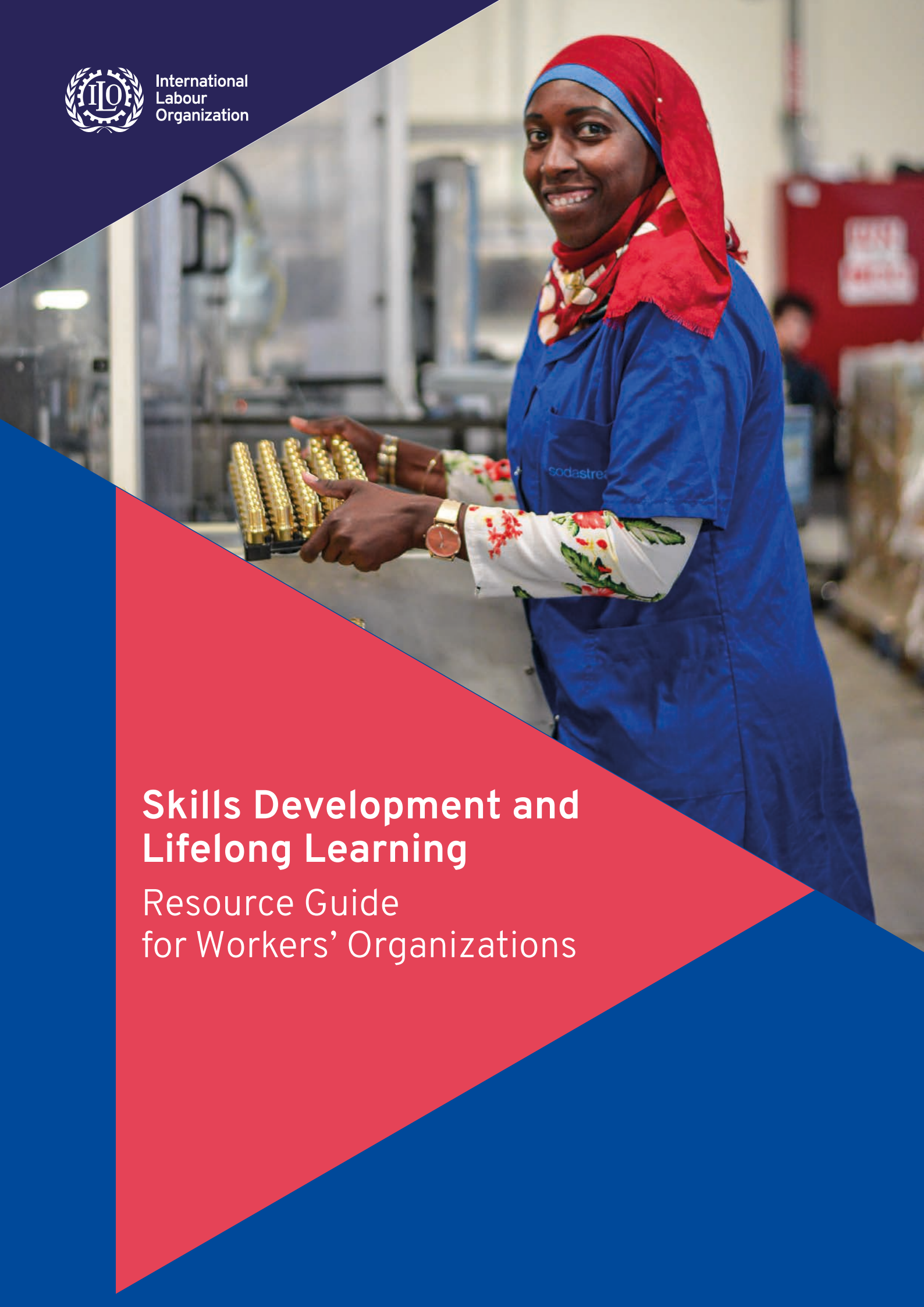




International  
Labour  
Organization

# Skills Development and Lifelong Learning

Resource Guide  
for Workers' Organizations





▶ **Skills Development and  
Lifelong Learning**

Resource Guide  
for Workers' Organizations

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## Introduction

As the discussions within the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the future of work have shown, technological innovation, demographic trends and climate change are all having an increasingly significant impact on the world of work. Together they will affect the task make-up and skills requirements for most jobs, generate new occupations, impact the need for skills on the part of both of the young and ageing members of the workforce, and transform the demand for, and supply of, skills. Given the accelerating pace of change, skills development strategies will be required to ensure the ongoing renewal of skills over one's working life.<sup>1</sup>

In its response to the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the ILO has stressed the importance of quality education and training. It has committed to ensuring access to pre-primary education, free primary and secondary education, and access to affordable technical, vocational and tertiary education. In addition, it has pledged to substantially increase the number of young people and adults with the relevant skills (including technical and vocational skills) – for employment, decent jobs for all and entrepreneurship.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the world of work has been profoundly affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Not only is the health of millions of workers at risk; their long-term livelihoods and well-being are also at stake.<sup>3</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unique challenges to all types and levels of learning, including in schools, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), apprenticeships and skills development. In addition, it has also stimulated discussion on the need for accelerated innovation in distance and online learning, and the delivery of TVET and skills training.<sup>4</sup>

The notion of a job for life is receding, and Guy Ryder, the ILO Director-General, has called for a new approach: *"We need to replenish skills throughout a working career, and this calls for revisiting the models and concept of lifelong learning to create the future we want."*

This will necessitate the revision of school-based education and training for employment and/or self-employment, as well as apprenticeships, which combine on-the-job training and off-the-job learning, enabling learners from all walks of life to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies required to carry out a specific occupation. It will also require a renewed commitment to continuing vocational education and training, to enable workers to improve or update their knowledge and skills, and/or acquire new skills for career progression.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms\\_618170.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_618170.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/skills/Whatsnew/WCMS\\_740656/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/skills/Whatsnew/WCMS_740656/lang--en/index.htm)

As a result of the future of work discussions that were held at the ILO in June 2019, at the 108th (Centenary) Session of the International Labour Conference, the ILO constituents adopted the Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work.<sup>5</sup>

This Declaration sets out guidelines for the work of the ILO and its constituents for the years to come, and – not surprisingly – the challenges around skills development and lifelong learning are high on the agenda. In a context of profound transformations in the world of work, and with the aim of developing a human-centred approach to its future, the Declaration underlines the importance of skills development for all workers throughout their working lives. The Declaration additionally states that it is a joint responsibility of governments and social partners to address existing and anticipated skills gaps, paying particular attention to ensuring that education and training systems are responsive to labour market needs, while enhancing workers' capacity to make use of the opportunities available for decent work. Moreover, social dialogue is a vehicle for strengthening the capacities of working people to address challenges in respect of international labour standards and to benefit from the opportunities of a changing world of work – and also for realizing their right to lifelong learning and quality education for all.

In May and June 2021, ILO constituents from all over the world – governments and workers' and employers' organizations – will engage in a “general discussion on skills and lifelong learning”, to provide concrete guidance on the issue for the ILO and its constituents in the years to come.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, at the 2022 International Labour Conference, ILO Constituents will hold an initial discussion on standard setting for quality apprenticeships. There is increasing recognition of the key role that apprenticeships play in enabling young people to acquire the relevant competencies to facilitate their transition from the world of education to the world of work. Apart from providing a solution to youth unemployment, quality apprenticeships can benefit jobseekers and workers of all ages who – due to changes in the labour market or job requirements – find themselves in need of retraining or upskilling. Given that quality apprenticeships have the potential to equip people with the relevant competencies to navigate the challenges in the world of work throughout their lives, they are considered to be an important element of the system of lifelong learning.<sup>7</sup>

In short, these developments will exert a major influence over the lives of working men and women, requiring the effective support and engagement of workers' organizations.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/mission-and-objectives/centenary-declaration/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/109/WCMS\\_713239/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/109/WCMS_713239/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/110/reports/reports-to-the-conference/WCMS\\_731155/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/110/reports/reports-to-the-conference/WCMS_731155/lang--en/index.htm)

This resource guide on skills development for workers' organizations aims to provide a contribution to these discussions. It will examine the following questions:

- ▶ Why should workers' organizations engage in the area of skills development and lifelong learning?
- ▶ What issues affect their engagement?
- ▶ How do they currently engage in skills development and lifelong learning systems and processes?
- ▶ What should their priority areas be?
- ▶ What elements of skills development and lifelong learning require the engagement of workers' organizations?

**Skills Development and Lifelong Learning: Resource Guide for Workers' Organizations**

aims to provide answers to these questions, and in doing so to build the capacity and engagement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning around the world. As the ILO Director-General has highlighted in the past, *"(i)t is essential to pursue a rights-based approach to lifelong learning, one that provides a right to training at any point in working life. Without that approach we risk creating more inequality and less inclusive and sustainable development."*<sup>8</sup>

We encourage trainers, facilitators, ILO officials and – most importantly – workers' organizations to use this guide to strengthen the strategic role of workers' organizations, and through social dialogue to promote skills development and lifelong learning for all workers throughout their working lives.

Geneva, 1 October 2020

**Maria Helena André**

Director, Bureau for Workers' Activities

**Srinivas Reddy**

Chief, SKILLS and Employability Branch

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/ilo-director-general/statements-and-speeches/WCMS\\_644530/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/ilo-director-general/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_644530/lang-en/index.htm)

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## Who should use the Resource Guide for Workers’ Organizations?

This **Resource Guide for Workers’ Organizations** has been designed for the training of facilitators from workers’ organizations and ILO specialists who are engaged in capacity-building activities, so as to be better equipped to:

- ▶ promote the engagement of workers’ organizations in skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems, on the basis of already existing experience;
- ▶ communicate background technical information about the skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems that workers’ organizations are most likely to engage with;
- ▶ provide workshop materials for use by ILO SKILLS and ACTRAV field specialists, as part of their ongoing activities with workers’ organizations;
- ▶ provide workshop materials for use by key staff within workers’ organizations, to support their engagement with workers; and
- ▶ extend the range of core trade union services that will help grow the trade union and extend its membership base.

## What is in this Resource Guide for Workers’ Organizations?

This **Resource Guide for Workers’ Organizations** is made up of nine modules, consisting of:

- ▶ a set of introductory materials for each of the four common core sections (Part A) and for each of the five issue-specific sections (Part B), in this way providing an overview of the most salient elements of skills development and lifelong learning systems, and of why and how workers’ organizations should engage in these processes;
- ▶ a set of workshop materials for each of the common core sections (Part A) and for the five issue-specific sections (Part B), in this way contributing in practical terms to improving capacity building in workers’ organizations.

This **Resource Guide** is structured as follows:

### **Part A: A common core of modules that examine:**

1. Why workers' organizations should engage in skills development and lifelong learning;
2. What issues affect the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning;
3. How workers' organizations engage in skills development and lifelong learning; and
4. What the priority areas for workers' organizations are.

### **Part B: Five issue-specific modules that present:**

5. Policies, governance and funding for skills development;
6. Anticipation of and planning for skills requirements;
7. Delivery, recognition and certification of skills;
8. Access to skills for all; and
9. Skills for employability and decent work.

Each of these modules includes a short presentation of the issue and a set of capacity-building activities.

Each of these modules also includes a selection of references and suggestions for further reading.

## How to use this this Resource Guide

This **Resource Guide for Workers’ Organizations** provides information and workshop materials for capacity building on the subject of the engagement of workers’ organizations in skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems.

The common core and issue-specific modules lay the basis for a strategic approach, enabling representatives and officers of workers’ organizations to engage in skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems.

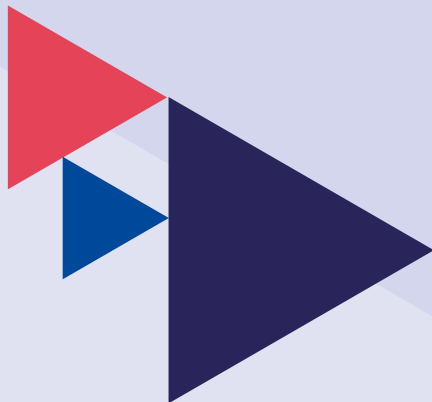
This **Resource Guide** can be used as a stand-alone capacity-building publication, or preferably as a support – either in part or in its entirety – for a one-day or two-day workshop, depending upon the needs of officers and representatives of workers’ organizations.

It provides an opportunity for officers and representatives of workers’ organizations from different backgrounds to reflect on ideas, engage with significant issues, build knowledge and skills together and carry forward the workers’ message on skills development and lifelong learning.

It will be more effective if it forms part of a broader strategy to develop the engagement of workers’ organizations in skills development and lifelong learning.

# Abbreviations

<b>ACTRAV</b>	Bureau for Workers' Activities
<b>Cedefop</b>	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
<b>CFDT</b>	French Democratic Confederation of Labour
<b>Cinterfor</b>	Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training
<b>CISL</b>	Italian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions
<b>CLC</b>	Canadian Labour Congress
<b>COSATU</b>	Confederation of South African Trade Unions
<b>DGB</b>	German Trade Union Confederation
<b>EGFSN</b>	Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
<b>ETF</b>	European Training Foundation
<b>ETUC</b>	European Trade Union Confederation
<b>ILC</b>	International Labour Conference
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>ITC</b>	International Training Centre of the ILO
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>SENA</b>	National Training Service (Colombia)
<b>SENAI</b>	National Industrial Training Service (Brazil)
<b>SOLAS</b>	Further Education and Training Authority (Ireland)
<b>TUAC</b>	Trade Union Advisory Committee
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



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## Glossary

### Definitions of the most commonly used terms in technical and vocational education and training<sup>9</sup>

Term	Definition
▶ accreditation	A process of quality assurance through which a programme or provider of education and training is accredited by the relevant legislative or professional body after having met predetermined standards.
▶ apprenticeship	Systematic, long-term training for a designated occupation that combines on- and off-the-job training involving a workplace and an education or training institution. The apprentice is contractually linked to the employer or the institution and receives remuneration (a wage or allowance) for the duration of the programme. The employer assumes the primary responsibility for providing the trainee with training related to a specific occupation.
▶ assessment	The process of making judgements about evidence of the knowledge, skills and attitudes possessed by an individual, against predefined criteria such as learning outcomes or performance criteria. Assessments can occur in a formal programme of learning, or as part of a process to recognize prior learning and skills possessed. It generally leads to certification.
▶ awarding body	A body that issues qualifications, formally recognizing that learning outcomes have been achieved, following a process of assessment and validation.
▶ basic/ foundation skills	Foundation skills include the literacy and numeracy skills necessary for getting work that can pay enough to meet daily needs. These skills are also a prerequisite for continuing in education and training, and for acquiring transferable technical and vocational skills that enhance the prospect of getting good jobs.
▶ certification	The process of issuing a certificate, diploma or other credential formally attesting that a set of learning outcomes or performance criteria has been acquired or demonstrated by an individual. Formal certification is only issued by a recognized certifying body using predefined standards and criteria.
▶ competency/ competencies	The knowledge, skills and attitudes deployed when undertaking work in a specific occupational context.

<sup>9</sup> There are varying definitions for each of these terms. These definitions have been chosen to respond to the particular needs of this Resource Guide.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
▶ continuing TVET	Technical and vocational education and training following entry into working life that enable workers to improve or update their knowledge and skills, and/or to acquire new skills.
▶ core work skills	The ability to: learn and adapt; read, write and compute competently; listen and communicate effectively; think creatively; solve problems independently; manage oneself at work; interact with co-workers; work in teams or groups; handle basic technology; and lead effectively as well as follow supervision.
▶ employability	Portable competencies and qualifications that enhance an individual’s capacity to make use of the education and training opportunities available in order to secure and retain decent work, progress within the enterprise and between jobs, and cope with changing technology and labour market conditions.
▶ formal learning	A series of activities, content and/or methods implemented to acquire knowledge, skills and/or competencies, organized in a logical sequence over a specified period of time and that provides the opportunity for certification.
▶ governance	The way in which the funding, provision, ownership and regulation of TVET systems are coordinated, which actors are involved, and their respective roles, responsibilities and level of formal competency – at the local, regional, national and supranational levels.
▶ informal learning	Unstructured learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure.
▶ initial TVET	Technical and vocational education and training that is undertaken in a TVET institution before entering working life.
▶ learning outcomes	The set of knowledge, skills and attitudes an individual has acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process, whether formal, non-formal or informal.
▶ lifelong learning	All learning activities undertaken throughout life for the development of competencies and qualifications.
▶ non-formal learning	Learning that takes place in planned and structured activities but that does not lead to formal certification.
▶ off-the-job training	Technical and vocational education and training that is generally undertaken in a TVET institution, as part of a broader training programme, in combination with on-the-job training.
▶ on-the job training	Technical and vocational education and training that is generally undertaken in a normal work situation, as part of a broader training programme, in combination with off-the-job training.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
▶ qualification	The certification awarded to an individual in recognition of having achieved particular knowledge, skills or competencies. It can also be a formal expression of the vocational or professional abilities of a worker for a specific occupation as recognized at international, national or sectoral levels.
▶ qualification framework	A system for the classification of qualifications at national or sectoral level according to a set of criteria applicable to specified levels of learning outcomes.
▶ professional/ personal skills	Individual attributes that impact on work habits such as honesty, integrity and work ethic.
▶ retraining	Supplementary training that enables individuals to acquire new skills.
▶ recognition of prior learning (RPL)	Acknowledgement and validation of the knowledge and skills that an individual has acquired through previous education, training, employment and life experience. RPL may or may not lead to formal certification.
▶ skills development	The full range of formal and non-formal vocational, technical and skills-based education and training for employment and/or self-employment, including: pre-employment and livelihood skills training; vocational education and training and apprenticeships; education and training for employed workers, including workplace training; and employment-oriented and job-related short courses.
▶ skills needs anticipation	Activities to assess future skills needs in the labour market in a strategic way, using consistent and systematic methods.
▶ social partners	Employer and business membership organizations and workers' organizations.
▶ teacher/trainer	A person whose function is to facilitate learning and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes of learners. Teachers and trainers can work in an education or training institution, the workplace and/or any other site of learning.
▶ technical and vocational education and training (TVET)	Initial and continuing education and training provided by schools, training providers or enterprises that imparts the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for employment in a particular occupation, or group of related occupations, in any field of economic activity.
▶ upskilling	Training that supplements and updates existing knowledge, skills and/or competencies.
▶ vocational guidance	The counselling of individuals on career, job, learning, education and training opportunities.
▶ vocational/ technical skills	Specialized skills, knowledge or know-how needed to perform specific duties or tasks

## ► Part 1 – Building capacity within workers’ organizations to engage with skills development and lifelong learning systems and processes

Technological innovation, demographic trends and climate change are all increasingly having an impact on the world of work. Together they will affect the task make-up and skills requirements for most jobs, generate new occupations, impact the needs for skills on the part of both young and ageing members of the workforce, and transform the demand for and supply of skills.

In short, these developments are exerting a major influence over the lives of working men and women who will require effective support and engagement from workers’ organizations on their behalf.

This **Resource Guide for Workers’ Organizations** will make the case for engagement in skills development and lifelong learning.

In Part 1 (Modules 1-4), the **Resource Guide** will examine the reasons for engagement in skills development and lifelong learning at national, sectoral and enterprise levels. It will present the variety of different ways in which workers’ organizations already engage in skills development and lifelong learning. It will consider the barriers that they encounter and make proposals for priority areas that could be developed to tackle these obstacles.

This **Resource Guide** will provide workshop materials for use by ILO SKILLS and ACTRAV field specialists, as part of their engagement with workers’ organizations, and also for use by key staff in workers’ organizations to build up capacity within their own organizations so that they are better equipped to defend the interests of their members and other workers.





## ► Why do workers' organizations engage in skills development and lifelong learning

As can be seen from the following five statements, workers' organizations are important stakeholders in skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems (Boxes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5).

These statements all embody a clear priority: to ensure that workers and unemployed people can acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies to get jobs, keep jobs and succeed in the labour market.

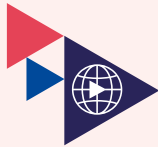
This in turn contributes to:

- reducing social and economic inequality;
- building a more inclusive workforce; and
- enhancing workers' ability to participate fully in decent work and human development, promoting a rights-based approach through social dialogue and collective bargaining.



