Developing Effective Vocational Education Outreach Communication Strategy in East Africa

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INTRODUCTION

- An effective vocational education outreach policy communication strategy will create, raise, develop, and sustain public awareness of the role of vocational education training in achieving the 2030 sustainable development goals (SDGs) with a focus on SDG 4 on access to practical, quality, and productive, or gainful employment in East Africa.

- In practice, all the Eastern and other African states are required to achieve meaningful progress in VET through universal access to all competencies.
Despite a flurry of national and international vocational education training (VET) curricula, policies, programmes, policy briefs, innovations, reports, research, international projects, initiatives or interventions in East African Community (EAC) states; the quality and quantity of the national VET outputs are quite wanting. Part of this could be attributed to lack of communication strategy to create, raise, develop, and sustain public awareness on the role of VET in SDG 4 progress in East Africa.
OBJECTIVES

1. To answer the question of education for what in view of the UN’s 2030 the SDG 4 (sustainable development goal 4).
2. To discuss the current prospects and practical challenges of public engagement in VET policy implementation.
3. To infuse the social, economic, political, and environmental issues for VET pedagogy curriculum policy.
4. To explain the role of advocacy in promoting VET services, products, and processes for community outreach.

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METHODOLOGY

- This review was conducted sourcing relevant government documents, current literature, UN policies, and news bulletins with a focus on Vocational Education Training (VET) programme at Kyambogo University in Uganda.
- Information was also provided through email contacts or communications with key VET informants.
- The document search was performed through online search engines on ESD by UNESCO and other international bodies.
- More information was gathered through discussion with key informants and multiple stakeholders at institutional, community, national, regional, or global policy perspectives.
1. The appropriate answer to the policy question of education for what?, needs to be approached from the perspective of the current (2030) SDG 4 on specific access to practical quality education issues for all ages, to access gainful and productive labour.

2. There are many opportunities and barriers to public engagement in VET policy implementation that can be well tackled by effective public communication campaigns informed by evidenced-based curricula.
3. Integrated methods of infusing social, economic, political, or environmental issues in VET pedagogy curriculum policy for evidence-based outputs, are enhanced by public awareness media campaigns.

4. Public advocacy communication can promote VET services, products, or processes for community outreach curriculum effectiveness and efficiency.

5. There are gaps in public information, knowledge, technology transfer, good practice, policy, skills, curriculum, funding, investments, or PPPs on the functions and roles of VET in achieving SDGs.
CONCLUSIONS

It is vital to deploy effective VET human resource development, institutional capacity building, south-south as well as the north–south partnerships, enhanced access to media services and ICT access, sound institutional infrastructure investment development, good governance to cover: rule of law, zero-corruption, transparency, accountability, democracy, and gender equality to achieve ESD right from ECD curriculum to all university curricula. Indigenous knowledge (IK) or local knowledge (LK) should be infused into VET curriculum at all levels.
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