflects extension of GIA to TVET students 4. Apprenticeship scheme developed and operationalised 5. 1 technical college established 6. # of relevant partnerships developed/established	1a. Assessment of facilities b. Conduct needs assessment 2. Identify 30 relevant courses and engage stakeholder 3. Review the existing GIA Policy 4. Develop Policy	20% of TVET institutions have ramps and disability aide 2. Existing and new curriculum reviewed and new ones developed 2.1 Reviewed and standardised 3. 200 TVET students awarded 4. Identify relevant industries and sign MOUs with relevant institutions	50% of TVET institutions have ramps and disability aide 2. Reviewed curriculum implemented 3. 200 TVET students awarded 4. Operationalise the Scheme	75% of TVET institutions have ramps and disability aid 3. 200 TVET students awarded 4. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the scheme	100% of TVET institutions have ramps and disability aid 3. 200 TVET students awarded 4. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the scheme	1 - 3 Annually	Adapted facilities, Procurement report 3. Reviewed Policy and GIA report	Directorate of M&E and others
Improving Relevance of Training	1. Establish specialised TVET institutions/centres 2. Modularise TVET programs 3. Support delivery of special and remedial courses 4. Train adequate and quality TVET trainers/instructors	1. 5 specialised TVET institutions 2. Tailor courses to mesh with specialisation 3. Remedial courses in 2 centres 4. # of trainers/instructors trained	1. Conduct assessments 3. Monitor and evaluate quality of content and delivery 4. Conduct assessment to know the #	1. Upgrade 2 specialised institutions 2. # of revised/ new modules introduced 4. Sign MOU with relevant training providers	1. Upgrade 2 specialised institutions 2. Continuation of the modules 4. 100 trainers/instructors trained	1. Upgrade 1 specialised institutions 2. Continuation of the modules 4. 100 trainers/instructors trained	1. All 5 up and running 2. Modules have been adopted 4. 100 trainers/instructors trained	1. Annually 2. Per semester 4. Annually	1. Assessment, M&E reports 2. Course books, Course outline 4. Training report and certification	Directorate of M&E and others
Developing skills for Jobs	1. Conduct a countrywide skills gap assessment 2. Develop and implement HR plan 3. Collaboration between TVET institutions and Universities 4. Support and promote ICT 5. Invest in skills development	1. 1 countrywide assessment 2. HR plan delivered with deliverables 3. # of research projects done collaboratively 4. # of new technologies introduced to the institutions 5. Prepare students for selfemployment	1. assessment report 2. HR plan with deliverables 3. Look up credible Peer-review journals 4. Linkages with relevant mentors	1. Design implementation plan 2. HR plan implemented 3. Write and publish articles and reports 4. # of established business partnerships	Monitor all 5 activities 4. 5 institutions utilising modern ICT	Monitor all 5 activities	Monitor all 5 activities	Annually	Reports	Directorate of TVET and others
Promoting Productivity in the Non-Formal TVET	1. Outline and create a database of the non-formal TVET providers 2. Mechanism linking non-formal to formal TVET institutions 3. Provide occupational guidance for the informal TVET sector 4. Guidelines for the establishment of non-formal TVET institutions	1. 1 countrywide database developed 2. MOUs signed 3. Establish Career and Counselling Units 4. Draft guidelines produced	1. Prepare for data collection 2. 10 MOUs signed 3. 5 Career and Counselling Units	1. Collect data and set up database 2. 10 MOUs signed 3. 5 Career and Counselling Units 4. Completed guidelines	1. Update database 2. 10 MOUs signed 3. 5 Career and Counselling Units	1. Update database 2. 10 MOUs signed 3. 5 Career and Counselling Units	1. Database updated 2. Evaluate and review MOUs 3. 5 Career and Counselling Units	1. Half yearly 2. - 4. Annually	1. Soft and hard copies of data 2. Signed documents 3. Functioning CCUs 4. Completed guidelines	Directorate of I&T and others
Assuring Sustainable TVET Funding	1. Develop and introduce TVET financing framework 2. Establish a Skills Development Fund through taxation 3. Encourage District Councils to support skills training 4. Establish regular M&E Reporting system	1. Financing/funding framework produced 2. Councils to factor skills training to their annual education sector budget 4. Build on the existing M&E reporting system	3. Meeting with 5 District councils	1. Financing/funding framework produced 2. Develop a legal instrument for taxation (duty levy and corporate tax) 3. Councils to factor skills training to their annual education sector budget 4. Build on the existing M&E reporting system	1 - 2. Legal framework to come to force 3. 5 District councils operationalising; 4. Application of the M&E system	Application of the M&E system	Application of the M&E tools	Quarterly and yearly	legal framework, council budget document and other reports	MTHE Finance Office and M&E Directorate