## Box 1.1

### Workers' organizations and skills development in the leather industry – Bangladesh



Abul Kalam Azad, President, Tannery Workers Union – Bangladesh

*“The leather industry is one of the biggest sectors in Bangladesh, currently employing about 200,000 workers, and with the potential to employ hundreds of thousands more in the near future. However, only a small minority of workers (about 5 per cent) have received any training at all.*

*Workers in the industry are aware of their lack of skills, but unwilling to admit this to their managers, as it could jeopardize their chances of being employed and/or remaining in employment. Workers feel safer sharing their concerns regarding skills needs with the Tannery Workers Union, which plays an important role in the overall skills development programme. In the union we realize that skills development training for workers and supervisors is essential in order to improve productivity and the quality of the product, and we make a significant contribution in assessing the training needs of the workers and monitoring the successful implementation of training programmes.*

*I have been actively involved as Director of the Centre of Excellence for Leather Skill Bangladesh Limited, which is an initiative of the Industry Skill Council. In this capacity I provide continuous support for demand-driven skills development in the sector.*

*Effective trade unions in the product manufacturing sub-sectors cannot be expected until effective trade unions are developed there; we are engaged in catering for this need.*

*We are also contributing towards the formulation of needs-based training programmes involving workers at the enterprise level.” (International Labour Organization, 2019)*





## Box 1.2

### Why workers' organizations are actively involved in skills development programmes – Canada



**Mike Luff, National Representative,**  
Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)

*“Skills development is crucial to help workers obtain the qualifications they need to get jobs in high-demand fields, and construction unions, for example, operate state-of-the-art union training centres that deliver world-class apprenticeship programs connecting workers with good jobs in the construction sector.*

*Unions in Canada help workers upgrade their skills to advance in their careers and get jobs with higher pay, and in the hotel sector, for example, unions offer hands-on skills development so workers can climb potential job ladders.*

*Canadian unions recognize the need for workers to gain a broad set of essential skills that are portable. A broad set of skills helps workers adapt to the changing nature of work and gives them more leverage in the job market. Unions provide programs that help workers gain computer and digital skills, literacy and numeracy skills, communication skills, and problem-solving, critical thinking, leadership and teamwork skills.*

*Unions in Canada understand the role of skills development in reducing social and economic inequality by building a more inclusive workforce that includes key groups who are traditionally under-represented. For example, many unions deliver skills development programmes that are specifically aimed at recruiting Indigenous peoples, women, immigrants, and young workers facing barriers to participation in the job market.*

*Finally, skills development is an essential ingredient in human development. It is about helping workers to develop their individual capacities and enhancing their ability to participate fully in the life of their families and communities. A society with an active and engaged citizenry, with the skills needed to participate fully in all aspects of life, is more vital, inclusive and democratic.” (International Labour Organization, 2019)*

## Box 1.3

### COSATU is a stakeholder in the skills development process – South Africa



**Bhabhali Ka Maphikela Nhlapo, Education and Training Secretary, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)**

*“We support a demand- or industry-led system that cannot proceed without the involvement of organized labour. We want to promote a skills revolution where many workers and unemployed young people will be involved in training. We jealously guard against the mainstreaming of adult education or the prioritization of lower-level skills. We value and guard the principles of equity, progression, articulation and mobility.*

*We want a skills development system at the workplace linked to grading and pay. We need to work for public sector employers to be covered by the levy and for increased investment in skills development in all enterprises. We need a system that mainstreams public providers – the most affordable and most accessible. We need to increase the profile and status of the apprenticeship system to make it equal in social esteem with higher education. This can only be done through trade union engagement.*

*The policies of skills development have a trade union footprint. We have a compulsory system of skills development, except in the public sector where there is a levy exemption. We have a levy system that also funds trade union capacity building in skills development. Along with employers’ organizations, we manage the sectoral skills development bodies. We have the relevant training institutions that drive the system forward and respond to issues of accreditation. We have revived the public TVET colleges so that they respond to the needs of industry. We can point to many case studies indicating that successful enterprises support skills training. We have a good system of planning, at enterprise and sectoral levels, that examines skills needs and ensures that training providers respond to these needs.*

*South African legislation operates on the basis of consultation, and not on collective bargaining, so trade unions need to organize better and recruit more members in the workplace to be the key voice in the system.” (International Labour Organization, 2019)*

## Box 1.4

### The importance of Continuing Vocational Education and Training – Germany



Elke Hannack, Vice-President, German Trade Union Confederation (DGB)

*“We are going through a period of fundamental change – in terms of work, the economy and society. Digitalization on the one hand, and climate change on the other, are driving a profound technological change in entire industries, and this will lead to massive restructuring of production processes and employment. The German Trade Union Confederation, our trade union confederation, has around six million members and is committed to supporting the participation of all members of society in obtaining good quality employment and their own personal development. Learning at the workplace needs clear structures. The DGB demands guaranteed time off for learning, secure funding, better advice, and counselling and transparency.*

*Continuing TVET does not happen automatically, and we in the trade unions have striven to negotiate collective agreements on training in many different sectors. These agreements deal with issues such as analysing individual training needs and making plans for continuing training, supporting systematic personnel development and setting up continuing training structures in companies. Participation in continuing training depends to a large extent on whether employees can obtain advice and counselling, whether it leads to improved career prospects, whether time for learning is an integrated part of the work processes, and whether there is paid time off for learning purposes. It is therefore essential for companies to create a new understanding of training and competency development, and to support and coordinate work organization, continuing training and personnel development.*

*That is why the DGB is calling for increased company expenditure in continuing training.” (International Labour Organization, 2019)*



## Box 1.5

### Skills development and the new law – “For the freedom to choose an occupational future” – France



**Yvan Ricordeau, National Secretary responsible for Education and Training, French Democratic Confederation of Labour (CFDT)**

*“All workers must be able to update their skills regularly, especially those facing the digital revolution and ecological change. They also need to be able to enjoy the right to retraining.*

*All jobseekers must have the opportunity to have their skills recognized, as well as the opportunity to improve them or to acquire new ones. And so training for jobseekers needs massive and constant investment.*

*The French government recently introduced a legislative proposal without any prior consultation with the social partners. The CFDT’s response has been to defend the right to support members of society and collective frameworks so that the individual right to training is recognized, at both the enterprise and regional levels.*

*Following the CFDT’s intervention, the government has agreed to set up “Councils for Professional Development” that will provide free advice to all workers, whether already in employment or looking for employment. We are keeping a watchful eye on implementation of this policy.*

*The CFDT has come forward with a new focus on a rights-based approach to professional development. We still have to make sure it is implemented, by increasing pressure on training and accreditation bodies.*

*The CFDT has also opened up a new space in collective bargaining frameworks in relation to the financial contribution required for employees’ personal training accounts, so as to reduce inequalities of access to skills development.*

*Other issues need to be addressed – for example, the collective dimension of professional skills, the economic and social significance of which are often neglected by employers and the state.” (International Labour Organization, 2019)*

## ▶ Other Benefits

There are other potential benefits for workers' organizations in engaging in skills development and lifelong learning, located along four dimensions – vis-à-vis the state, their own organizations, employers and their own members, as follows:

- ▶ Influencing state policy on education and training to ensure that it is responsive to industry's and workers' needs and that it is supportive of lifelong learning opportunities;
- ▶ Integrating the learning agenda with other roles and priorities of workers' organizations;
- ▶ Taking advantage of the less controversial nature of learning and skills development to strengthen social dialogue and collective bargaining with employers on skills; and
- ▶ Enhancing membership activity and representation.

Skills development and lifelong learning provide a pathway for workers' organizations to play a role in identifying skills gaps for their members and other workers, as a pathway to decent work, as well as in influencing policy-making at the political level.

Skills development and lifelong learning are cross-cutting issues that influence, and are influenced by, a series of different priorities for workers' organizations – workers' rights, collective bargaining, social inclusion, jobs, pay and citizenship – and in this way contribute to a coherent overall agenda. Such is the range of issues that many workers' organizations have developed their own “lifelong learning agenda”, enabling them to have a wide-ranging and integrated perspective on this subject.

Skills development and lifelong learning provide representatives of workers' organizations with an opportunity to shape policies and practices at the enterprise level and engage in discussions, consultations and/or collective bargaining with employers at the workplace.

Skills development and lifelong learning help to provide learning opportunities for all workers, whether in stable or precarious employment. Initiatives led by workers' organizations on training issues highlight the positive role workers' organizations play in wider debates on education and training, such as during the COVID-19 crisis, as well as in the workplace – a significant issue in retaining members and recruiting new ones. This adds value to the “union card”, thus increasing the attraction in becoming and staying a member of a workers' organization.

Workers' organizations have a clear role to play – to ensure that workers and unemployed people acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies to get jobs, to keep jobs and to succeed in the labour market.

## Activity 1.1

### Introducing the strategies of workers' organizations on skills development and lifelong learning – *Reasons for engagement of workers' organizations*



*Aim*

The aim of this activity is to consider why workers' organizations engage in skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems.



*Method*

Please read the statements that were presented above in the first part of this module, from: Abul Kalam Azad of the Bangladeshi Tannery Workers Union; Mike Luff of the Canadian Labour Congress; Bhabhali Ka Maphikelela Nhlapo of the Congress of South African Trade Unions; Elke Hannack of the German Trade Union Confederation; and Yvan Ricordeau of the French Democratic Confederation of Labour.

Then please make a list of the reasons that they have presented for the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems.

In your own opinion, which two reasons would be the most persuasive for your own national circumstances?

Turn to your neighbour and exchange your opinions in pairs, and then decide on the two most important reasons for the two of you.

Be prepared to present your choices, and the reasons for them, to the plenary session.

## Activity 1.2

### Introducing the strategies of workers' organizations on skills development and lifelong learning – *Evidence of impact of engagement of workers' organizations*



#### *Aim*

The aim of this activity is to consider why workers' organizations engage in skills development and lifelong learning.



#### *Method*

Please take another look at the statements that were presented in the first part of the module, from: Abul Kalam Azad of the Bangladeshi Tannery Workers Union; Mike Luff of the Canadian Labour Congress; Bhabhali Ka Maphikelela Nhlapo of the Congress of South African Trade Unions; Elke Hannack of the German Trade Union Confederation; and Yvan Ricordeau of the French Democratic Confederation of Labour.

What evidence can you find in the statements to show that engaging in skills development and lifelong learning:

1. provides a pathway for workers' organizations to play a role in identifying skills gaps for their members and other workers, as well as in influencing policy-making at the political level.
2. is a cross-cutting issue that influences – and is influenced by – a series of different priorities for workers' organizations: workers' rights, collective bargaining, social inclusion, jobs, pay and citizenship – and contributes to a coherent overall agenda for workers' organizations.
3. provides representatives of workers' organizations with an opportunity to shape policies and practices at the enterprise level and engage in discussions, consultations and/or collective bargaining with employers at the workplace.
4. helps to provide learning opportunities for all workers, whether in stable or precarious employment, and highlights the positive role workers' organizations play at the workplace – a significant issue when retaining members and recruiting new ones.

Be prepared to present your choices, and the reasons for them, to the plenary session.



## ▶ Selected references and suggestions for further reading

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## ▶ How do workers' organizations engage in skills development and lifelong learning?

Workers' organizations are engaged in a variety of different activities at national, sectoral and enterprise levels to support policy formulation and implementation, through contributing to national strategies, negotiating collective agreements and participating in regulatory and/or consultative bodies.

Workers' organizations support skills development and lifelong learning in the following ways:

- ▶ advising on skills anticipation for initial and continuing training;
- ▶ advising on training standards, curricula, training programmes and assessment procedures for initial training;
- ▶ negotiating pay rates, paid time off and entitlement to training;
- ▶ providing guidance and motivation for continuing training;
- ▶ supporting links with local training providers for continuing training; and
- ▶ supporting recruitment for initial training. (Trade Union Advisory Committee, 2016)

International Labour Standards (ILS) highlight the need to involve workers' organizations in these activities and to strengthen social dialogue and collective bargaining in this field (see Chapter 5).

### ▶ National level

#### Tripartite training strategies

Formal tripartite training strategies that deal with skills issues are rare, but they are powerful in that they enable workers' organizations to play a direct role in policy formulation. A notable example would be the South African "National Skills Accord", which committed all social partners to combine their "efforts in order to strengthen skills development as a crucial pillar of the New Growth path" (see Box 2.1).

## Box 2.1

### Tripartite strategies for skills development and lifelong learning – South Africa



In South Africa, three trade union confederations signed a tripartite agreement in 2011 with an employers' association and the Ministry of Higher Education and Training, committing all social partners to combining their "efforts in order to strengthen skills development as a crucial pillar of the New Growth path". Stakeholders committed to training craftspersons and holders of other scarce skills, contributing to the placement of further education graduates in workplace learning, improving the quality of skills planning and focusing on the performance of sectoral skills councils.

### National regulatory and/or consultative bodies

Engagement in national regulatory and/or consultative bodies provides workers' organizations with a clear opportunity to formulate and implement skills development and lifelong learning policies.

For example, in Asia workers' organizations are represented in the Philippines on the board of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Box 2.2), and in Bangladesh on the National Skills Development Council, whose role is to oversee and monitor all activities of public and private training providers related to skills training.

## Box 2.2

### Representation of workers' organizations on national consultative bodies – Philippines



In the Philippines there are six representatives of workers' organizations (out of a total of 22) on the board of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, which has a key role in policy formulation and implementation for technical and vocational education and training (TVET). It is mandated by law “to provide relevant, accessible, high quality and efficient technical education and skills development” and is primarily responsible for the formulation of continuing technical education and skills development policies and programmes.

As part of its quality assurance measures, it has promoted the use of competency- and outcome-based training regulations containing minimum standards for trainers and training material, and it has established a National Qualification Programme for TVET trainers/assessors. It also approves the National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan and allocates resources for the different training programmes. It defines and approves TVET skills standards and assessments. In addition, it establishes and administers a system of accreditation of both public and private TVET institutions. (International Labour Organization, 2017)

In Latin America, workers' organizations are also represented on regulatory and/or consultative bodies. In Uruguay, for example, the Workers' Interunion Plenary – National Workers' Assembly (PIT-CNT) is a member of the National Council of the tripartite National Institute of Employment and Vocational Training, which has a wide-ranging mission and a significant number of responsibilities: supporting career development; providing technical assistance for enterprises and employers; offering credit guarantees for enterprises; and certifying competencies.

Workers' organizations are also represented on national regulatory and/or consultative bodies supporting skills development in many European countries – for example, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

## ▶ Sectoral level

At the sectoral level, workers' organizations are engaged in skills development and lifelong learning, through negotiating collective agreements and participating in sector skills bodies.

### Collective agreements

In Europe there are numerous examples of sectoral agreements signed by workers' organizations and employers' organizations. In France, for example, 232 sectoral agreements dealing with different aspects of vocational training were signed in 2015. Sixty-seven of these agreements dealt specifically with apprenticeship training covering issues that include, inter alia:

- ▶ the nature of the apprenticeship contract;
- ▶ the obligations of the apprentice and the employer;
- ▶ the choice, role and tasks of the in-company mentor, the number of apprentices s/he can supervise, and his/her own training – “some agreements provide, in this respect, an appropriate workload and an allowance for the in-company mentor”;
- ▶ financing apprenticeships, and more specifically ways of ensuring that enterprises pay their apprenticeship tax;
- ▶ the possibility of sharing learning pathways between two enterprises; and
- ▶ the responsibilities of the apprenticeship training centres and – where appropriate – their accreditation by the sector. (Ministry of Labour of France, 2016)

Latin America: Approximately 17 per cent of collective agreements and 10 per cent of enterprise agreements that were negotiated in Brazil in 2018 contained references to TVET.

### Sector skills bodies

At sector level, workers' organizations are represented on skills bodies in a variety of different countries, including Argentina, Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, the Philippines, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden and Uruguay.

For example, the sectoral trade committees in Denmark – the backbone of its VET system – are made up of an equal number of representatives of workers' and employers' organizations. They are specifically responsible for apprenticeship training and approximately 100 training programmes. Their key responsibilities are extensive (Box 2.3).

## Box 2.3

### Trade committees – Key responsibilities – Denmark



The key responsibilities of trade committees are:

- performing a central role in the creation and renewal of TVET courses, by closely monitoring developments in their particular occupations, and formulating learning objectives and final examination standards, based around the key competencies required in the labour market;
- conducting relevant analyses and development projects, and maintaining close contact with relevant stakeholders;
- deciding on the regulatory framework for individual courses, the occupation that is to provide the core of the training, the duration of the programme, and the ratio between teaching in TVET institutions and practical work in an enterprise;
- approving enterprises as qualified training establishments and ruling on conflicts that may develop between apprentices and the enterprise; and
- functioning as gatekeepers to the occupation, as they are responsible for issuing journeyman's certificates. (Andersen and Kruse, 2014)



Latin America workers' organizations are represented on sectoral working groups of the National Apprenticeship Service in Colombia, the sectoral technical committees of the National Industrial Training Service in Brazil and the sectoral councils in Argentina.

South African workers' organizations are represented on the sectoral Skills Education Training Authorities, whose functions were revised in 2019 as part of the National Skills Development Plan 2030 (Box 2.4).

## Box 2.4

### Workers' organizations and skills education training authorities – Functions – South Africa



Skills education training authorities (SETAs) have numerous functions, including:

- Understanding demand and signalling the implications of these trends for supply;
- Steering the system to meet this demand;
- Ensuring that the institutional capacity exists to deliver these programmes; and
- Managing the plans, budget and expenditure of the SETA as well as partnerships arrangements. (Republic of South Africa, 2017)





## ► Enterprise level

In some countries, workers' organizations are involved in the implementation of skills development initiatives at the enterprise level, by means of works councils of different types, company agreements and/or the activities of union representatives.

### Works councils

Where works councils exist, they provide a forum that can be used by representatives of workers' organizations to develop workers' skills at the enterprise level.

In Italy, workers' organizations may be represented on works councils for TVET. Employers' and workers' organizations in the metalworking sector have negotiated a national agreement that provides for the establishment of works councils for TVET that carry out a number of functions (Box 2.5).

### Box 2.5

#### Works councils for vocational education and training – Functions – Italy



- Monitoring the number of continuing TVET initiatives carried out, the types of initiatives, the number of training days and the total number of employees involved;
- Improving access to training by evaluating the feasibility of training projects for workers not involved in previously organized TVET initiatives;
- Disseminating information among workers about ongoing TVET training initiatives offered locally;
- Examining the specific training needs of workers, in line with technological developments within the enterprise; and
- Reporting training needs and the numbers of potentially interested workers to the competent local committees at the enterprise level. (Italian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions, 2018)

## Company agreements

There are examples from Latin America of specific enterprises. In Costa Rica, the Workers of the *Compañía Bananera Atlántica Limitada* signed an agreement with a subsidiary of Chiquita Brands International to provide training for workers in technical subjects such as: refrigerating systems troubleshooting; use of personal protection equipment; welding and electronics; workplace safety; and general education subjects, such as computer or English language skills. More recently, in 2019, the Intercompany Leading Workers of *Holding Walmart (SIL)* signed an agreement with Walmart Chile to train cashiers in the use of new self-scanning devices, during working time and without loss of pay.

Another interesting example comes from Italy. In 2014 the Italian multinational energy company ENEL and three sectoral trade unions signed an agreement to establish an experimental programme combining on- and off-the-job training, leading to a “technical diploma with theoretical contents more in tune with industrial needs, and practical technical training characterized by better linkage to the needs of the world of work”. The agreement covered a series of issues, including the duration of the apprenticeship, remuneration, holidays, sick leave, termination, the role of in-company trainers, and health and safety.

## Union learning representatives

In the United Kingdom there is no statutory right to bargain on training, no obligation on the part of employers to provide training, and no significant tradition of works councils. However, the 2002 Employment Act provides an opportunity for workers' organizations to play a key role, via union learning representatives (ULRs), in helping workers get into training.

A union learning representative is a member of an independent trade union, recognized by the employer and elected by members of the union in the workplace. The ULR's role involves promoting the value of learning, supporting learners, arranging learning/training, and supporting workplace learning centres to embed learning in the workplace. As a specific example of their work, 96 new learning agreements were negotiated in 2017/18.

Workers' organizations are clearly engaged in a variety of different activities at national, sectoral and enterprise levels to support policy formulation and implementation – contributing to national strategies, negotiating collective agreements and participating in regulatory and/or consultative bodies.



## Activity 2.1

### Analysing the strategy of your own workers' organization on skills development and lifelong learning – *National level*



The aim of this activity is to analyse the strategy of your own workers' organization on skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems, in light of the different types of engagement described in the introduction to this module.

What is your own workers' organization doing to engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the national level?



Let's take two types of national-level activity mentioned in the introduction to this Module:

- tripartite training strategies; and
- national regulatory and/or consultative bodies.

Does your own workers' organization engage in activities at the national level?

Please fill in the evaluation sheet (2.1), and be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the different ways in which workers' organizations in your own country can – and do – engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the national level.

If your workers' organization does not engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the national level, make a list of the reasons why it does not, and be prepared to explain in the plenary session why this is the case.

## ▶ 2.1 Evaluation sheet – Analysing the strategy of your organization on skills development and lifelong learning at the national level

Level	Actions	Yes	No	Comments
National level	Engaging in tripartite training strategies			<p><b>2.1.1. If yes...</b></p> <p>What is the subject of this strategy?</p> <p>Why does your workers' organization take part?</p> <p>Who in your workers' organization is involved?</p> <p>What has been the outcome?</p>
	Participating in a regulatory and/or consultative body on education and training			<p><b>2.1.2. If yes...</b></p> <p>What is the name of the body?</p> <p>What is its function?</p> <p>What does this body do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ skills anticipation?</li> <li>▶ standard-setting?</li> <li>▶ programme definition?</li> <li>▶ other?</li> </ul> <p>What is the composition of the body?</p> <p>How many representatives of workers' organizations are members of this body?</p>

## Activity 2.2

### Analysing the strategy of your own workers' organization on skills development and lifelong learning – *Sectoral level*



The aim of this activity is to analyse the strategy of your own workers' organization on skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems, in light of the different types of engagement described in the introduction to this module.

What is your own workers' organization doing to engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the sectoral level?



Let's take the two types of sector-level activity mentioned in the introduction to this module:

- collective agreements; and
- sector skills bodies/labour market observatories.

Does your own workers' organization engage in activities at the sectoral level?

Please fill in the evaluation sheet (2.2) and be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the different ways in which workers' organizations in your own country can – and do – engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the sectoral level.

If your workers' organization does not engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the sectoral level, make a list of the reasons why it does not, and be prepared to explain in the plenary session why this is the case.

## ▶ 2.2 Evaluation sheet – Analysing the strategy of your own workers' organizations on skills development and lifelong learning at the sectoral level

Level	Actions	Yes	No	Comments
Sector level	Negotiating a sectoral agreement			<p><b>2.2.1. If yes...</b></p> <p>What does the agreement cover?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ rights to training?</li> <li>▶ learning needs?</li> <li>▶ priorities for learning?</li> <li>▶ funding?</li> <li>▶ paid time off for training?</li> <li>▶ other?</li> </ul>
	Participating in a sectoral skills body and/or a labour market observatory			<p><b>2.2.2. If yes...</b></p> <p>What is the name of the body?</p> <p>What is its function?</p> <p>What does this body do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ skills anticipation?</li> <li>▶ standard-setting?</li> <li>▶ programme definition?</li> <li>▶ other?</li> </ul> <p>Does this body have a specific responsibility for apprenticeship training?</p> <p>What is the composition of the body?</p> <p>How many representatives of workers' organizations are members of this body?</p>

## Activity 2.3

### Analysing the strategy of your own workers' organization on skills development and lifelong learning – *Enterprise level*



The aim of this activity is to analyse the strategy of your own workers' organization on skills development and lifelong learning processes and systems, in light of the different types of engagement described in the introduction to this module.

What is your own workers' organization doing to engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the enterprise level?



Let's take the three types of enterprise-level activity mentioned in the introduction to this module:

- works councils;
- enterprise-level agreements; and
- union learning/training representatives.

Does your own workers' organization engage in activities at the enterprise level?

Please fill in the evaluation sheet (2.3), and be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the different ways in which workers' organizations in your own country can – and do – engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the enterprise level.

If your workers' organization does not engage in skills development and lifelong learning at the enterprise level, make a list of the reasons why it does not, and be prepared to explain in the plenary session why this is the case.

## ▶ 2.3 Evaluation sheet – Analysing the strategy of your own workers' organization on skills development at the enterprise level

Level	Actions	Yes	No	Comments
Enterprise level	Participating in works councils			<p><b>2.3.1. If yes...</b> Do representatives of workers' organizations engage with employers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ survey training needs?</li> <li>▶ establish a training policy?</li> <li>▶ organize the training?</li> <li>▶ other?</li> </ul>
	Negotiating an enterprise-level agreement			<p><b>2.3.2. If yes...</b> What does the agreement cover?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ rights to training?</li> <li>▶ learning needs?</li> <li>▶ priorities for learning?</li> <li>▶ funding?</li> <li>▶ paid time off for training?</li> <li>▶ other?</li> </ul>
	Acting as representatives			<p><b>2.3.3. If yes...</b> Do representatives of workers' organization engage with workers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ survey training needs?</li> <li>▶ advise them on their training options?</li> <li>▶ encourage them to participate in training?</li> <li>▶ organize their training?</li> <li>▶ other?</li> </ul>

## Activity 2.4

### What proactive steps can representatives of workers' organizations take to support workplace learning?



The aim of this activity is to examine the proactive steps that representatives of workers' organizations can take to support workplace learning.



A number of European workers' organizations from Bulgaria, England, Germany, Italy, Romania and Spain recently produced a toolkit that enables representatives of workers' organizations to develop workplace learning. (Trades Union Congress, 2016)

The toolkit consists of six steps that representatives of workers' organizations can take to support workplace learning, as follows:

#### Step 1 – Preparing the ground for learning

- rights to workplace learning
- existing provision for workplace learning

#### Step 2 – Connecting to your workers' organization

#### Step 3 – Entering into a dialogue with workers

- survey questionnaire to investigate learning experiences and needs

#### Step 4 – Turning workplace learning needs and experiences into demands of workers' organizations

- arguments for preparing a position

#### Step 5 – Entering into a dialogue with employers

- preparing a workplace learning agreement

#### Step 6 – Reconnecting with workers

On the basis of your experience, and with the aid of the evaluation sheet (2.4), please indicate why and how you would take these steps in your own country.

Please explain the reasons for your choices in the section on “Comments – Why and how”.

Please note down any other steps you think could be taken.

Be prepared to present your choices, and the reasons for them, to the plenary session.

## ▶ 2.4 Evaluation sheet – Developing the support for workplace learning on the part of representatives from workers' organizations

Steps	Comments – why and how
2.4.1 Preparing the ground for learning: ▶ rights to workplace learning ▶ existing provision for workplace learning	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2.4.2 Connecting to your workers' organization	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2.4.3 Entering into a dialogue with workers ▶ survey questionnaire to investigate learning experiences and needs	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2.4.4 Turning workplace learning needs and experiences into demands on the part of workers' organizations ▶ arguments for preparing a position	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2.4.5 Entering into a dialogue with employers ▶ preparing a workplace learning agreement	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2.4.6 Reconnecting with workers	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



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## ▶ What issues affect the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning?

Workers' organizations around the world may face many challenges that directly and/or indirectly shape their ability to engage in skills development and lifelong learning, including:

- ▶ competing priorities;
- ▶ limited access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning; and
- ▶ limited human resources and technical capacity.

### ▶ Competing priorities

Workers' organizations are faced with a variety of competing priorities.

The ILO's Compilation of Decisions of the Committee on Freedom of Association shows that some workers' organizations face existential challenges. In some countries they are faced with threats of dissolution, violence, detention, discrimination or damage to premises and property, coupled with interference to the right to organize and/or the right to engage in collective bargaining. Since its establishment in 1951, the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association has dealt with more than 3,200 cases covering violations to workers' organizations – an average of nearly 50 a year. (International Labour Organization, 2018)

The ILO's Global Trends on Occupational Accidents and Diseases report shows that workers' organizations in all countries are faced with matters of life and death – literally, in some cases. Every year over 2.3 million women and men die at work from an occupational injury or disease. Over 350,000 deaths are due to fatal accidents and almost two million deaths are due to fatal work-related diseases. In addition, over 313 million workers are involved in

non-fatal occupational accidents causing serious injuries and absences from work. The ILO also estimates that each year there are 160 million cases of non-fatal work-related diseases. Every day approximately 6,400 people die from occupational accidents or diseases and 860,000 people are injured on the job. (International Labour Organization, 2015)

Dealing with these issues, and others such as emergency response measures during periods of crisis, may leave little time, resources and energy for activities regarding other issues, such as skills development or lifelong learning.

An ILO International Review of Trade Union Involvement in Skills Development has shown that in some countries skills development and lifelong learning constituted an important issue, but one that has slipped down the (long) list of priorities. In Morocco, for example, workers' organizations have tended to prioritize industrial relations questions in general – freedom of association, social dialogue and social protection – rather than TVET and skills development. Despite the fact that workers' organizations in South Africa were a driving force in shaping the education and training landscape, by the mid- to late-2000s skills development was no longer central to the unions' agenda. Nor was it highlighted by unions in the collective bargaining processes, where the key issues were wages and working conditions. In another example, over the years workers' organizations in the Philippines have prioritized core functions – such as organizing, collective bargaining, the protection of workers' rights and job security.

However, there is evidence that skills development and lifelong learning are important workplace issues.

According to the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work, establishing an effective lifelong learning system is a joint responsibility, “requiring the active engagement and support of governments, employers and workers, as well as educational institutions”. As such, employers' and workers' organizations have a leading role to play, including through anticipation of future skills requirements as well as participation in their delivery. (Global Commission on the Future of Work, 2019). This role is further confirmed in International Labour Standards (see Chapter 5).

## ▶ Limited access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning

Workers' organizations may have a leading role to play, but this is often not recognized, and they may have little access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning.

The situation is mixed throughout the world, and in flux.

Laws at the national level often make no provision for the involvement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning, on the basis of formal representation in regulatory and/or consultative bodies. In some countries there may be no legal obligations on employers and employers' organizations to develop workers' skills and thus to consult and/or negotiate with workers' organizations on achieving this. In these two types of situations, engagement in skills development and lifelong learning is severely compromised.

Where there was traditionally no access, there are, however, some signs that workers' organizations are becoming increasingly involved, and where there was typically some form of access, there are signs that this access is on the wane.

Argentina provides an example of the former. The structure of its industrial relations model places workers' organizations at the centre of the development of workers' skills and competencies; this is crystallized institutionally in their committed participation in sectoral councils.

Ghana provides another example of the first case. As part of its Strategic Plan for TVET Transformation 2018-2020, the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) is in the process of establishing sector skills bodies, with representatives of governments and employers' and workers' organizations, so as to improve the linkage between industry and the TVET training system (Box 3.1) – initially in three sectors: agriculture and agribusiness; construction; and tourism.

## Box 3.1

### Tripartite sector skills bodies – Proposed functions – Ghana



The proposed functions of the sector skills bodies are to:

- produce authoritative skills and labour market intelligence;
- outline career pathways and develop occupational standards and learning materials;
- develop sector skill strategies and input into national and regional TVET strategies;
- support the initial training of young people and skills upgrading for existing workers, including apprenticeships and internships;
- make the case for effective skills development and support the formation of public-private partnerships (PPPs);
- provide advice on funding of TVET, including workplace development such as management skills and train-the-trainers; and
- introduce licence-to-practice or quality job schemes.





On the other hand, Canada and the United Kingdom provide examples of the latter. In Canada, the original practice of creating sector councils with worker representatives has been eroded. The presence of workers' organizations and the notion of parity in numbers with employers' organizations are no longer considered essential. In England, sector skills councils (SSCs) were set up, with a responsibility for developing occupational standards – including apprenticeships – and approving the qualifications that underpin vocational training programmes. Although employer-led, SSCs were required to appoint at least one representative of a workers' organization to their boards. With the launching in 2013 of employer-led “trailblazer” apprenticeships, the influence of sector skills councils has declined. In addition, given that there is no formal provision for participation of workers' organizations in the design and implementation of “trailblazer” apprenticeships, the influence of workers' organizations in this area of work has declined further. (International Labour Organization, 2017)

There may be another impediment. Those workers' organizations represented on regulatory and/or consultative bodies may find it difficult to arrive at a consensus on the education and training needs of their members and/or workers in general. In Bangladesh, for example, this may be explained in part by the existence of a huge informal economy, which makes it difficult to organize workers, and in part by the existence of a number of workers' organizations that represent divergent interests.

South African workers' organizations have had a significant role to play in the formulation and implementation of different aspects of initial and continuing TVET. As seen in Module 2, they are represented on sectoral skills education training authorities. In the past, the SETAs have been criticized because their structure did not leverage stakeholder participation effectively and was too administratively complex and burdensome, with multiple oversight boards and administrations in a context of scarce skills.

According to an ILO study, “SETA stakeholders tend to spend most of their time dealing with administrative matters such as procurement, staffing, systems and customer complaints.... Therefore the system ends up with the worst of both worlds, poor corporate governance of SETAs and poor stakeholder participation in identifying skills needs, validating delivery and quality, and monitoring the effectiveness of training delivery.” It remains to be seen whether these recent changes will answer this criticism and enable sectoral workers' organizations to play a more effective role in skills development and lifelong learning. (International Labour Organization, 2017)

Not only is there an issue of access to the governance structures of skills development and lifelong learning, but also one of **effective** access, which is partially constrained by another challenge, that of limited human resources and technical capacity, as presented in the following section.



## ▶ Limited human resources and technical capacity

If opportunities to engage in skills development and lifelong learning exist, are workers' organizations able to participate effectively?

Workers' organizations often do not have enough officers and representatives to participate in regulatory and/or consultative bodies, so they cannot take full advantage of their access to governance structures. In addition, effective participation in regulatory and/or consultative bodies requires specific technical knowledge, skills and experience. Officers and representatives of workers' organizations will be familiar with issues like occupational profiles, but not necessarily the more specific technicalities that lie at the heart of training programmes – learning outcomes, curricula, assessments, qualifications and certification.

Indeed, it is for this reason that this Resource Guide has been written.

Some workers' organizations may have staff with the requisite skills, or they can obtain the support of other bodies that can provide this level of expertise. Workers' organizations in Denmark can call on the services of the trade committees, while in Germany and the Netherlands they are supported by the Federal Institute for Vocational Training and the Foundation for Cooperation on Vocational Education, Training and Labour Market respectively. Some workers' organizations – for example in India and Singapore – may be able to benefit from outreach work undertaken by bodies such as the National Skills Development Corporation and SkillsFuture respectively.

However, this is not the norm, and the vast majority of workers' organizations has resources and technical capacity that are limited or very limited. In Morocco, for example, workers' organizations lack specialists in TVET, training methodology, needs analysis and skills development. In the Philippines, government representatives on the tripartite Board of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) have full-time technical support from their respective agencies, and employers' organizations have their own human resources departments, but “the depth and quality of union participation in policy making bodies like TESDA could have been enhanced if the workers' representatives had full-time technical staff support.” (International Labour Organization, 2017)

Workers' organizations may be able to influence the formulation and implementation of policies relating to skills development and lifelong learning, but many around the world face considerable challenges that directly and/or indirectly shape their ability to engage in skills development and lifelong learning, including:

- ▶ competing priorities;
- ▶ limited access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning; and
- ▶ limited human resources and technical capacity.

## Activity 3.1

### What issues affect the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning? – *Competing priorities*



The aim of this activity is to analyse an issue that affects the engagement of your workers' organization in skills development and lifelong learning: competing priorities.



Let's address a challenge facing workers' organizations in terms of their ability to engage in skills development and lifelong learning:

- competing priorities

Please fill in the evaluation sheet (3.1), and be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the different ways in which this issue – competing priorities – affects the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning.

## ▶ 3.1 Evaluation sheet – Analysing the challenges faced by your own workers' organization in engaging in skills development and lifelong learning – Competing priorities

Challenges	Questions	Yes	No	Comments
Competing priorities	Is a skills development strategy a priority for your workers' organization?			3.1.1. If yes... ▶ Why has your workers' organization decided to make it a priority?
				3.1.2. If no... ▶ What stops your workers' organization from deciding to make it a priority?
	Is a lifelong learning strategy a priority for your workers' organization?			3.1.3. If yes... ▶ Why has your workers' organization decided to make it a priority?
				3.1.4. If no... ▶ What stops your workers' organization from deciding to make it a priority?

## Activity 3.2

### What issues affect the engagement of workers’ organizations in skills development and lifelong learning? – *Limited access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning*



**Aim**

The aim of this activity is to analyse an issue that affects the engagement of your workers’ organizations in skills development and lifelong learning – limited access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning.



**Method**

Let’s address a challenge facing workers’ organizations in terms of their ability to engage in skills development and lifelong learning:

- limited access to governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning

Please fill in the evaluation sheet (3.2) and be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the different ways in which this issue – limited access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning – affects the engagement of workers’ organizations.

▶ **3.2 Evaluation sheet – Analysing the challenges faced by your own workers' organization in engaging in skills development and lifelong learning – Limited access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning**

Challenges	Questions	Yes	No	Comments
Limited access to the governance structures for skills development and lifelong learning	Does your workers' organization participate in a regulatory and/or consultative body on TVET?			<b>3.2.1. If yes...</b> ▶ What does it do? ▶ How effective has it been?
				<b>3.2.2. If no...</b> ▶ What stops your workers' organization from participating in a regulatory and/or consultative body on TVET?
	Has your workers' organization been involved in collective bargaining on skills development and/or lifelong learning?			<b>3.2.3. If yes...</b> ▶ What has been the outcome?
				<b>3.2.4. If no...</b> ▶ What stops your workers' organization from participating in collective bargaining on skills development?

## Activity 3.3

### What issues affect the engagement of workers’ organizations in skills development and lifelong learning? – *Limited human resources and technical capacity*



The aim of this activity is to analyse an issue that affects the engagement of your workers’ organization in skills development and lifelong learning: limited human resources and technical capacity.



Let’s address a challenge facing workers’ organizations in terms of their ability to engage in skills development and lifelong learning:

- limited human resources and technical capacity

Please fill in the evaluation sheet (3.3), and be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the different ways in which this issue – limited human resources and technical capacity – affects the engagement of workers’ organizations in skills development and lifelong learning.

▶ **3.3 Evaluation sheet – Analysing the challenges faced by your own workers' organization in engaging in skills development and lifelong learning – Limited human resources and technical capacity**

Challenges	Questions	Yes	No	Comments
Limited human resources and technical capacity	Does your workers' organization have enough officers and representatives with the knowledge and experience to work on the skills development and lifelong learning agenda?			<p><b>3.3.1. If yes...</b></p> <p>▶ How has your workers' organization been able to build up this capacity?</p>
				<p><b>3.2.2. If no;</b></p> <p>▶ What stops your workers' organization from building up capacity on skills development and lifelong learning?</p>

## ► Selected references and suggestions for further reading

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## ▶ What are the priority areas for workers' organizations?

As was presented in Module 3, workers' organizations around the world face many challenges that directly and/or indirectly constrain their ability to engage in skills development and lifelong learning.

In order to support the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development, the Bureau for Workers' Activities of the International Labour Organization (ACTRAV) has produced a policy brief proposing a series of different policy areas that could be developed. (International Labour Organization, 2019)

### ▶ Influencing state policy on education and training

- ▶ Lobbying government to introduce legislation or policy providing for clear streamlined policies and structures for the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development, whether in terms of collective bargaining or of participation in national or sectoral or enterprise consultative bodies;
- ▶ Lobbying government to introduce legislation that enables workers' representatives to play a determinant role in skills development and to have reasonable paid time off for: analysing learning or training needs; providing information and advice about learning or training matters; arranging and supporting learning and training; consulting the employer about carrying out such activities; and preparing to carry out these activities;
- ▶ Lobbying government to introduce legislation that enables workers to participate in skills development, notably a right to training and paid time off to take up training opportunities;
- ▶ Lobbying government to ensure that sufficient funding is made available to set up good quality skills development activities;
- ▶ Supporting the introduction of measures to enable the recognition of non-formal and informal learning so as to facilitate enhanced labour market mobility;

- ▶ Requesting the respect of ILS, in particular Recommendation No. 195 which specifies the need for the Government to involve worker's organizations in the development and implementation of training and education strategies;
- ▶ Supporting the strengthening of measures to ensure inclusive access to training for under-represented groups;
- ▶ Contributing to the collection of data on skills training so that stakeholders are in a position to monitor skills development and estimate the impact of their skills strategies.

## ▶ Integrating the learning agenda with other union functions

- ▶ Committing at the highest level within workers' organizations to a comprehensive skills development policy and to developing a multi-level strategy to accompany it;
- ▶ Ensuring that workers' organizations avoid fragmentation and provide a united front on the question of skills development;
- ▶ Ensuring that skills development is integrated into other priorities of the workers' organizations;
- ▶ Building capacity within their own organizations so that officers of workers' organizations are qualified and able to defend workers' interests within multi-sectoral and sectoral tripartite bodies dealing with skills development issues and – where possible – negotiate collective bargaining agreements.

## ▶ Focusing on the institutionalization of learning with employers

- ▶ Seeking out alliances with employers' organizations and employers, to engage in a process of social dialogue at the national, sectoral and enterprise level, so that skills development becomes an integral part of collective bargaining;
- ▶ Ensuring that young people – particularly apprentices – have access to quality training and good working conditions and are not used as cheap labour to displace existing workers.

## ▶ Enhancing membership activity and representation

- ▶ Building capacity within their own organizations so that representatives of workers' organizations are qualified and able to: defend workers' interests at the workplace; communicate information about skills development activities to workers; provide them with guidance and counselling; and motivate them to take up skills development opportunities.

As a function of their national circumstances, workers' organizations will be able to take some of these policy areas forward and transform them into concrete forms of engagement in skills development and lifelong learning.

The means by which workers' organizations have engaged in skills development and lifelong learning are: tripartite strategies, tripartite or bipartite collective agreements, and participation in national and/or sectoral regulatory and/or consultative bodies.

These avenues are not open to workers' organizations in all countries. Below are two examples of other ways in which workers' organizations have decided to engage in skills development and lifelong learning.

In Argentina, the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) has committed to a broad-based programme of provision of technical and vocational training. Its Construction Workers Union has set up a "National Plan for the Skilling of Workers in the Construction Industry". As can be seen from the following comments by Gustavo Gándara, the Executive Director of the UOCRA Foundation, this has enabled workers in the sector to participate in lifelong learning activities and to develop their skills significantly (Box 4.1).



## Box 4.1

### Vocational training in the construction industry – Argentina



**Gustavo Gándara, Executive Director of the UOCRA (Construction Workers Union of Argentina) Foundation – Argentina**

*“Trade unions in Argentina have contributed to the establishment of a series of institutions and actions providing a collective response to the needs of workers and their families, regardless of their employment status.*

*The development of a “Training and Certification System (SiFoC)” was defined jointly and then reinforced in sectoral councils, within the framework of the National Council for Employment and Productivity.*

*Trade unions design and manage training projects and skills accreditation. This approach makes it possible to combine an educational proposal with integrated training that combines the technical, employment and social dimensions of work.*

*Following the establishment of sectoral policies, the tripartite sectoral councils – which include representatives from the state, employers’ organizations and trade unions – meet regularly, with the aim of adopting employment policy decisions in the sector, carrying out studies on labour market developments and defining the skills that workers need.*

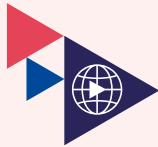
*Within the framework of this council, the National Training Programme for Workers in the Construction Industry (PNCT) has been developed. Over the last ten years it has achieved substantial results:*

- *54,741 workers trained and certified in health and safety and environment training;*
- *339,107 workers trained and certified through initial and continuing training; and*
- *109,221 workers with their skills certified.” (International Labour Organization, 2019)*

In the United Kingdom, union learning representatives (ULRs) support workers in access to skills development and lifelong learning, greatly improving their employment as well as their chances of career progression, as explained below by Kevin Rowan of the Trades Union Congress (Box 4.2).

## Box 4.2

### Continuing vocational education and training: The contribution made by union learning representatives



**Kevin Rowan, Head of Organization, Services and Skills at the Trades Union Congress, United Kingdom**

*“Accessing opportunities to develop and learn new skills is an integral part of what makes employment ‘good’; workers and trade unions clearly recognize this. They also understand that an effective skills system is a necessary function for a decent economy. It is natural that trade unions are enthusiastic social partners in policy design and operational implementation of skills development, as key stakeholders and as part of their role in representing workers.*

*Trade unions, through the work of union learning representatives, demonstrate an unmatched effectiveness in encouraging, enabling and supporting workers to gain new key functional skills for professional career development.*

*Every year in the UK, ULRs support around a quarter of a million workers to access skills development, greatly improving their employment and chances of career progression, as well as improving productivity where they work. Many union learners gain their first qualifications, promotions and pay rises as a result of union support and secure transferable skills.*

*Through learning agreements, unions are also able to leverage additional skills investment from employers and create a genuine lifelong learning environment that enables workers to continue to learn and develop their skills, with union support.” (International Labour Organization, 2019)*

ACTRAV, the Bureau for Workers' Activities of the International Labour Organization, has proposed a series of different policy areas that could be developed, as follows:

- ▶ Influencing, following up and evaluating state policy on education and training, and promoting the active and inclusive participation of workers' organizations in the various institutional mechanisms at different levels;
- ▶ Integrating the learning agenda with other union functions;
- ▶ Focusing on the institutionalization of learning with employers; and
- ▶ Enhancing membership activity and representation.

## Activity 4.1

### What are the priority areas for workers' organizations?



The aim of this activity is to consider which of the priority areas proposed in the ACTRAV Policy Brief could be appropriate in your country for developing the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning.



Review the four priority areas proposed by the ACTRAV policy brief, presented above in the module, as follows:

1. Influencing state policy on education and training;
2. Integrating the learning agenda with other union functions;
3. Focusing on the institutionalization of learning with employers; and
4. Enhancing membership activity and representation.

Now consider: “which of these priority areas would be **the most unrealistic** for developing the engagement of workers' organizations in your country, and why?”

Be prepared to present your choices, and the reasons for them, to the plenary session.

As a second activity, read through the same four priority areas proposed by the ACTRAV Policy Brief, presented above in the module, and consider which of these priority areas would be **the most realistic** for developing the engagement of workers' organizations in your country, and why.

Be prepared to present your choices, and the reasons for them, to the plenary session.

## Activity 4.2

### What are the priority areas for workers' organizations?



The aim of this activity is to consider whether the engagement of workers' organizations in skills development and lifelong learning in one particular country – in this case, Argentina or the United Kingdom – could be appropriate for the engagement of workers' organizations in your country.



Please read the statements from Gustavo Gándara, Executive Director of UOCRA Foundation and from Kevin Rowan, Head of Organization, Services and Skills at the Trades Union Congress, presented above, and consider whether this type of approach would be feasible.

If yes, why?

If no, why not?

Be prepared to present your choices, and the reasons for them, to the plenary session.



## Activity 4.3

### What needs to be included in a workplace learning agreement?



The aim of this activity is to consider what needs to be included in a workplace learning agreement from the perspective of a workers' organization.



In this module, Kevin Rowan of the Trades Union Congress stated that:

*“(t)hrough learning agreements, unions are also able to leverage additional skills investment from employers and create a genuine lifelong learning environment that enables workers to continue to learn and develop their skills, with union support.”*

From the perspective of a workers' organization, the question is: what could and should be included in a workplace learning agreement?

On the basis of a proposal for a model framework learning agreement proposed by Unionlearn, the learning and skills organization of the Trades Union Congress (4.1), work in groups of three or four to consider what issues could be realistically included in a workplace learning agreement in your own country.

Be prepared to present your choices, and the reasons for them, to the plenary session.

## ► 4.1 What needs to be included in a model framework learning agreement?

### A model framework learning agreement

This agreement is between [insert name of enterprise] and [insert name of workers' organization].

The parties, [insert name of enterprise] and [insert name of workers' organization], consider the promotion of and attention given to vocational skills training to be a high priority for management, since it contributes greatly to the performance and sustainability of the enterprise, and for the personal fulfilment, career progress and working conditions of workers.

The parties are committed to working in partnership to promote and support lifelong learning, ensure equal access to learning opportunities and jointly discuss training plans.

The parties will encourage workers to take up learning activities, including ongoing professional development, where appropriate.

The workers' organization, [insert name], will represent the workforce on all aspects of skills development and technical and vocational education and training.

The workers' organization will be responsible for recruiting and training learning representatives.

The workers' organization will advise management on possible sources of external support for training activities, such as those for everyday skills (literacy and numeracy, ITC), when necessary.

Paid time off will be granted to learning representatives to enable them to carry out their duties effectively [state an agreed minimum amount of time].

A joint learning committee shall be established, no later than [insert time frame for establishing the committee] from the date of this agreement.

The terms of this agreement shall be reviewed by the learning committee at regular intervals to ensure that they continue to reflect the needs of the workforce.

The agreement shall encourage employees to use their statutory right to request training, review implementation and ensure it is successful.

## Workplace learning committee: Terms of reference

The overall aim of the committee will be to promote, initiate, support and monitor lifelong learning activities in the workplace.

It will work to make learning opportunities as accessible and affordable as possible to all employees, enabling them to increase their skills and maximize their own potential.

The committee will comprise [insert number] nominated learning representatives, a senior operations manager, and representatives from the human resources and training functions.

The committee will meet on a regular basis as required, but no less than four times each year.

The responsibilities of the workplace learning committee are to:

- ▶ identify the learning needs and aspirations of all employees, in line with a learning needs analysis;
- ▶ discuss employer training plans;
- ▶ develop and promote a range of workplace learning initiatives, to encourage individuals to return to learning;
- ▶ monitor and evaluate activities and feedback and the effectiveness of the initiative;
- ▶ identify funding – both internal and external – to assist with learning activities, and explore options for making learning both affordable and sustainable; and
- ▶ administer and manage the workplace learning fund.

This agreement shall be communicated to the national vocational training system, detailing its main characteristics, so as to enhance coordination.

## ▶ Selected references and suggestions for further reading

Barretto Ghione, H. 2015. *Current status of vocational training in social dialogue* (OIT/Cinterfor) – available in English and Spanish  
[https://www.oitcinterfor.org/sites/default/files/file\\_publicacion/oit\\_socialdia\\_ingles\\_sec.pdf](https://www.oitcinterfor.org/sites/default/files/file_publicacion/oit_socialdia_ingles_sec.pdf)

European Trade Union Confederation. 2018. *EU priorities on education and training post 2020 – Towards a European right to training for all*  
[https://www.etuc.org/sites/default/files/document/files/ec226\\_resolution\\_future\\_of\\_vet\\_post-2020\\_en\\_adopted.pdf](https://www.etuc.org/sites/default/files/document/files/ec226_resolution_future_of_vet_post-2020_en_adopted.pdf)

International Labour Organization. 2019. *Workers' organizations engaging in skills development* – available in Bahasa Indonesia and English  
[https://www.ilo.org/skills/areas/skills-policies-and-systems/WCMS\\_714830/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/skills/areas/skills-policies-and-systems/WCMS_714830/lang-en/index.htm)

L20. 2018. *L20 Statement to the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting, Mendoza, Argentina, 6-7 September 2018*  
<https://tuac.org/news/to-the-g20-labour-and-employment-ministers-meeting-mendoza-argentina-6-7-september-2018/>

TUAC. 2016. *Unions and skills; Discussion paper on OECD strategies for skills, jobs and the digital economy*  
[https://tuac.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/1607t\\_unions-skills.pdf](https://tuac.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/1607t_unions-skills.pdf)

Unionlearn. 2012. *Delivering better learning agreements: A guide for learning reps and officers*  
<https://www.unionlearn.org.uk/publications/delivering-better-learning-agreements-guide-union-reps-and-officers>



## ► Part 2 – Building capacity within workers’ organizations to address issues in skills development and lifelong learning systems

Workers’ organizations have good reasons for engaging in skills development and lifelong learning at national, sectoral and enterprise levels, and while there are undoubtedly barriers to their engagement, ACTRAV and national unions have undertaken a series of activities and put forward a variety of proposals to overcome them.

The activities and proposals of workers’ organizations have been presented and examined in Part 1 and the previous four modules (numbers 1 through 4).

The focus will change in Part 2.

In Part 2 (Modules 5 through 9), this **Resource Guide for Workers’ Organizations** will provide background technical information about the different elements of skills development and lifelong learning that workers’ organizations are most likely to engage with, as follows:

- Policies, governance and funding for skills development;
- Skills anticipation and planning;
- Skills recognition and certification;
- Access to skills for all; and
- Skills for employability and decent work.

This **Resource Guide** will provide workshop materials for use by ILO SKILLS and ACTRAV field specialists, as part of their engagement with workers’ organizations, and also for use by key staff within workers’ organizations, to build up their internal capacity so that they are better equipped to defend the interests of workers.







## ▶ Policies, governance and funding of skills development

The aim of this module is to enable officers and representatives of workers' organizations to:

- ▶ improve their understanding of the policies, governance and funding that underpin skills development and lifelong learning; and
- ▶ improve their understanding of their own organization's skills development and lifelong learning policy.

### ▶ Policies and strategies

According to the International Labour Organization, training policies and systems are grounded in the characteristics of each country, while nevertheless a number of common building blocks can be identified. A good skills development and lifelong learning system will be able to:

- ▶ anticipate skills needs;
- ▶ engage employers and workers in decisions about training provision, including in specific sectors;
- ▶ maintain the quality and relevance of training;
- ▶ make training accessible to all sectors of society (for all workers in the formal and informal economy);
- ▶ ensure viable and equitable financing mechanisms; and
- ▶ continuously evaluate the economic and social outcomes of training (International Labour Organization, 2010).

A skills development policy may relate specifically to initial and/or continuing technical and vocational education and training, which may be defined as follows.

- ▶ Initial TVET: technical and vocational education and training that is undertaken in a TVET institution before entering working life; and

- ▶ Continuing TVET: technical and vocational education and training after entry into working life that enables workers to improve or update their knowledge and skills and/or to acquire new skills.

A skills development policy should form part of a broader national lifelong skills policy, to include early childhood education and primary, secondary and university education, as well as adult education.

A skills development policy may be coordinated at the national level and refer to all workers, or, more likely, it may be composed of a variety of different skills policies:

- ▶ At the sectoral level, like for example in the metalworking industries, the construction industry or the agri-food sector, or
- ▶ At the regional level, in countries (Brazil, France or Italy, for example) where TVET is a devolved responsibility.

It is clear however that policies for the development of skills will need to be closely related to policies that make practical and effective use of these skills within labour markets. This requires convergence with a variety of other policy areas: employment; mobility and migration; industrial and economic development at the sectoral, regional and local levels; science and technology; inclusiveness; and social welfare.

Skills policies also need to recognize the need to “seize the moment” (in the words of the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work), on the basis of future labour market transformations caused by technological advances, the transition to a sustainable environment and demographic changes. (Global Commission on the Future of Work, 2019)

These transformations will lead to increased labour market transitions – movement in and out of the labour market and from one job to another – which, to be successful, will need to be underpinned by lifelong learning opportunities.

Over time, ILO tripartite constituents developed various legal instruments – ranging from Conventions, Recommendations and Declarations to Resolutions – to provide rights, obligations, and guidance on policies and strategies for skills development and lifelong learning (see following table).

### **Key priority for workers' organizations**

**Workers' organizations need to lobby governments to enable them to participate in skills development – in particular for a right to training and paid time off to take up training opportunities.**

Instrument	Relevant highlights
Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974 (No. 140)	Formulates the term “paid educational leave” as leave granted to a worker for educational purposes (training at any level; general, social and civic education; trade union education) for a specific period, during working hours, with adequate financial entitlements.
Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)	Recognizes education, training and lifelong learning as fundamental to promoting the interests of individuals, enterprises, the economy and society as a whole, in the pursuit of full employment, poverty eradication, social inclusion and sustained economic growth. In addition, it establishes the right to lifelong learning and provides details on how governments, employers and workers can contribute to it.
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)	Requires that the representative organizations of employers and workers shall be consulted on the implementation of any related policy, including the measures to be taken to promote cooperation and coordination between the public and private bodies engaged in vocational rehabilitation activities.
Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)	Provides specific details on how governments, employers and workers can contribute towards lifelong learning, including in the areas of: development and implementation of education and training policies; education and pre-employment training; development of competencies; training for decent work and social inclusion; development of frameworks for recognition and certification of skills; reform of training providers; career guidance and training support services; research in human resource development, education, training and lifelong learning; and international cooperation.
Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No.187)	Requiring that each member, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers, shall develop a national preventative safety and health culture that includes information, consultation and training.
Resolution and conclusions on skills for improved productivity, employment growth and development adopted by the International Labour Conference (2008)	Define a more holistic approach to skills development, with a focus on: learning pathways throughout life; the development of core and high-level skills and ways to ensure their portability; and the commitment to improving employability skills.
ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008)	Expresses the ILO’s and its constituents’ vision in an era of increased globalization, emphasizing that employment and skills development must be placed at the centre of trade and financial market policies.
Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (2017)	Contains a section on training, and calls on MNEs to ensure that relevant training is provided as appropriate for all levels of workers employed by them in the host country, to meet the needs of the enterprise as well as the development policies of the country. This responsibility should be executed in cooperation with employers’ and workers’ organizations.
Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)	Identifies a number of measures to facilitate the transition to the formal economy, including policies to enhance access to education, lifelong learning and skills development as an integral part of a comprehensive policy approach. Such policies should include recognition of prior learning – for example through informal apprenticeship systems – thereby broadening options for formal employment.
Centenary Declaration (2019)	The ILO must direct its efforts, inter alia, to: promoting the acquisition of skills, competencies and qualifications by all workers throughout their working lives, as a joint responsibility of governments and social partners, with particular attention to ensuring that education and training systems are responsive to labour market needs, taking into account the evolution of work; and enhancing workers’ capacity to make use of the opportunities available for decent work. The Centenary Declaration also calls for strengthening the capacities of all people to benefit from the opportunities of a changing world of work, through effective lifelong learning and quality education for all.

## ► Governance of skills development systems

Skills development systems are often highly fragmented, with a variety of different actors. In some countries, Ministries of Education may have overall responsibility, but in others this may be held by the Ministries of Employment, and in still others it may be held by sectoral ministries for agriculture, trade or tourism.

Given the links to the labour market, there is also an important role for the social partners – employers' and workers' organizations – in a process of social dialogue at various levels. There is a role as well for training providers – public technical schools and colleges, private vocational institutes and private enterprises themselves – in the implementation of skills development and lifelong learning policies.

Skills development and lifelong learning systems deal with a variety of different issues, such as: legislative frameworks; strategies and policies; regulatory and/or consultative bodies; training programmes; certification and qualification frameworks; information and monitoring systems; and funding.

A further element of complexity arises where technical and vocational skills policies are not integrated into a national lifelong learning approach to skills that takes in everything from early childhood to adult education and training.

As has been shown in Module 3, in many countries workers' organizations face a series of obstacles to engagement in skills development and lifelong learning: competing priorities, effective access to the governance of skills development and limited capacity. This fragmentation only further undermines their potential for engagement.

So in order to coordinate these different actors and issues, effective skills development systems requires effective governance: how the funding, provision, ownership and regulation of TVET systems are coordinated; which actors are involved; and their respective roles, responsibilities and level of formal competency – at the local, regional, national and supranational levels (UNESCO, 2010).

There are numerous ways in which skills development and lifelong learning policies can be formulated and implemented in a coordinated fashion, at the national, sectoral and enterprise levels. Moreover, as has been shown in Module 2, workers' organizations in many countries contribute regularly to this process.

ILO instruments highlight the importance of involving the social partners – employers' and workers' organizations – in the development of vocational guidance and training (Article 5 of ILO Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)). As well, the ILO constituents have spelled out in great detail the ways in which social partners can engage

in formulating, applying and reviewing national policies for human resources development, education, training and lifelong learning (see following box). In particular, Recommendation No. 195 calls on Government to " provide support to the social partners to enable them to participate in social dialogue on training" (5 i).

### **ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195) identifies various areas for the involvement of social partners and social dialogue**

**National strategy:** Defining a national strategy for education and training (Art. 5(a))

Different policy levels: Establishing a guiding framework for training policies at national, regional, local, sectoral and enterprise levels (Art. 5(a))

**Alignment:** Policies that are consistent with economic, fiscal and social policies (Art. 1)

**Phases of skills development:** Formulating, applying and reviewing policies for national human resource development, education, training and lifelong learning (Art. 1)

**Inclusiveness:** Education and training are a right for all; in cooperation with the social partners, work towards ensuring access for all to lifelong learning (Art. 4(a)) and improving access for all to enhance employability and facilitate social inclusion (Art. 8(a) and 10(b))

**Identifying skills needs:** Promoting the ongoing identification of trends in the competencies needed by individuals, enterprises, the economy and society as a whole (Art. 9(a))

**Public sector:** Promoting the development of equitable training policies and opportunities for all public sector employees (Art. 9(k))

**Skills recognition:** Promoting the development, implementation and financing of a transparent mechanism for the assessment, certification and recognition of skills, whether acquired formally or informally (Art. 11(1))

**Diversity of training:** Promoting diversity of training provision to meet the different needs of individuals and enterprises and to ensure high-quality standards (Articles 13 and 14(b))

**Roles and responsibilities:** Identifying the roles and responsibilities of employment services, training providers and other relevant service providers with respect to vocational and career information and guidance (Art. 15(c)); taking into account the primary responsibility of government, as well as recognizing the role of the social partners in further training (Articles 6(1) and 9(b))

**Collective bargaining:** Support initiatives by the social partners in the field of training, within bipartite dialogue, including collective bargaining (Art. 9(c)); and support social dialogue and collective bargaining on training at international, national, regional, local, sectoral and enterprise levels, as a basic principle for systems development, programme relevance, quality and cost-effectiveness (Art. 5(f))

**Capacity building:** Promoting national capacity building to reform and develop training policies and programmes (Art. 21(c)); provide support to the social partners to enable them to participate in social dialogue on training; analyse trends in labour markets and human resources development; and contribute to dynamic lifelong learning policies (Articles 5(1), 17 and 21(e))

**Research:** Members should support and facilitate research on human resources development and training, in consultation with the social partners (Art. 19)

### **Key priority for workers' organizations**

**Workers' organizations need to develop clear streamlined policies and structures for their engagement in skills development, whether in terms of collective bargaining or of participation in national, sectoral or enterprise consultative bodies.**

## Tripartite training strategies and agreements

Mention was made in Module 2 of the tripartite training strategy agreed in South Africa, but there are others, for example the German Alliance for Initial and Further Training 2019-2021, agreed in 2019 by employers' and workers' organizations, the public employment services, national ministries and representatives of the regions.

The Alliance aims to: bring more companies and young people together and keep them involved in training; promote vocational training and increase the attractiveness and quality of apprenticeship training; improve continuing vocational education and training; and support higher-skilled/higher vocational training. This will be implemented primarily, by:

- ▶ increasing the number of apprenticeship places registered with the Federal Employment Agency;
- ▶ developing an agreed concept for the placement of young people in training;
- ▶ funding remedial training for young disadvantaged people; and
- ▶ improving access to training-related assistance.

## National regulatory and/or consultative bodies

Workers' organizations participate in national regulatory and/or consultative TVET bodies in Asia and in Europe, as presented in Module 2. However, there are others, for example in Latin America, where workers' organizations are represented on the board of directors of national vocational training institutions, for example:

- ▶ the National Employment and Vocational Training Institute in the Dominican Republic;
- ▶ the National Institute of Apprenticeship in Costa Rica;
- ▶ the National Vocational Training Institute for Human Development in Panama;
- ▶ the National Apprenticeship Service in Colombia; and
- ▶ the Technical Institute for Training and Productivity in Guatemala.

## ► Sectoral agreements

French sectoral agreements relating to TVET and apprenticeship training were highlighted in Module 2, but there are also sectoral agreements in other parts of the world. For example, in Uruguay in Latin America, workers' organizations have negotiated agreements in the following sectors: general industries; refrigeration; fishing; textiles; leather, garments and footwear; wood, cellulose and paper; chemical and pharmaceutical; metalworking and engineering; construction; retail; hospitality; transport and storage; and agriculture.

### Key priority for workers' organizations

**Workers' organizations need to seek out alliances with employers' organizations and employers, to engage in a process of social dialogue at the national, sectoral and enterprise level, so that skills development becomes an integral part of collective bargaining**

## Sector skills bodies

There are other examples in addition to those from Africa, Asia and Latin America presented in Module 2.

Asia: In Bangladesh there are Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) in sub-sectors, such as leather, construction, ready-made garments and agri-food, with representation on the part of workers' organizations. In addition, Bangladeshi workers' organizations in the construction industry are involved in managing and monitoring training delivery within the informal apprenticeship programme of a development project entitled "Way out of Informality".

In the Philippines, there are consultative Industry Tripartite Councils in six sectors (clothing and textiles; construction; automotive assembly; banking; hotels; restaurants; and sugar). In addition, workers' organizations have also been involved in providing training directly to workers, particularly in the maritime and construction sectors.

## Enterprise-level works councils

Mention was made of the representation of workers' organizations on works councils for vocational education and training in the Italian metalworking sector. There are also other example relating to all sectors, for example in Germany, where workers' organizations are represented on works councils; the latter "shall participate in the decisions relating to the implementation of vocational training programmes in the enterprise". (Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Germany, 2001).

## Key priority for workers' organizations

**Workers' organizations need to lobby governments to introduce legislation enabling workers' representatives to play a determinant role in skills development, and to have reasonable paid time off for: analysing learning or training needs; providing information and advice about learning or training matters; arranging and supporting learning and training; consulting the employer about carrying out such activities; and preparing to carry out these activities.**

## Funding of skills development systems

Skills development systems are typically funded from two major sources: public authorities and employers. It is possible in some countries that the beneficiaries of the training – students, apprentices or workers – will also be required to contribute to the costs of training, perhaps in the form of tuition fees.

In terms of initial TVET, the public authorities – whether at national, regional or local level – typically fund public TVET institutions: the construction and maintenance of buildings and investment in equipment, and salary costs for teachers, trainers and other staff. This funding is usually linked to the supply of skills and its associated inputs (number of students, teachers and courses). In addition, public authorities generally fund the various costs of administering initial TVET systems, and more broadly, the institutions that are responsible for maintaining a quality assurance framework – qualifications, certification, accreditation and inspection. Employers generally fund the labour costs (wages and social security contributions) of apprentices during the periods of on-the-job apprenticeship training – and in some countries, the periods of off-the-job training too.

Funding systems are typically complex, as can be seen from the Irish example of financing craft apprenticeships for designated occupations, which can be described as traditional apprenticeships in manufacturing and construction (Box 5.1). In addition, there are varying approaches from one country to another, as well as within the same countries, as post-2004 employer-led apprenticeships in the services sector in Ireland have a slightly different funding structure.



## Box 5.1

### Financing craft apprenticeships in designated occupations – Ireland



*An apprentice's remuneration for the period of on-the-job training is paid by the employer. The level of remuneration is the subject of negotiation between an employers' association and a sectoral workers' organization and is set out in a collective agreement. It is calculated in terms of the type of occupation and the year of the apprenticeship programme. Social insurance is paid by the employer and the apprentice.*

*An apprentice's remuneration for the period of off-the-job training is paid by the National Training Fund, which is itself financed by a levy on enterprises. The National Training Fund also finances all other off-the job costs – notably, the funding of public TVET institutions: the construction and maintenance of buildings and investment in equipment and salary costs for teachers and trainers and other staff, and various costs of administering initial TVET systems.*



In terms of continuing TVET, public authorities typically provide funds for public TVET institutions, and this funding is usually linked to the supply of skills and its associated inputs (number of students, teachers and courses). Often the training providers are private institutions, and employers generally pay the direct costs of training, in the form of fees, as well as the direct labour costs and social security contributions for employees engaged in continuing TVET programmes.

The funds provided by the public authorities for continuing TVET are typically funnelled through a variety of different policy initiatives: employment and active labour market programmes, adult learning schemes, industrial development programmes and research and development. This contributes to the fragmentation of TVET referred to in the previous section, which often makes it difficult for workers' organizations to have an overall view of the system.

The benefits of skills development and lifelong learning may make economic sense in the medium or long term, but employers may not be willing to make these investments up-front, and so in many countries public authorities have established schemes to encourage employers to engage in skills development programmes, particularly (but not only) to address skills shortages in certain priority sectors. They may offer incentives in the form of grants or tax credits, or exemptions from social security contributions. In Australia, incentives may be paid to employers who take on apprentices, for example: for mature workers; for occupations on the National Skills Needs list; for priority occupations; and for workers in areas declared to be suffering from drought.

This financial support may be channelled through training funds that are themselves funded by levies paid by employers, often as an overall percentage of the total wage bill. These funds may be administered by the social partners at the sector level, with a board composed of an equal number of representatives of workers' organizations and employers' organizations, as is the case in Italy. Alternatively, they may be employer-led, but with representation of workers' organizations on the board of directors, as in Singapore (Box 5.2). At the same time, however, we have the case of Southern African countries (Botswana, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) that have set up skills development levy systems, where there is frequently "little or no private sector and workers' involvement". (International Labour Organization, 2020).

## Box 5.2

### Training funds for TVET – Italy and Singapore



#### Italy

In Italy, employers are required to pay 0.30% of their total wage bill into joint interprofessional funds for continuing VET (in 18 different sectors) which are then used to finance sectoral, regional or individual training plans for workers' retraining and/or upskilling.

Each fund has a board composed of an equal number of representatives of workers' and employers' organizations.

#### Singapore

In Singapore, employers are required by the Skills Development Levy Act to pay a payroll tax (equivalent to 0.25% of the monthly remuneration of all workers) to a Skills Development Fund (SDF) which is used to support workforce upskilling programmes.

The SDF is administered by Skillsfuture, which includes a representative of the National Trade Union Confederation on its board.

### Key priority for workers' organizations

**Workers' organizations need to lobby government to ensure that sufficient funding (from public authorities and employers) is made available to set up good quality skills development activities.**

Workers' organizations are engaged in influencing policies relating to skills development and lifelong learning, by participating in governance structures such as tripartite bodies or sector skills councils, and by negotiating collective agreements. In some countries they may also participate in administering funds aimed at supporting initial – and more often, continuing – technical vocational education and training.

## Activity 5.1

### What are the features of skills development and lifelong learning?



The aim of this activity is to:

- consider key features of skills development and lifelong learning systems and processes; and
- decide if the key features are evident in the skills development and lifelong learning systems and processes in your country.



Let's take six features of a good skills development system, as proposed by the International Labour Organization, as follows:

- Anticipating skill needs;
- Engaging employers and workers in decisions about training provision, including in specific sectors;
- Maintaining the quality and relevance of training;
- Making training accessible to all sectors of society;
- Ensuring viable and equitable financing mechanisms; and
- Continuously evaluating the economic and social outcomes of training. (International Labour Organization, 2010).

Are these features to be found in the skills development and lifelong learning systems and processes operating in your own country, or in your own sector?

Please fill in the evaluation sheet (5.1), and be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the features of the different skills development systems.

If these features do not exist in your country, or in your sector, make a list of the reasons why, and be prepared to explain in the plenary session why this is the case.

► **5.1 Evaluation sheet – Do the skills development and lifelong learning system and processes operating in your own country, or in your own sector, have these features?**

Features	Yes	No	Comments
Anticipating skills needs			<p>5.1.1. If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5, how well does the system anticipate skills needs? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</p> <p>What is the process for anticipating skills needs?</p>
Engaging employers and workers in decisions about training provision, including in specific sectors			<p>5.1.2. If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5, how well does the system engage employers and workers in decisions about training provision, including in specific sectors? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</p> <p>How are employers' organizations and workers' organizations engaged in decisions about training provision?</p>
Maintaining the quality and relevance of training			<p>5.1.3. If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5, how well does the system maintain the quality and relevance of training? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</p> <p>How are the quality and relevance of training maintained?</p>
Making training accessible to all sectors of society			<p>5.1.4. If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5, how well does the system ensure that training is accessible to all sectors of society? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</p> <p>What measures are taken to ensure that training is accessible to all sectors of society?</p>
Ensuring viable and equitable financing mechanisms			<p>5.1.5. If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5, how well does the system ensure viable and equitable financing mechanisms? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</p> <p>In what way are the financing mechanisms viable and equitable?</p>
Continuously evaluating the economic and social outcomes of training			<p>5.1.6. If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5, how well does the system continuously evaluate the economic and social outcomes of training? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</p> <p>How are the economic and social outcomes of training evaluated?</p>

## Activity 5.2

### What are the features of the skills development and lifelong learning policy of your own workers' organization?



The aim of this activity is to examine the features of your own organization's skills development and lifelong learning policy.



Let's return to the six features of a good skills development system, as proposed by the International Labour Organization, as follows:

- Anticipating skill needs;
- Engaging employers and workers in decisions about training provision, including in specific sectors;
- Maintaining the quality and relevance of training;
- Making training accessible to all sectors of society;
- Ensuring viable and equitable financing mechanisms; and
- Continuously evaluating the economic and social outcomes of training. (International Labour Organization, 2010).

Are these features included in the skills development and lifelong learning policy of your own workers' organization?

Please fill in the evaluation sheet (5.2), and be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the features of the policy of your workers' organization on skills development and lifelong learning.

Are they sufficient? Are there any others?

If these features do not exist in the policy of your own workers' organization, make a list of the reasons why, and be prepared to explain in the plenary session the why this is the case.

As a supplementary point, please explain what resources your own workers' organization allocates to skills development and lifelong learning activities.

## ► 5.2 Evaluation sheet – Does the policy on skills development and lifelong learning of your workers’ organization have these features?

Features	Yes	No	Comments
Anticipating skills needs			5.2.1. If yes... What does your workers’ organization consider should be done to anticipate skills needs?
Engaging employers and workers in decisions about training provision, including in specific sectors			5.2.2. If yes... What does your workers’ organization consider should be done to engage employers’ and workers’ organizations in decisions about training provision?
Maintaining the quality and relevance of training			5.2.3. If yes... What does your workers’ organization consider should be done to maintain the quality and relevance of training?
Making training accessible to all sectors of society			5.2.4. If yes... What does your workers’ organization consider should be done to ensure that training is accessible to all sectors of society?
Ensuring viable and equitable financing mechanisms			5.2.5. If yes... What does your workers’ organization consider should be done to ensure that the financing mechanisms are viable and equitable?
Continuously evaluating the economic and social outcomes of training			5.2.6. If yes... What does your workers’ organization consider should be done to evaluate the economic and social outcomes of training?
Others?			5.2.7. Please give details



## Activity 5.3

### What are the funding arrangements for skills development and lifelong learning?



The aim of this activity is to examine the funding arrangements for skills development and lifelong learning in your country or sector.



Typically the funding arrangements for initial TVET differ from those for continuing TVET.

With the aid of the evaluation sheet (5.3), please consider who funds initial TVET and continuing TVET in your country, or in your sector – public authorities, employers and/or the beneficiaries of the training (students, apprentices or workers)?

To refresh memories:

- Initial TVET: technical and vocational education and training that is carried out in a TVET institution before entering working life;
- Continuing TVET: technical and vocational education and training following entry into working life that enables workers to improve or update their knowledge and skills and/or to acquire new skills.

Please give details of who pays for what.

Once you have examined the situation in your country, turn to your neighbour, and in pairs exchange your opinions and identify the similarities and differences between your two sets of funding arrangements.

In two further activities...

1. Consider what is being funded and what, in your opinion, is not.
2. Explain how the workers' organizations in your country or sector influence choices on funding arrangements, in terms of:
  - The ways in which the funds are sourced – who provides the funds?
  - The ways in which the funds are allocated – what programmes are funded?

Be prepared to explain your views in the plenary session on these two further activities.



► **5.3 Evaluation sheet – Who funds initial TVET and continuing TVET in your country or sector, and what elements do they fund?**

Type of skills development	Public authorities Yes	Public authorities No	Please give details of the TVET elements that are funded
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5.3.1. Initial TVET

5.3.2. Continuing TVET

Type of skills development	Employers Yes	Employers No	Please give details of the TVET elements that are funded
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5.3.3. Initial TVET

5.3.4. Continuing TVET

Type of skills development	Beneficiaries Yes	Beneficiaries No	Please give details of the TVET elements that are funded
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5.3.5. Initial TVET

5.3.6. Continuing TVET

## ▶ Selected references and suggestions for further reading

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[http://www.apprenticeshipsupport.com.au/ApprenticeshipSupport/media/asa/PDFs/Employer\\_Financial\\_Incentives\\_NSW.pdf](http://www.apprenticeshipsupport.com.au/ApprenticeshipSupport/media/asa/PDFs/Employer_Financial_Incentives_NSW.pdf)

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## ▶ Skills anticipation and planning

Module 6 aims to enable officers and representatives of workers' organizations to:

- ▶ Improve their understanding of the ways in which skills development and lifelong learning are anticipated and planned;
- ▶ Identify ways in which workers' organizations engage in anticipating and planning skills development and lifelong learning; and
- ▶ Examine practical ways that the representatives of workers' organizations can construct a survey questionnaire to investigate learning experiences and needs at the workplace level.

### ▶ Introduction

As mentioned in Module 5, policies for the development of skills will need to be closely related to policies that make practical and effective use of these skills within labour markets. This requires convergence with a variety of other policy areas: employment; mobility and migration; industrial and economic development at the sectoral, regional and local levels; science and technology; and inclusiveness and social welfare. It also needs to address challenges and opportunities in the labour market linked to transitions, whether it is from the informal to the formal economy, or from an unsustainable resource-intensive economy to an environmentally sustainable economy for all.

Clearly, from a worker's perspective it is a waste of time, energy and resources – and a source of intense frustration – to be well trained but unable to find a job.

The point of skills anticipation is to ensure that there is not an imbalance between the skills required by employers in the labour market, and the skills that workers and potential workers have acquired.

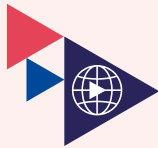


## ► What are skills for the world of work?

Basic/foundation skills, such as literacy and numeracy, are generally developed in the formal education system. They provide a basis for acquiring further vocational or technical skills that are required to carry out specific duties or tasks in the workplace, and for acquiring core work skills. These are thus generic “learning to learn” skills that are required to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills, and are the basis themselves for lifelong learning (Box 6.1)

### Box 6.1

#### Skills for the World of Work



##### Basic/ foundation

At their most elemental, foundation skills include the literacy and numeracy skills necessary for getting work that can pay enough to meet daily needs. These skills are also a prerequisite for continuing in education and training, and for acquiring transferable and technical and vocational skills that enhance the prospect of getting good jobs.

##### Vocational or technical

Specialized skills, knowledge or know-how needed to perform specific duties or tasks.

##### Professional/ personal

Individual attributes that impact on work habits, such as honesty, integrity and work ethic.

##### Core work skills

The ability to: learn and adapt; read, write and compute competently; listen and communicate effectively; think creatively; solve problems independently; manage oneself at work; interact with co-workers; work in teams or groups; handle basic technology; and lead effectively as well as follow supervision. (Brewer, 2013)

Workers may have the skills but not be in a position to use them. The most obvious reason for this is that there are no jobs, or no jobs where they live, or not enough jobs, or not enough quality jobs. On this basis they may be compelled to take jobs with a lower skill requirement.

The question that arises as a corollary to this is: how is it possible to ensure that workers have, and continue to have, the skills that are required in an ever-changing labour market, facing technological advances, the transition towards an environmentally sustainable economy and/or demographic changes?

Young workers may possibly obtain these skills, or at least some of them, through initial TVET in schools and training institutions, which may be able to offer some form of work-based learning, or apprenticeships that combine on- and off-the-job training.

For workers who are already employed, the situation is different. They are typically dependent upon the willingness of their employers to invest in skills development and the ability of their workers' organizations and workplace representatives to act on their behalf.

## ▶ Anticipating future skills needs

In 2010, the International Labour Organization indicated that a good skills development system would be based on a series of building blocks, the first of which is the anticipation of skills needs.

### What is skills needs anticipation?

Skills needs anticipation refers to activities to assess future skills needs in the labour market in a strategic way, using consistent and systematic methods.

The ILO is careful to point out the limitations of this exercise, however. It is not expected that these activities will provide **exact** numbers for the workers, skills and qualifications that are required for a future labour market. The reason for engaging in skills needs anticipation is nevertheless “to provide information to all labour market actors about potential future skills needs and imbalances, so that they can make decisions, develop measures and take actions with a view to meeting the needs and avoiding the imbalances.” (International Labour Office, 2015).

### Key priority for workers' organizations

**Workers' organizations need to contribute to the collection of data on skills training, so that stakeholders are in a position to monitor skills development and estimate the impact of their skills strategies.**



## What are the common features of skills anticipation?

While the systems for anticipation of skills needs vary enormously, as a reflection of widely different national contexts, the ILO has noted a number of common features that they may share – most notably, aiming to analyse the need for and availability of skills, to identify occupations that need developing or discontinuing, and to match supply and demand in different geographical areas (Box 6.2).

### Box 6.2

#### Skills needs anticipation and planning systems – Common features



Skills needs anticipation and planning systems are:

- Focused on solving specific problems – for example, skills in short supply, priority occupations and the need for workers in specific geographical areas;
- Clear about their principal objectives – for example, data for policy-makers and information for workers to make informed career choices;
- Able to access institutional platforms for social dialogue on education and training – for example, sector skills councils;
- Able to rely on competent institutions and expert networks;
- Able to achieve good data coverage and complementarity of information to cover all relevant levels (national, sectoral, regional and enterprise level) (International Labour Office, 2015)

## What are these skills needs anticipation and planning exercises used for?

They are basically used to inform the different aspects of TVET policy-making and implementation – most notably, national and sectoral skills strategies and training programmes (Box 6.3).

### Box 6.3

#### Skills needs analysis and anticipation exercises – Using the results to...



- provide an input to national and sectoral employment and skills strategies;
- accompany industrial, investment, trade, technology and environmental policies;
- design occupational and competency standards and training programmes;
- underpin budget allocations for education and training programmes, so as to target retraining programmes offered through employment services;
- inform policy decisions on the encouragement of workforce migration;
- evaluate training and skills development programmes and measure the impact of skills policies;
- inform vocational guidance and career counselling; and
- inform human resource development decisions by enterprises.



According to the views of workers' organizations reflected in a survey conducted by the ILO, Cedefop, the European Training Foundation and the OECD, workers' organizations primarily use the information for:

- ▶ informing collective bargaining processes;
- ▶ informing the strategic orientation of their organizations;
- ▶ influencing the policies of the Ministries of Education and Labour;
- ▶ advising workers in their organizations about the skills to develop; and
- ▶ developing or funding retraining, upskilling and apprenticeship programmes.

### Who should be involved in skills anticipation exercises?

For the European Training Foundation, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training and the International Labour Organization, the answer is clear: "in the case of skills it should be ministries – of education, labour, social affairs, economy and finance, government agencies, research community, social partners – including trade unions, and civil society organizations".

In response to the question "for whom?", the answer is that the main audiences include government and stakeholders, including workers' organizations. (European Training Foundation et al, 2016a)

### ▶ Workers' organizations and anticipating skills

In a number of countries (including Bangladesh, Colombia, Benin, Jamaica, Jordan, Madagascar, Mozambique, Peru, Tanzania and Uganda), tripartite committees have been set up to enable collaboration with stakeholders. "The success of these committees and platforms seems to be mixed, from the stakeholders' criticism on the degree and depth of their involvement." (International Labour Office, 2017b)

The same report notes that workers' organizations participate in some skills anticipation exercises, for example in Bangladesh, Tanzania and Uganda. The Bangladeshi National Skill Development Corporation includes the expertise of workers' organizations in sample skills demand surveys. The same is true for Tanzania and Uganda, where workers' organizations are involved in discussing survey results. However, in others such as Colombia, Jordan, Peru and Tunisia, employers are involved but not workers' organizations. (International Labour Office, 2017b)

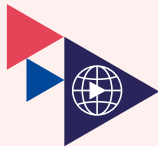
There are numerous examples in Europe of the involvement of workers' organizations in skills anticipation exercises. For example, in Ireland the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), which includes representation from the Irish Confederation of Trade Unions, has a significant role in skills anticipation and planning:

- ▶ It advises government on projected skills requirements at national and sectoral levels, and makes recommendations on how best to address the identified needs;
- ▶ It makes recommendations on how existing education and training systems and delivery mechanisms might be adapted to better effect, as well as the role that enterprises can play in developing the skills of their workforces; and
- ▶ It advises on any skills requirements that cannot be met internally at a given time, and so must be met through inward migration.

The EGFSN produces reports on a regular basis, for example on the impact of digitalization on Ireland's workforce (Box 6.4).

## Box 6.4

### Digital transformation: Assessing the impact of digitalization on Ireland's workforce – *Key findings*



One in three jobs in Ireland is at high risk of being disrupted by the adoption of digital technologies. The sectors most at risk are those normally associated with repetitive, manual tasks that can be replaced by automation.

The jobs at highest risk of displacement by digital technologies include many elementary, low-skilled occupations; the potential impact of automation will be felt by those with lower levels of educational attainment.

There will be opportunities for many people to upskill within their current jobs, but those people who do lose their jobs will have to retrain for new roles – and this will require engagement from different stakeholders.

In the coming years there will be a need for all stakeholders to prepare for an increasingly automated world, as it is likely that job roles may change more quickly than in the past, and individuals may have many different jobs over the course of their working lives. This will have implications for the types of skills people are taught during their years of formal education, but will also make the requirement for ongoing education and training more necessary. The concept of lifelong learning – where each individual has an education and training programme they follow throughout their career – will become more of an imperative.

### Anticipating skills needs for green and decent jobs

Climate change and environmental degradation are among the greatest challenges of our times. Transition to environmental sustainability can potentially create millions of jobs, but this will require bold action to invest in people's capabilities to realize their full potential and contribute to the productivity of enterprises. The ILO [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all \(2015\)](#) specify the role of the social partners with regard to skills development policies for a just transition:

Governments, in consultation with social partners, should:

- (a) Support the transitioning to more environmentally sustainable economies by reviewing skills development policies to ensure they support responsive training, capacity building and curricula;
- (b) Coordinate skills development policies and technical and vocational education and training systems with environmental policies and the greening of the economy, and consider concluding bipartite or tripartite agreements on skills development;
- (c) Match supply and demand for skills through skills needs assessments, labour market information and core skills development, in collaboration with industry and training institutions;
- (d) Give high policy priority and allocate resources to the identification and anticipation of evolving skills needs and the review and alignment of occupational skills profiles and training programmes; and
- (e) Encourage the acquisition of both generic skills and skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and their incorporation in curricula for basic training and lifelong learning. (paragraph 24)

Governments and social partners should:

- (a) Engage in social dialogue for responsive and collaborative labour market institutions and training systems, and coordinate stakeholder needs at all stages of education and skills policy development and implementation;
- (b) Promote equal access to opportunities for skills acquisition and recognition for all, in particular for young people, women, workers who need to be redeployed (including across borders), and for owners and workers of MSMEs (micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises), by offering specific training services, ensuring suitable timing and duration and promoting supportive policies to enable individuals to balance their work, family and lifelong learning interests;
- (c) Promote work-related training and practical experience as part of the training process, in order to increase the employability of jobseekers;
- (d) Formulate a holistic skills development policy, to promote skills for green jobs that are coherent with environmental policies, including means for appropriate recognition through certification of skills;
- (e) Foster peer learning among enterprises and workers, as well as education and training in green entrepreneurship, to spread sustainable practices and the use of green technologies; and
- (f) Assist businesses – particularly MSMEs, including cooperatives – in their engagement with governments and training providers with regard to the management and skills upgrading of their current workforce, anticipation of future occupational profiles and skills needs, and workers' acquisition of portable and employable skills. (paragraph 25)

## At the sectoral level

In Brazil, the mission of SENAI, the National Industrial Training Service, is to promote vocational training and technical education, stimulate innovation in industrial technologies and increase the competitiveness of Brazilian industry. Workers' organizations are represented on its sectoral technical committees, whose role is to help identify training needs and draw up training profiles to meet this demand. The data collected by the sectoral technical committees leads to the production of competency profiles and then feeds into programme design. (European Training Foundation et al., 2016b).

In France, sectoral forecasting observatories for occupations and qualifications (OPMQs), composed of representatives of employers' and workers' organizations, engage in the following key skills anticipation and planning activities:

- ▶ Collecting and analysing employment and training data about current trends and needs;
- ▶ Identifying key economic, technological, regulatory and demographic drivers, and forecasting their future impacts on employment, occupations and training needs; and
- ▶ Disseminating data to stakeholders, including the government, regional councils, employers' federations and workers' organizations.

The methods they use and the resources they provide are found in Box 6.5.

### Box 6.5

#### Forecasting observatories for occupations and qualifications – Methods and resources – France



Forecasting observatories for occupations and qualifications use macroeconomic forecasts, in combination with surveys and qualitative information, to generate projections for the demand for and supply of qualifications in their sectors.

They focus primarily on the production of surveys and analyses in a variety of areas: prospective jobs and skills management; training and recruitment needs; forecasting; age management; certification schemes; and equality at work. They also produce statistical databases and undertake the mapping of occupations.

## At the enterprise level

If the institutional structures at the enterprise level are non-existent or weak, or need strengthening, there are still opportunities for workers' organizations to be proactive and to provide a voice for workers in the skills anticipation process.

A number of European trade unions from Bulgaria, England, Germany, Italy, Romania and Spain recently produced a toolkit that enables representatives of workers' organizations to develop workplace learning. A section on skills analysis is included in Step 3 ("Entering into a dialogue with workers"), which presents a template for a survey questionnaire focusing on previous workplace learning and current workplace learning needs, and which is the subject of a training activity (see Activity 6.3).

### Key priority for workers' organizations

**Workers' organizations need to build capacity within their own organizations so that their officers are qualified and able to defend workers' interests within tripartite multi-sectoral and sectoral bodies dealing with skills development issues and – where possible – negotiate collective bargaining agreements.**

In some countries, workers' organizations are engaged in skills anticipation and planning exercises. While the focus is firmly on the skills needs of the labour market, the presence of workers' organizations enables the (often overlooked) skills needs of workers to be heard. Workers' organizations may then use the results of these skills anticipation and planning exercises to inform collective bargaining processes, inform the strategic orientation of their organizations, influence the policies of the Ministries of Education and Labour, advise workers in their organizations about skills to develop, and develop or fund retraining, upskilling and apprenticeship programmes.



## Activity 6.1

### What are the skills for the world of work?



The aim of this activity is to identify the different types of skills required for a series of occupations.



As seen in this module (Box 6.1), there are numerous work-related skills – basic/foundation, vocational or technical, professional/personal, and core work skills – that may enhance the employability of young people, and of course of all workers.

#### Box 6.1 – ILO skills for the world of work

<b>Basic/ foundation</b>	At their most elemental, foundation skills include the literacy and numeracy skills necessary for getting work that can pay enough to meet daily needs. These skills are also a prerequisite for continuing in education and training, and for acquiring transferable and technical and vocational skills that enhance the prospect of getting good jobs.
<b>Vocational or technical</b>	Specialized skills, knowledge or know-how needed to perform specific duties or tasks
<b>Professional/ personal</b>	Individual attributes that impact on work habits, such as honesty, integrity and work ethic
<b>Core work skills</b>	The ability to: learn and adapt; read, write and compute competently; listen and communicate effectively; think creatively; solve problems independently; manage oneself at work; interact with co-workers; work in teams or groups; handle basic technology; and lead effectively as well as follow supervision.

In pairs, take one of the following occupations – baker, electrician, hairdresser, mechanic, nurse, plumber, salesperson, secretary or tailor, or one of your own choosing – and identify some of the basic/foundation, vocational or technical, professional/personal and core work skills that would be required to do the job appropriately in light of the latest demands of the changing world of work.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the different types of skills that would be required for your chosen occupation.

## Activity 6.2

### What are the key features of skills anticipation and planning?



The aim of this activity is to identify the key features of skills anticipation and planning in your country.



At the beginning of Module 6 (Box 6.2) there is a list of the common features that skills anticipation and planning may have, as follows:

- Focused on solving specific problems – for example, skills in short supply, priority occupations and the need for workers in specific geographical areas;
- Clear about their principal objectives – for example, data for policy-makers and information for workers to make informed career choices;
- Able to access institutional platforms for social dialogue on education and training – for example, sector skills councils;
- Able to rely on competent institutions and expert networks; and
- Able to achieve good data coverage and complementarity of information to cover all relevant levels (national, sectoral, regional and enterprise level).

In groups of three or four, using evaluation sheet 6.1, please indicate whether these features are to be found in skills anticipation exercises in your own country or sector (yes or no).

If the answer is yes, please comment on the form these features take.

If the answer is no, please explain why.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the features of the skills anticipation and planning exercises in your own country or sector.

## ▶ 6.1 Evaluation sheet – System in your country for anticipating skills and planning their development – Common features

Features Are skills anticipation and planning:	Yes	No	Comments
6.2.1 Focused on solving specific problems – for example, skills in short supply, priority occupations and the need for workers in specific geographical areas?			
6.2.2 Clear about their principal objectives – for example, data for policy-makers, and information to make informed career choices for workers?			
6.2.3 Able to access institutional platforms for social dialogue on education and training – for example, sector skills councils?			
6.2.4 Able to rely on competent institutions and expert networks?			
6.2.5 Able to achieve good data coverage and complementarity of information?			
6.2.6 Able to cover all relevant levels (national, sectoral, regional and enterprise)?			

## Activity 6.3

### How are the results of skills needs analysis and anticipation exercises used?



The aim of this activity is to identify the uses to which skills needs analysis and anticipation exercises may be put in your country or sector



At the beginning of Module 6 (Box 6.3) there is a list of the uses to which skills needs analysis and anticipation exercises may be put, to:

- provide an input to national and sectoral employment and skills strategies;
- accompany industrial, investment, trade, technology and environmental policies;
- design occupational and competency standards and training programmes;
- underpin budget allocations for education and training programmes, so as to target retraining programmes offered through employment services;
- inform policy decisions on the encouragement of workforce migration;
- evaluate training and skills development programmes and measure the impact of skills policies;
- inform vocational guidance and career counselling; and
- inform human resource development decisions by enterprises.

On the basis of your experience, and with the aid of the evaluation sheet (6.3) on the next page, please indicate whether skills needs analysis and anticipation exercises are used in your own country or sector (yes or no).

If the answer is yes, please comment on the ways in which the results of these exercises are used.

If the answer is no, please explain why.

As a supplementary activity, please indicate the ways in which workers' organizations use this information.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the uses of skills analysis and anticipation exercises.

## ► 6.2 Evaluation sheet – Skills needs analysis and anticipation exercises – Use of results to...

	Uses	Yes	No	Comments
6.3.1	Provide an input to national and sectoral employment and skills strategies			
6.3.2	Accompany industrial, investment, trade, technology and environmental policies			
6.3.3	Design occupational and competency standards and training programmes			
6.3.4	Underpin budget allocations for education and training programmes			
6.3.5	Target retraining programmes offered through employment services			
6.3.6	Inform policy decisions on the encouragement of workforce migration			
6.3.7	Evaluate training and skills development programmes and measure the impact of skills policies			
6.3.8	Inform vocational guidance and career counselling			
6.3.9	Inform human resource development decisions by enterprises			

## Activity 6.4

### How can representatives of workers' organizations construct a survey questionnaire to investigate learning experiences and needs at the workplace?



The aim of this activity is to examine the ways that the representatives of workers' organizations can construct a survey questionnaire to investigate workers' learning experiences and needs at the workplace.



A number of European trade unions from Bulgaria, England, Germany, Italy, Romania and Spain recently produced a toolkit that enables trade union representatives to develop workplace learning. A section on skills analysis included in Step 3 ("Entering into a dialogue with workers") proposes a template for the construction of a survey questionnaire to investigate workers' previous learning experiences and analyse their learning needs.

On the basis of the survey questionnaire (6.4), work in groups of three or four to consider which questions would be appropriate for use within your own workplace.

Be prepared to present your choices, and the reasons for them, to the plenary session.

## ▶ 6.3. Template for a survey questionnaire to investigate learning experiences and needs at the workplace

This survey questionnaire is **confidential**. It is designed to investigate individual and collective workplace learning needs, as a basis for a dialogue with the employer. All information about individuals' views will be kept **strictly confidential**.

### Personal details

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Job title \_\_\_\_\_
3. Department \_\_\_\_\_
4. Contact details \_\_\_\_\_
5. Formal qualifications \_\_\_\_\_

### Previous workplace learning

6. Has anyone consulted you before about your workplace learning needs?
  - yes       no
  - 6.1 If yes, did this lead to an opportunity for workplace learning?
    - yes       no
7. If you have had an opportunity for workplace learning
  - 7.1 What activities did you take up? (Please give examples.)
  - 7.2 When did they take place?
  - 7.3 What is your opinion of them?
  - 7.4 Have you been able to use the skills that you acquired in your daily work?
    - yes       no
  - 7.5 Did the activities lead to some form of qualification?
    - yes       no
    - 7.5.1 If yes, please give details
  - 7.6 Did they lead to some form of improvement in pay or working conditions?
    - yes       no
  - 7.7 What would you propose to make them more useful?



**Present workplace learning needs**

8. Are there problems that could be solved by improvements in workplace learning for your job or your team? Please provide details.
9. What type(s) of workplace learning would you personally be interested in taking up?
- 9.1 Vocational (job-related)?  
 yes       no
- 9.2 Key competencies (e.g. working with numbers, reading, writing, computer skills)?  
 yes       no
- 9.3 Personal development (e.g. improving self-confidence and developing talents)?  
 yes       no
10. Please give more specific details about the type(s) of workplace learning that you would be interested in taking up.

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11. Why would you want to take up this workplace learning?

---

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12. Where would you like this workplace learning to take place?

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## ▶ Delivery, recognition and certification of skills

Module 7 aims to enable officers and representatives of workers' organizations to:

- ▶ improve their understanding of the ways in which skills can be delivered, recognized and certified;
- ▶ identify ways in which workers' organizations engage in the delivery, recognition and certification of skills; and
- ▶ examine ways in which the demands and proposals of workers' organizations can be taken into considerations when decisions are taken on the delivery, recognition and certification of skills.

### ▶ Introduction

According to the L20, which brings together workers' organizations from G20 countries along with global unions, there has been an evolution in thinking on skills development.

"Historically unions have been primarily interested in the regulation of labour market entry-level training, in particular through apprenticeships. Nowadays, unions seek to address training issues for broader groups of workers. They have acknowledged that not only their members but workers in general are interested in the development, recognition and certification of skills and competencies.

That has caused unions across different skill formation regimes to focus on the integration of employee voices into training and workforce development by implementing new modes of informal or formal partnerships with management or by strengthening existing union-management cooperation on skills formation." (L20, 2015).



## Training delivery

One of the key shifts in the delivery and assessment of TVET and skills training has been a move away from traditional classroom-based learning to more practical skills training that provide learners with an opportunity to develop and demonstrate their skills to the standard expected in the workplace. The development of competency- or outcome-based curriculum has gone hand in hand with an expansion of work-based learning, where training is delivered in real or simulated workplace settings.

There has also been greater attention given to the use of problem- and project-based learning, to ensure that students are able to engage with and complete the sort of problems they will face in the workplace. These shifts have presented education and training institutions with a number of challenges, including the need to upskill their teaching staff and to improve their teaching facilities so that they can provide more realistic training meeting labour market needs.

It has also meant that institutions are now expected to reach out and form partnerships with enterprises, industry and social partners, so that the world of education and training has stronger connections with the world of work. Trade unions are also an important provider of training, often through their own training centres.

### The Impact of COVID-19 on skills development and training delivery

The major challenge for institutions in the TVET and skills sector during the COVID-19 pandemic was to remain operational, establish communications with and between teachers and students, and continue to provide their services to the community, despite having suspended face-to-face classes. Some TVET institutions supported national crisis response measures and used their workshops to manufacture personal protective equipment and hand sanitizer for healthcare personnel, or to 3D-print medical devices. Work-based learning was maintained in very few countries and in sectors where commercial activities continued. Other impacts included adjustments to the academic calendar, the prioritizing of students for high-stake examinations and assessments, and moving to online and offline distance learning or expanding its availability. However, the shift to online learning laid bare the digital divide between rich and poor countries, and between general/higher education and TVET. Uneven access to equipment, tools and skills widened the existing inequalities, and it was acknowledged that future action was required to:

- improve Internet infrastructure and access to digital equipment and tools;
- expand access for learners to online digital application and platforms;
- provide support for teachers and trainers to operate in the new environment;
- increase distance learning options for core, entrepreneurial and employability skills to vulnerable groups and individuals;
- strengthen systems for the recognition and validation of digital learning;
- increase investment in digital solutions for practical skills development; and
- improve social dialogue and coordination among education and training institutions, employment services and local authorities.

(ILO. 2020. [Distance and Online Learning during the time of COVID-19](#))

## ► Qualifications for skills development

This evolution in thinking on TVET mentioned above has accompanied another evolution – in the development of qualifications and how skills are recognized. The emphasis has changed from qualifications based on training inputs, to qualifications based on competencies and learning outcomes: what a learner is expected to know, be able to do and understand at the end of a programme of learning. In simple terms, the focus has moved from what the trainers need to teach, to what the learners need to learn and be able to do.

This forms part of a broader change from “traditional” qualifications to “modern” qualifications. Among other things, this change addresses the focus of training, the definition of training, the basis for standards and the types of learners (Box 7.1). The emphasis is shifting from training for young learners prior to entering working life, to a variety of learning activities for people of all ages throughout life. Learners can learn in schools, but they can also learn in different ways in different situations, via alternative pathways. The formal recognition of qualifications and what they represent in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies may provide access to jobs and learning opportunities vertically in a single sector, or to a variety of different jobs and learning opportunities horizontally.

All in all, the switch from “traditional” to “modern” qualifications helps to support the implementation of “ensuring access for all” – a subject which will be considered in greater detail in Module 8.

## Box 7.1

### “Traditional” and “Modern” Qualifications



“Traditional”	“Modern”
focusing on initial training	supporting lifelong learning
determined by providers	defined by stakeholders
based on knowledge inputs	based on learning outcomes
fixed programs	alternative pathways
used for first job entry	used for different purposes, including job entry, changing jobs, further learning and career change
focused on young learners	designed for all types of learners
mainly vertical progression	horizontal and vertical progression and mobility
overseen by a single authority, often led by education ministries	involving different institutions and stakeholders, including workers' organizations
only full qualifications recognized	partial recognition (unitization) is a key principle, including the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning

*Based on European Training Foundation, 2016.*





## ► Benefits for workers

There has been a progression from “traditional” to “modern” qualifications, and this has affected how skills are developed, certified and recognized, in such a way as to generate a series of benefits for workers, as follows:

- The move from initial training for young people to lifelong learning provides continuing TVET opportunities for workers of all ages, and opportunities for lifelong learning; it is useful for initial job entry, but also for career development, either vertically with the same employer, or horizontally and vertically with a new employer;
- The switch from training inputs to learning outcomes makes it possible for workers to demonstrate what they know and can do, particularly if there is a system in place for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning; and
- The expansion of the range of stakeholders in governance systems makes it possible for workers’ skills needs to be transmitted via workers’ organizations.

### **Key priority for workers’ organizations**

**Workers’ organizations need to support the introduction of measures to enable the recognition of non-formal and informal learning to facilitate enhanced labour market mobility**

## ▶ Developing and issuing qualifications

Qualifications are important in the world of work. They act as a passport in the recruitment and promotion process, enabling workers to demonstrate what they know and can do, on the basis of generally recognized standards, and enabling employers to take on new staff readily, likewise on the basis of generally recognized standards, without needing to carry out their own individual investigations.

Developing and issuing a qualification is often a complex process, entailing a number of different steps:

- ▶ Determining labour market and skills needs (as seen in Module 6);
- ▶ Establishing an occupational profile and training standards;
- ▶ Defining the curriculum and assessment procedures;
- ▶ Setting up a training programme;
- ▶ Formally certifying and validating the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired; and
- ▶ Issuing certificates or diplomas from accredited awarding bodies.

In many countries, these processes may offer opportunities for workers' organizations to be involved, via consultative and/or regulatory bodies, and for them to relay workers' interests and skills needs.

The exact content of these process will vary from country to country.

In Ireland, for example, the development of a national post-2014 apprenticeship qualification starts off with an indication of skills needs and then develops and approves, among other things: an occupational profile; standards; curriculum; and assessment. It subsequently approves the validation and quality assurance of the apprenticeship programme, after which the apprenticeship is ready to be launched (Box 7.2).

## Box 7.2

### Development of a post-2014 national apprenticeship qualification – Ireland



**Step 1** – Post-2014 apprenticeships are employer-led in Ireland; the industry-led consortium is required to provide evidence of demand for an apprenticeship proposal on the basis of the anticipation of skills needs.

**Step 2** – The Ministry for Education and Skills, with support from the Apprenticeship Council – made up of representatives of employers’ organizations, trade unions and training providers – is required to assess and approve the proposal for development.

**Step 3** – SOLAS, the public agency responsible for apprenticeship training, leads the consultation prior to approval of the project plan, and allocates the funding.

**Step 4** – The industry-led consortium develops the programme, which should contain the occupational profile, standards, curriculum and assessment. In addition, the industry-led consortium is required to provide key documents, such as the professional award type descriptors, the validation policies and criteria, and the quality assurance guidelines for the apprenticeship.

**Step 5** – The Apprenticeship Council reviews and approves the occupational profile, ensuring that there is no overlap with existing apprenticeships.

**Step 6** – Quality and Qualifications Ireland, which is responsible for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training, approves the validation and quality assurance of the apprenticeship programme.

**Step 7** – SOLAS creates the Industrial Training Order, which is a statutory instrument designating an industrial activity as an apprenticeship.

**Step 8** – SOLAS agrees the implementation plan and budget.

**Step 9** – SOLAS approves the registration for apprenticeship presented by the employer.

**Step 10** – The industry-led consortium launches the apprenticeship.

TVET qualifications have typically been free-standing, not linked to higher-level qualifications, including those offered by universities, but increasingly they are being incorporated into national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) that have developed at a remarkable rate in the last ten years. “The total figure now exceeds 150. The United Nations lists 193 sovereign states, so NQF coverage extends to approximately three in four countries”. (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2015).

As presented by the ILO, “a qualifications framework is an instrument for the development, classification and recognition of skills, knowledge and competencies along a continuum of agreed levels”. A qualifications framework is a way of structuring existing and new qualifications, defined by learning outcomes. A qualifications framework indicates the comparability of different qualifications and – importantly for workers – helps to facilitate progress from one level to another, within and across occupations or industrial sectors. (International Labour Organization, 2007)

## ► Recognizing skills

Skills are often not fully recognized, particularly those acquired on the job, with no form of accredited certification, and this means that the opportunities for career advancement and labour mobility for workers and potential workers are significantly constrained.

To make these skills more visible, numerous initiatives have been undertaken to validate non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL), or to recognize prior learning (RPL). They have been described by the ILO as “a process of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying formal, non-formal and informal learning outcomes against standards used in formal education and training”. The existence of a system to recognize prior learning makes it possible to obtain a qualification, or one part of a qualification, without attending a formal education and training programme in a TVET institution. (International Labour Organization, 2018).

Workers and potential workers may benefit in a variety of different ways (Box 7.3).

## Box 7.3

### Recognition of prior learning – Profiles of potential beneficiaries



Profile	Why they may need RPL
A craftsperson, such as a plumber, mason, cook, electrician, hairdresser, etc. (in the formal and/or informal economy)...	...who acquired initial competencies informally, or furthered his/her skills on the job, but does not hold any qualification, or holds one that is not recognized by employers, or holds a formal qualification for a lower skill level than the one attained on the job
any worker in the informal economy...	...who wants to move to the formal economy
an unemployed person...	...who realizes that formal certification is required to find a job
an economically inactive person...	...who used to work in an occupation without certification and exited the labour market, who now wants to go back and find formal employment
a caretaker or a person employed in an occupation mainly conducted at home, without a qualification (mostly by women, often unpaid)...	...who wants to move into a job outside the home and into the labour market
an employed person working in any job where qualification requirements have changed over the years, or where qualification requirements differ across countries (such as someone caring for the elderly, kindergarten worker, physiotherapist, coach, etc.)...	...and who wants to remain competitive on the labour market
a migrant worker or returning migrant worker...	...who needs to obtain formal recognition of competencies in the recipient country, including competencies acquired through non-formal and informal channels

*Adapted from International Labour Organization, 2018.*

Workers' organizations may take on certain responsibilities, such as:

- ▶ Supporting the process of RPL in different ways throughout its development;
- ▶ Shaping the system and safeguarding the interests of their members and other workers; and
- ▶ Being represented on relevant regulatory and/or consultative bodies, such as sectoral councils for qualifications.

## ▶ Workers organizations and the recognition of skills and qualifications

As has already been shown in previous modules, workers' organizations are active in developing skills at the national, sectoral and enterprise levels. Here are further examples, with an emphasis on the certification and recognition of qualifications and skills, and the recognition of prior learning.

### At the national level

In the Irish case, presented above in Box 7.2, workers' organizations, as formal members of the Apprenticeship Council, are able to influence the policy-making process, at a minimum at Steps 2 and 5. Another opportunity arises at Step 1, if the analysis of skills needs is carried out by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, which – as was seen in Module 6 – includes a representative from the Irish Confederation of Trade Unions. If workers' organizations are part of the industry-led consortium, there is also a further opportunity during the programme development phase (Step 4), as was the case with the Services Industrial Professional and Technical Trade Union of Ireland in the preparation of the scaffolding apprenticeship.

Latin America: Workers' organizations in Mexico, as members of the board of the tripartite National Council for Standardization and Certification of Labour Market Competencies, are involved in the certification of competencies within national certification systems. In addition, in Chile, the Unitary Workers Central (*Central Unitaria de Trabajadores*) is on the Board of ChileValora, which is the regulatory agency of the national system for certification of competencies.

Asia: Workers' organizations are represented on tripartite consultative bodies, on the Indian National Council for Vocational Training, which advises the Ministry of Labour and Employment on the definition of standards for syllabi, equipment, duration of courses, methods of training and certification.

In South Africa, workers' organizations are members of the board of the South African Qualifications Authority, which oversees development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework, and also the Quality Council on Trades and Occupations, which is responsible for overseeing the design, implementation, assessment and certification of occupational qualifications.

### At the sectoral level

It is at the sectoral level that workers' organizations are most active. Reference has been made in previous modules to the involvement of workers' organizations from Bangladesh in the Industry Skills Councils, from Denmark in the trade committees and from South Africa in the Sector Education and Training Authorities.

In Latin America, workers' organizations in many countries are also represented on regulatory and/or consultative boards:

- ▶ In Argentina, workers' organizations are represented on the Sectoral Councils for Continuing Learning and Skills Certification, which present the sectors' demands in terms of identification of skills needs and standards of proficiency, and which carry out evaluation and certification.
- ▶ In Brazil, workers' organizations are members of the National Councils of the S-System (SENAI, for industry; SENAC, for commerce and the service sector; SENAR, for rural workers; and SENAT, for transport workers) and are also represented on the Sectoral Technical Committees of the National Industrial Training Service, which is responsible for defining vocational profiles for curriculum design.

Europe: In Finland, which has a well-developed system of RPL, tripartite involvement is found at the national level, in the National Board of Education, which supervises the national validation framework, and at the sectoral level, in the Qualification Committees, which are responsible for defining occupational standards.

### At the enterprise level

There are also possibilities at the enterprise level for workers' organizations to be engaged in advising workers on the recognition and certification of qualifications and skills, particularly in countries that have information, consultation and participation structures.



## Key priority for workers' organizations

**Workers' organizations need to lobby governments to introduce legislation that enables workers' representatives to play a determinant role in skills development and to have reasonable paid time off for: analysing learning or training needs; providing information and advice about learning or training matters; arranging and supporting learning and training; consulting the employer about carrying out such activities; and preparing to carry out these activities.**

In Germany, works councils (which include workers' representatives) have certain legally binding responsibilities for TVET, and German workers' organizations offer workplace representatives training on the subject. IG Metall, for example, has produced manuals to support workers' representatives in bargaining for training at the workplace level.

### ► Workers' organizations as training providers

In addition, workers' organizations may also be engaged directly or indirectly as training providers in recognition and certification of qualifications and skills, via their own TVET institutions. The example of the Metalworkers' Union of the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) in Argentina was presented in Module 4.

Another example would be the Vocational Training Institute (Berufsförderungsinstitut/BFI) in Austria, which was set up in 1959 by the Chamber of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Confederation as a vocational training institute for adults – workers and jobseekers. It offers a range of courses and educational services, including degree-level courses, remedial courses for entering university, continuing vocational education and training (CVET) evening courses and distance learning, as well as a variety of adult education classes. All in all, it offers numerous opportunities for skills development and lifelong learning.

Workers' organizations in some countries are engaged in recognizing and certifying qualifications and skills. This may be facilitated by the presentation of national strategies, but more often through their participation in discussions and decisions within regulatory and/or consultative bodies, whether at the national or sectoral levels.

## Activity 7.1

### What are the key features of “traditional” and “modern” qualifications?



The aim of this activity is to identify the key features of qualifications in your country.



At the beginning of Module 7 there is a table listing the features of “traditional” and “modern” qualifications, as follows:

<b>“Traditional” Qualifications</b>	<b>“Modern” Qualifications</b>
focusing on initial training	supporting lifelong learning
determined by providers	defined by stakeholders
based on curriculum	based on learning outcomes
fixed programs	alternative pathways
used for first job entry	designed for different purposes, including job entry, changing jobs, further learning, and career change
focused on young learners	for all types of learners
mainly vertical progression	horizontal and vertical progression and mobility
overseen by a single authority, often led by education ministries	involving different institutions and stakeholders, including workers’ organizations
only full qualifications recognized	partial recognition (unitization) is a key principle, including the possibility for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

In groups of three or four, please indicate on the basis of your own experience which of these features in the table correspond to qualifications in your own country or sector.

As a second activity, make your own list of benefits for workers resulting from the shift from “traditional” to “modern” qualifications.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the different aspects of “traditional” and “modern” qualifications in your own country or sector, and secondly the benefits to workers resulting from the shift from “traditional” to “modern” qualifications.

## Activity 7.2

### What are the steps required to prepare a qualification?



The aim of this activity is to:

- consider the stages in the preparation of a qualification, on the basis of an example taken from Ireland;
- design a process that represents the preparation of a qualification in your own country or sector; and
- indicate the stages at which it is possible for your own workers' organization to influence the process.



In Module 7 there is a figure indicating the ten steps on the critical path to the development of an employer-led post-2014 national apprenticeship qualification in Ireland, as follows:

**Step 1** – Post-2014 apprenticeships are employer-led in Ireland; the industry-led consortium is required to provide evidence of demand for an apprenticeship proposal on the basis of **the anticipation of skills needs**.

**Step 2** – The Ministry for Education and Skills, with support from the Apprenticeship Council – made up of representatives of employers' organizations, trade unions and training providers – is required to assess and approve the proposal for development.

**Step 3** – SOLAS, the public agency responsible for apprenticeship training, leads the consultation prior to **approval of the project plan, and allocates the funding**.

**Step 4** – The industry-led consortium develops the **programme**, which should contain the **occupational profile, standards, curriculum and assessment**. In addition, the industry-led consortium is required to provide key documents, such as the professional award type descriptors, the validation policies and criteria, and the quality assurance guidelines for the apprenticeship.

**Step 5** – The Apprenticeship Council reviews and approves the occupational profile, ensuring that there is no overlap with existing apprenticeships.

**Step 6** – Quality and Qualifications Ireland, which is responsible for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training, **approves the validation and quality assurance of the apprenticeship programme**.

**Step 7** – SOLAS creates the **Industrial Training Order**, which is a statutory instrument designating an industrial activity as an apprenticeship.

**Step 8** – SOLAS agrees the **implementation plan and budget**.

**Step 9** – SOLAS approves the registration for apprenticeship presented by the employer.

**Step 10** – The industry-led consortium launches the apprenticeship.

- First, please read the list of ten steps carefully, on the basis of your experience. Note the different elements in **bold** that correspond to the different activities required for developing and certifying a qualification.
- Second, design a diagram that would express the stages of a process for preparing a qualification in your own country or sector; what elements of development and certification would be undertaken at each stage?
- Third, in pairs, share information about the preparation process in your country/countries, and indicate the stages where it is possible for your workers' organization to influence the process.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the ways in which your workers' organization could influence the preparation process.

## ▶ Selected references and suggestions for further reading

### General

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## ▶ Access to skills for all

Module 8 aims to enable officers and representatives of workers' organizations to:

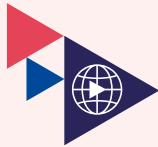
- ▶ improve their understanding of the challenges that under-represented groups face in gaining access to skills development and lifelong learning;
- ▶ consider ways in which an enabling policy or strategy can be developed; and
- ▶ examine ways in which workers' organizations promote access for all to skills development and lifelong learning.

## ▶ Introduction

The ILO has clearly expressed that education and training should be a right for all, that equal opportunities for men and women should be promoted, and that access should be promoted to education and training for people with special needs (Box 8.1).

## Box 8.1

### ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)



The Human Resources Development Recommendation calls on members to:

- recognize that education and training are a right for all and, in cooperation with the social partners, work towards ensuring access for all to lifelong learning;
- promote equal opportunities for women and men in education, training and lifelong learning; and
- promote access to education, training and lifelong learning for people with nationally identified special needs, such as youth, low-skilled people, people with disabilities, migrants, older workers, indigenous people, ethnic minority groups and the socially excluded.

More recently, in 2015 the General Assembly of the United Nations agreed a series of Sustainable Development Goals, one of which (SDG4) is to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, with specific targets relating to gender, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations (Box 8.2).



## Box 8.2

### UN Sustainable Development Goals and targets



#### SDG4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;
- By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university;
- By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship; and
- By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

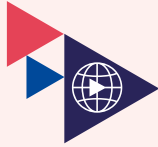
In its Centenary Declaration, the International Labour Conference declared that the ILO must direct its efforts to promoting the acquisition of skills, competencies and qualifications for all workers throughout their working lives, as a joint responsibility of governments and the social partners, in order to:

- ▶ address existing and anticipated skills gaps;
- ▶ pay particular attention to ensuring that education and training systems are responsive to labour market needs, taking into account the evolution of work; and
- ▶ enhance workers' capacity to make use of the opportunities available for decent work.

These UN Sustainable Development Goals and targets are ambitious. For some countries they will be attainable, for others they will not be. However, even in countries where these goals may be met, experience has shown that the better qualified have more opportunities for technical vocational education and training, and often those who need it the most do not get it. (Box 8.3).

## Box 8.3

### Access to training – Challenges identified in Europe (figures for 2018)



- Only 4.3 per cent of Europeans with at best lower secondary qualifications took part in education or training, compared to 18.6 per cent of highly qualified persons;
- In many countries, workers in non-standard forms of work lack access to the same training and career development opportunities as their counterparts in standard forms of work;
- A little over 6 per cent of older citizens (aged 55 to 64) take part in learning, compared to 17.8 per cent of young people (aged 25 to 34); and
- People working in micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises have many fewer opportunities to engage in further training than those working in large companies.

As a further example, part-time work – often considered to be the best form of non-standard employment – is associated with low or lower levels of training. Full-time workers in Japan are more likely to undertake training than non-standard workers, including part-time as well as temporary and contract workers. In the European Union, the likelihood of part-time workers receiving training declines as a function of the number of hours they work.

Entire social groups are significantly under-represented, including girls and women, persons with disabilities, migrants and minorities.

The barriers may be physical, linked for example to the architecture of buildings or the availability of appropriate transport facilities. These are of particular concern for persons with disabilities, but also for girls and women. They may be non-physical, based on social or religious discrimination, skin colour, cultural stereotypes, low expectations or language. These are concerns not only for girls and women, but also for persons with disabilities and migrants. They may also be legal – particularly for migrants.

More specifically for women, the ILO has indicated the following:

- ▶ Occupational choices remain gender-based;
- ▶ Women still face more barriers to education and training, especially in rural, informal and traditional economies;

- ▶ For women, higher skills levels do not (yet) mean better jobs; and
- ▶ Women still lag behind in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) fields.

What can be done to achieve these UN Sustainable Development Goals and targets, and to overcome these barriers?

## ▶ Developing an enabling policy or strategy

A series of different measures may be taken to support under-represented groups, on the basis of existing experience and practice, as the ILO has already demonstrated.

### Persons with disabilities

For persons with disabilities, access to TVET may be underpinned by legal provision. This may be a specific law – for example, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act in England, Scotland and Wales – which gives disabled people rights not to be discriminated against in education and training. Or it may be part of a law specifically devoted to TVET, as for example in Germany, where “the subject matter, nature, purpose and duration of vocational training preparation must be geared to the special requirements of persons with disabilities, or socially disadvantaged persons, and such preparation must be accompanied by comprehensive guidance and support” (German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2005).

An enabling policy or strategy could cater to all individuals in the population (such as in Bangladesh); it could seek to promote access for all disadvantaged groups in the population (such as in South Africa); or it could focus solely on including persons with disabilities (such as in Costa Rica). It may be supported by a network of specialized TVET institutions, as in France, or, in some cases, initiatives led by NGOs, such as the EBTESSEMA in Egypt, or individual TVET institutions, such as the Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for People with Physical Disabilities (BBRVBD) in Indonesia, or the National Apprenticeship Institute in Costa Rica.

### Girls and women

For girls and women, access to TVET may be supported by ensuring that a solid educational base is in place, upon which further skills could be developed. It should include, for example:

- ▶ delivering large-scale public and private sector programming for girls’ education, skills and market-adapted training; and
- ▶ improving the quality and relevance of teaching and learning, to enable girls to develop the foundational, transferable and technical/vocational skills needed for life and work.

An enabling policy or strategy may propose numerical targets – for example 40 per cent female enrolment in TVET by 2020 in Bangladesh – and improve reporting, accountability and transparency – for example by publishing completion rates and transition-to-work rates in apprenticeship training – with the figures broken down by gender. It would ensure that TVET programmes were more flexible in terms of delivery, so as to allow for better integration of training with household or childcare duties, or seasonal agricultural work.

## Migrants and minorities

For migrants, it could include measures in line with Article 33(c) of the ILO Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, to “facilitate the recognition, certification, accreditation and use of skills and qualifications of refugees through appropriate mechanisms, and provide access to tailored training and retraining opportunities, including intensive language training”. An example for refugees would be the information portal established by the German government for the recognition of foreign professional qualifications. For returnees, an example would be the initiative in Sri Lanka to recognize the skills of Sri Lankan migrant workers. However, in an ILO study of bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding on migration of low-skilled workers between countries, there is little or no reference to support for training.

## Across-the-board measures

A further series of across-the-board measures would be essential to ensure the success of an enabling policy or strategy for all under-represented groups:

- ▶ Information services and vocational guidance, to enable learners to become aware of different types of occupations and the availability of corresponding TVET programmes and their entry requirements;
- ▶ Pre-vocational training, to ensure that learners have basic skills – particularly literacy and numeracy – and are subsequently prepared to embark on TVET programmes;
- ▶ Mechanisms for the recognition of prior learning, or the validation of non-formal and informal learning, to enable experienced workers to demonstrate that they have the skills required (and the certificates to prove it) to take on skilled tasks and be considered for more highly qualified – and better paid – jobs, as was indicated in Module 7; and
- ▶ Active labour market programmes, to enable unemployed or vulnerable workers to access training or work placements so that they can continue to remain connected to the world of work.

## ▶ Workers' organizations and improving access for all to skills development and lifelong learning

Workers' organizations may support vulnerable groups in different ways in accessing skills development and lifelong learning.

A partnership between the ILO and the Government of Jordan enabled Syrian refugees in the construction sector to upgrade their professional expertise and obtain accredited skills certificates. Following on from that, the Ministry of Labour and the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions signed a memorandum of understanding to ease the process of issuing work permits to Syrian refugees in the construction sector. Applicants for the new work permits must hold a certificate awarded by the Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA), on the basis of a process of recognition of prior learning.

The French Democratic Confederation of Labour (CFDT), in cooperation with the ILO, has produced a Guide for the Integration of Migrant Workers, which includes a chapter on rights to training in the workplace, with an explanation of:

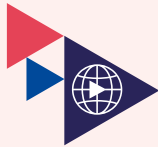
- ▶ the workplace training plan;
- ▶ personal skills assessment;
- ▶ individual training leave;
- ▶ the individual right to training; and
- ▶ the validation of prior learning and experience.

The British Trades Union Congress has taken an across-the board approach and produced a series of publications: "Tackling apprenticeship gender equality"; "Supporting black and minority ethnic apprentices"; and "Accessible apprenticeships for disabled workers". They show why workers' organizations should negotiate for diversity and equality in apprenticeship programmes, and suggest practical issues unions should include on their agenda for collective bargaining. An example of the way in which workers' organizations should tackle the issue on behalf of women can be found in Box 8.4.



## Box 8.4

### Tackling apprenticeship gender equality – United Kingdom



Unions should negotiate with employers for financial support for apprentices who have caring responsibilities, and ensure that the availability of such support is communicated via recruitment processes.

Unions should ensure that employers consider part-time or flexible hours options in apprenticeship programmes, for both existing staff and new starters.

Unions should ensure women's needs are specifically addressed in the management of health and safety.

Unions might want to set up their own mentoring schemes, including women-only peer support networks.

Your union will have model policies to help you negotiate a sexual harassment agreement in your workplace, to ensure that:

- the organization adopts a zero-tolerance approach to harassment;
- there is a transparent procedure for dealing with complaints fairly and effectively, and this is communicated to all staff; and
- all staff, especially managers, are trained in what constitutes sexual harassment, in the law, and in how to respond to complaints.

### Key priority for workers' organizations

**Workers' organizations need to support the strengthening of measures to ensure inclusive access to training for under-represented groups.**

Many social groups find it difficult to gain access to initial and continuing TVET programmes. In Argentina, workers' organizations may play a significant role as advocates for the inclusion of under-represented groups in TVET programmes – girls and women, persons with disabilities, migrants and minorities, refugees and returnees, workers in non-standard employment and ex-offenders embarking on rehabilitation – and as the providers of practical support.

## Activity 8.1

### Why are workers with non-standard work contracts less likely to receive on-the-job training?



*Aim*

The aim of this activity is to consider the reasons why workers with non-standard work contracts are less likely to receive on-the-job training.



*Method*

A recent ILO publication “Non-standard employment around the world” has identified four categories of non-standard employment:

1. Temporary employment: fixed-term contracts, including project- or task-based contracts; seasonal work; casual work, including day work; open-ended contract;
2. Part-time and on-call work: normal working hours fewer than full-time equivalent; marginal part-time; on-call work, including zero hours contracts; this is not full-time employment;
3. Multi-party employment relationship: also known as “dispatch”, “brokerage” and “labour hire”; temporary agency work; subcontracted labour; this does not involve a direct subordinate relationship with the party making use of the labour; and
4. Disguised employment/dependent self-employment: sham misclassified self-employment; this does not involve an employment relationship.

The same report concludes that “(w)orkers in NSE (non-standard employment) are less likely to receive on-the-job training, which can have negative repercussions on career development, especially for young workers”.

On the basis of your experience, please indicate

1. what non-standard employment means in your country; and
2. whether workers in non-standard employment in your country are less likely to receive on-the-job training, and, if so, why.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the meaning of the expression “non-standard employment” and the reasons why workers in non-standard employment in your country are less likely to receive on-the-job training.

## Activity 8.2

### What are the key features of a strategy to promote inclusivity in mainstream TVET? – *Persons with disabilities*



The aim of this activity is to identify the key features of a strategy to promote inclusivity in mainstream TVET for persons with disabilities.



The ILO published a Policy Brief in 2018 entitled “Making apprenticeships and workplace learning inclusive of persons with disabilities”, which includes a proposal for a strategy to effectively promote the inclusion of men and women with disabilities in mainstream TVET and skills development programmes, including the following elements:

- An enabling policy or strategy should be put in place;
- Mistaken assumptions about the abilities and capabilities of persons with disabilities should be challenged;
- Buildings and transport should be made accessible;
- Entry criteria, teaching methods, materials and evaluation methods should be reviewed and adapted;
- The TVET workforce capacity should be strengthened to teach trainees with disabilities alongside non-disabled trainees;
- Operational alliances should be formed with key partners;
- A system should be developed of ongoing support, including reasonable accommodation;
- The effectiveness of the policy or strategy should be regularly monitored and reviewed; and
- Resources should be allocated to make these changes possible.

On the basis of your experience, and with the aid of the evaluation sheet (8.1), please

1. put these proposals in order of priority; and
2. indicate any further proposals that you think suitable.

In groups of three or four, please indicate which of these proposals have already been taken into consideration in your own country.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about these proposals to promote the inclusion of men and women with disabilities in mainstream TVET and skills development programmes.

► **8.1 Evaluation sheet – Proposals to promote the inclusion of men and women with disabilities in mainstream TVET and skills development programmes**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Order of priority from 1 to 9</b>
1. An enabling policy or strategy should be put in place.	
2. Mistaken assumptions about the abilities and capabilities of persons with disabilities should be challenged.	
3. Buildings and transport should be made accessible.	
4. Entry criteria, teaching methods, materials and evaluation methods should be reviewed and adapted.	
5. The TVET workforce capacity should be strengthened to teach trainees with disabilities alongside non-disabled trainees.	
6. Operational alliances should be formed with key partners.	
7. A system should be developed of ongoing support, including reasonable accommodation.	
8. The effectiveness of the policy or strategy should be regularly monitored and reviewed.	
9. Resources should be allocated to make these changes possible.	

## Activity 8.3

### What are the key features of a strategy to promote inclusivity in mainstream TVET? – *Girls and women*



*Aim*

The aim of this activity is to identify the key features of a strategy to promote inclusivity in mainstream TVET for girls and women.



*Method*

The ILO published a Policy Brief in 2014 entitled “The gender divide in skills development: Progress, challenges and policy options for empowering women”, which includes a number of “most promising” policy options for a strategy to promote the inclusion of women in mainstream TVET and skills development.

What are the most promising of these policy options?

#### **Devising appropriate and targeted responses on the basis of women’s diverse contexts**

Women are a heterogeneous group, differing in many and various ways, including for example by age and cultural background, as well as level of education and the type of work they currently do. Any intervention aimed at redressing gender bias in skills development should be based on a good understanding of how different groups of women are affected by socio-economic and political power relations, and thus by gender inequalities in institutions, the market, the community and the household. Data collected should be disaggregated not only by sex, but also by educational attainment and other relevant factors.

Efforts to encourage women to participate in education, training and productive employment, including in hitherto male-dominated occupations, need to be:

- targeted to the specific context and group selected for intervention;
- designed to overcome the range of existing barriers (training fees, timing, facilities etc.) and to respond flexibly to different needs; and
- designed to address questions of status associated with different jobs and to open up these social perceptions to challenge.

On the basis of your experience, please give examples in groups of three or four of the ways in which efforts in your own country to encourage women to participate in education, training and productive employment are:

1. Targeted to the specific context and group selected for intervention;
2. Designed to overcome the range of existing barriers (training fees, timing, facilities etc.) and to respond flexibly to different needs; and
3. Designed to address questions of status associated with different jobs, and to open up these social perceptions to challenge.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about these proposals to promote the inclusion of women in mainstream TVET and skills development programmes.

## Activity 8.4

### In what ways can workers' organizations promote access for all to skills development and lifelong learning? – *Persons with disabilities*



The aim of this activity is to examine ways in which workers' organizations promote access for all to skills development, for persons with disabilities.



The ILO published a policy brief in 2018 entitled “Making apprenticeships and workplace learning inclusive of persons with disabilities”.

In the final section, it makes a series of policy recommendations that include reference to workers organizations, as follows:

Inclusive apprenticeship needs an enabling environment, policies and laws that put the principles of the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities into practice and establish the basis for mainstreaming disability in the provision of regular TVET. Effective and pertinent policies can only result from the participation of workers' and employers' organizations and from representative disabled persons' organizations. National training authorities, TVET colleges and public employment services should also be part of such a process.

Meaningful and well-functioning programmes need to include the concerns and experiences of everyone involved.

Workers' organizations can also advocate among their members for disability inclusion and develop a union-wide strategy for the inclusion of disabled workers in TVET. They should actively represent and protect the labour rights of apprentices with disabilities at the policy and sectoral level, within company works councils and safety committees. They are in a unique position to promote positive, inclusive and respectful attitudes among co-workers, informing disabled apprentices about their rights and guiding and supporting them if grievances arise.

In groups of three or four, please indicate:

1. Whether your own workers' organization has a strategy for the inclusion of workers with disabilities in skills development;
2. Whether your own workers' organization is in a position to implement these policy recommendations; and
3. Whether your own workers' organization is able to carry out other, supplementary, activities to support access by workers with disabilities to skills development and lifelong learning.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the ways in which workers' organizations promote access by persons with disabilities to skills development and lifelong learning programmes.

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## ▶ Skills for employability and decent work

Module 9 aims to enable officers and representatives of workers' organizations to:

- ▶ improve their understanding of the ways in which skills can enhance employability and decent work; and
- ▶ examine ways in which workers' organizations can promote and advocate for skills for employability and decent work.

### ▶ Introduction

#### What is decent work?

According to the ILO, "decent work" sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves: opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; security in the workplace; social protection for families; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

Decent work and the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda – employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue – lie at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development agreed by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015.

Workers need the knowledge, skills and competencies to thrive at work and in society. Skills development and lifelong learning are essential prerequisites for strengthening the four pillars of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and for ensuring that:

- ▶ employment creation allows for more jobs and for quality jobs;
- ▶ social protection provides social insurance and social assistance;
- ▶ rights at work include measures to protect against health risks and discrimination; and
- ▶ social dialogue provides an opportunity for the worker's voice to be heard.

### COVID-19 and decent work in the education sector

in most countries around the world, schools, universities and TVET institutions have been closed in an attempt to limit the spread of COVID-19. Nationwide closures have been mandated in 192 countries, interrupting learning for close to 1.58 billion learners (91.4 per cent of total enrolled learners) and prompting almost all education systems to deploy distance learning solutions.

The disruption has also impacted the work of more than 63 million primary and secondary school teachers, as well as countless education support personnel. It has also affected early childhood education personnel, technical and vocational training personnel and higher education teachers.

Ensuring that quality learning continues during the crisis in its new adopted forms requires that teachers have access to adequately resourced and safe teaching environments and decent working conditions. Early experiences with teachers as they navigate the responses to COVID-19 have focused on professional support and training, occupational safety and health, employment and working conditions, and involvement in education responses.

Drawing on international standards, the ILO is calling for:

- maintenance of wages and benefits during the crisis for teachers and education personnel, regardless of their employment relationship;
- adequate training and support for teachers as they transition to distance learning;
- as learners return to school in some countries, adequate occupational safety and health protection for teachers and education workers; and
- social dialogue between governments, teachers' organizations and private school employers to design and implement immediate and post-pandemic crisis response education policies.

ILO, 2020. [COVID-19 and the education sector](#)

## ► The world of work is changing rapidly

Following on from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the ILO set up a Global Commission on the Future of Work, which highlighted the changes taking place in the world of work. Technological advances, the transition towards an environmentally sustainable economy and demographic trends all have a major impact on developments in the labour market and will continue to do so. The ILO noted the following:

- **Technological advances** will increase the demand for technical skills that can facilitate problem-solving and innovation, particularly in occupations related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics. In addition, specific vocational skills will be required in order to deploy, operate and maintain new technologies. The appropriate combination of these technical, vocational and core work skills will provide workers with sound future employment prospects, as they will be able to move easily between jobs, occupations and sectors. However, these trends are likely to exacerbate the disadvantages that low-skilled workers currently face on the labour market. Those who lose their jobs will be the least equipped to take advantage of any new opportunities.
- The **transition towards an environmentally sustainable economy** will generate new occupations, cause some job losses and alter the skills composition of most jobs. New job opportunities in the "green economy" will emerge in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, recycling, repair and remanufacturing. These will require upgrading

and making adjustments to existing competencies (for example, by adding training components on green technical solutions and environmental awareness to the curricula followed by architects, plumbers or electricians), as well as increasing specialization in certain technical areas. However, other jobs will disappear as countries scale back their carbon- and resource-intensive industries.

- ▶ **Demographic change** is likely to affect the skills requirements of the ageing labour force in developed countries, as well as the skills needed to face the growing demand for caring professions. This ageing workforce will be obliged to constantly upgrade its digital and technology-related skills to be able to remain in the labour market longer. At the same time, other countries – especially emerging and developing countries – are facing the opposing trend of having an increased number of young people entering the labour market. The difficulties of finding a job in developing countries are likely to increase the pressure to migrate in search of work. At the same time, there is an increasing demand for high-skilled workers in developed countries, leading to emigration from and causing a brain drain in developing countries.

## ▶ **Developing skills for employability and decent work**

ILO Human Resources Development (HRD) Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195), underlines the linkage between TVET and decent work, and the role of members in identifying human resource developments leading to decent work, as mentioned in Module 8.

The ILO returned to these themes at its 108th (Centenary) Session in June 2019.

With the aim of developing a human-centred approach to the future of work, the Centenary Declaration underlines the importance of skills development for all workers throughout their working lives. It is a joint responsibility of governments and social partners – employers' and workers' organizations – to address existing and anticipated skills gaps, paying particular attention to ensuring that education and training systems are responsive to labour market needs, while enhancing workers' capacity to make use of the opportunities available for decent work.

It was underlined in addition that social dialogue is the vehicle for strengthening the capacities of working people to address challenges, benefit from the opportunities of a changing world of work, and realize the right to lifelong learning and quality education for all.

In line with HRD Convention 142, 1975, the Global Commission on the Future of Work calls for the formal recognition of a universal entitlement to lifelong learning (Box 9.1) and the establishment of an effective lifelong learning system (Box 9.2).

## Box 9.1

### A universal entitlement to lifelong learning



Lifelong learning encompasses formal and informal learning, from early childhood and basic education through to adult learning, combining foundational skills, social and cognitive skills (such as learning to learn) and the skills needed for specific jobs, occupations or sectors.

Lifelong learning involves more than the skills needed to work; it is also about developing the capabilities needed to participate in a democratic society.

It offers a pathway to inclusion in labour markets for youth and the unemployed. It also has transformative potential: investment in learning at an early age facilitates learning at later stages in life, and is in turn linked to intergenerational social mobility, expanding the choices of future generations.

A system of entitlements to training negotiated through collective bargaining would allow workers to take paid time off to engage in training. Workers could be entitled to a certain number of hours of training rights, regardless of the type of work they do.

Such a system has the advantage of supporting workers with the greatest need for continuing education.





## Box 9.2

### An effective lifelong learning system



Establishing an effective lifelong learning system is a joint responsibility, requiring the active engagement and support of governments, employers' organizations and trade unions, as well as educational institutions.

For lifelong learning to be an entitlement, governments must broaden and reconfigure policies and institutions in employment and skill systems to provide workers with the time and financial support they need to learn. Employers' organizations and trade unions also have a leading role to play in this system.

Governments must devise appropriate financing mechanisms tailored to their country and sectoral contexts. Given the continued importance of training at the workplace, employers need to contribute to its financing.

In cases where employers run their own training programmes, they can work together with trade unions to design relevant frameworks and steer funds to these programmes. There is a need to explore viable options to incentivize businesses to increase their investment in training.





In addition, the Global Commission on the Future of Work made a number of further recommendations:

- ▶ Establishing national or sectoral education and training funds, managed by tripartite boards, to provide workers with access to education and training, with a special focus on vocational skills;
- ▶ Creating quality assurance mechanisms for lifelong learning and, together with employers' and workers' organizations, monitoring the effectiveness of the lifelong learning system; and
- ▶ Increasing opportunities for decent work for young people, through employment programmes and support for young entrepreneurs, with special attention to promoting access to and participation in lifelong learning for young people not in employment, education or training, so as to ensure their social inclusion.

## ▶ **Workers' organizations and developing skills for employability and decent work**

This **Resource Guide for Workers' Organizations** has presented a multitude of different examples of the ways in which workers' organizations throughout the world have made numerous and distinct contributions to skills development and lifelong learning for employability and decent work, as follows:

### **At the national level**

- ▶ Underlining the importance of continuing TVET (Germany);
- ▶ Lobbying government to provide new improved laws (France);
- ▶ Promoting the attractiveness of apprenticeship training through contributions to tripartite strategies (Germany);
- ▶ Contributing to a tripartite strategy for skills development: the "National Skills Accord" (South Africa);
- ▶ Promoting the use of competency- and outcome-based training regulations that contain minimum standards for trainers and training material, through contributions to the tripartite board of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Philippines);
- ▶ Contributing to the National Skills Development Council, whose role is to oversee and monitor all activities of public and private training providers related to skills training (Bangladesh);
- ▶ Supporting the work of the National Institute of Apprenticeship (Costa Rica);
- ▶ Supporting the Technical Institute for Training and Productivity and its activities to recognize prior learning (Guatemala);

- ▶ Contributing to a tripartite strategy through the “Alliance for Initial and Further Training 2019-20” (Germany);
- ▶ Assessing the impact of digitalization on the workforce, via contributions to the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (Ireland);
- ▶ Participating in the administration of Skillsfuture (Singapore);
- ▶ Contributing to the development of apprenticeship qualifications (Ireland);
- ▶ Negotiating a tripartite agreement to promote the recognition of prior learning and the use of adult and CVET programmes (Denmark);
- ▶ Advising the Ministry of Labour and Employment on the definition of standards for syllabi, equipment, duration of courses, methods of training and certification, via contributions to the National Council for Vocational Training (India);
- ▶ Overseeing development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (South Africa);
- ▶ Overseeing the National Board of Education, which supervises the national skills validation framework (Finland);
- ▶ Participating in discussions relating to the certification of competencies in the National Council for Standardization and Certification of Labour Market Competencies (Mexico);
- ▶ Participating in the discussions and decisions of the Commission of the National System for the Certification of Labour Market Competencies (Chile);
- ▶ Overseeing the provision of TVET provided by the Vocational Training Institute (*Berufsförderungsinstitut*) (Austria);
- ▶ Producing practical material to support the integration of migrant workers (France); and
- ▶ Improving access to apprenticeship training for women, persons with disabilities and minority ethnic groups (United Kingdom).

### At the sectoral level

- ▶ Approving enterprises as qualified training establishments, and ruling on conflicts that may develop between apprentices and the enterprise providing practical training, through contributions to the roughly 50 sectoral trade committees (Denmark);
- ▶ Defining vocational profiles for curriculum design, through contributions to the Sectoral Technical Committees of the National Industrial Training Service (SENAI) (Brazil);
- ▶ Negotiating numerous sectoral agreements dealing with different aspects of TVET (France);
- ▶ Representing workers’ interests in the sectoral working groups of the National Apprenticeship Service (Colombia);
- ▶ Preparing to participate in the establishment of tripartite sector skills bodies so as to improve the linkage between industry and the TVET training system (Ghana);
- ▶ Representing workers’ interests in Industry Skills Councils, in sectors such as leather, construction, ready-made garments and agri-food (Bangladesh);

- ▶ Examining skills needs and ensuring that training providers respond to these needs – through contributions to sectoral SETAs (South Africa);
- ▶ Coordinating a network of TVET centres with the aim of establishing a national quality standard for training and retraining that covers curriculum design, the development of training materials, train-the-trainer activities, and minimum infrastructure and equipment requirements (construction sector in Argentina);
- ▶ Participating in the administration of training funds, the Joint Interprofessional Funds for Continuing VET, to support the retraining and upskilling of workers (Italy);
- ▶ Participating in the discussions and decisions surrounding the skills anticipation and planning activities of the sectoral forecasting observatories for occupations and qualifications (France);
- ▶ Participating in the Sectoral Councils for Continuing Learning and Skills Certification, which present the sectors' demands in terms of identification of skills needs and standards of proficiency, and which carry out evaluation and certification (Argentina); and
- ▶ Negotiating with the Ministry of Labour to enabling easing of the process of issuing work permits to refugees in the construction sector (Jordan).

### **At the enterprise level**

- ▶ Examining the specific training needs of workers in line with technological developments within the enterprise, via contributions to works councils for TVET (Italy);
- ▶ Negotiating company agreements to provide training for workers in technical subjects (Costa Rica);
- ▶ Negotiating enterprise agreements on the development of apprenticeship training (Italy);
- ▶ Negotiating an agreement with Walmart Chile to train cashiers during working time in the use of new self-scanning devices, without loss of pay; and
- ▶ Negotiating enterprise-level learning agreements and providing training guidance (United Kingdom).

## Key priorities for workers' organizations

It is clear that for workers' organizations to play these important roles, they need to:

- ▶ commit at the highest level to a comprehensive skills development and lifelong learning policy, and to develop a multi-level strategy to accompany it;
- ▶ ensure that they avoid fragmentation and provide a united front on the question of skills development;
- ▶ ensure that skills development and lifelong learning are integrated into other priorities of workers' organizations;
- ▶ build capacity within their own organizations so that officers of workers' organizations are qualified and able to defend workers' interests within multi-sectoral and sectoral tripartite bodies dealing with skills development and lifelong learning issues and – where possible – negotiate collective bargaining agreements;
- ▶ build capacity within their own organizations so that representatives of workers' organizations are qualified and able to defend workers' interests at the workplace, communicate information about skills development activities to their members and/or workers, provide them with guidance and counselling, and motivate them to take up skills development opportunities;
- ▶ seek out alliances with employers' organizations and employers, to engage in a process of social dialogue at the national, sectoral and enterprise level, so that skills development becomes an integral part of collective bargaining.

## Activity 9.1

### What is decent work?



The aim of this activity is to identify the key elements of decent work from the perspective of a member of a workers' organization.



The ILO has uploaded a short video clip to YouTube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZpyJwevPqc>

Have a look at this video clip, and then be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the key elements of decent work.

If this video clip is not accessible, take the ILO definition presented at the beginning of the module:

“**decent work** sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves: opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; security in the workplace; social protection for families; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.”

Do you agree with the elements proposed by the ILO?

On the basis of your experience at the national, sectoral or workplace level, do you have other proposals that you would like to add?

## Activity 9.2

### How to implement a universal entitlement to lifelong learning and establishment of an effective lifelong learning system



The aim of this activity is to consider how to implement a universal entitlement to lifelong learning as proposed by the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work.



As seen above in the module, the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work calls for the formal recognition of a universal entitlement to lifelong learning and the establishment of an effective lifelong learning system, and makes a series of three specific recommendations:

- Establishing national or sectoral education and training funds, managed by tripartite boards, to provide workers with access to education and training, with a special focus on vocational skills;
- Creating quality assurance mechanisms for lifelong learning and, together with employers' and workers' organizations, monitoring the effectiveness of the lifelong learning system; and
- Increasing opportunities for decent work for young people, through employment programmes and support for young entrepreneurs, with special attention to promoting access to and participation in lifelong learning for young people not in employment, education or training, so as to ensure their social inclusion.

In groups of three or four, on the basis of your experience consider whether it would be possible to incorporate these entitlements and recommendations into skills development and lifelong learning in your own country or sector.

If this is not possible, please explain why.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the possibility of incorporating these entitlements and recommendations into skills development and lifelong learning in your own country or sector.

## Activity 9.3

### In what ways can workers' organizations promote the more effective use of workers' skills?



The aim of this activity is to examine ways in which workers' organizations can influence the promotion of more effective use of workers' skills..



There is a long list in Module 9 of ways in which workers' organizations support skills development and lifelong learning for employability and decent work.

In groups of three or four, on the basis of your experience consider what the three most **likely** ways are for workers' organizations in your country or sector to contribute to skills development and lifelong learning for employability and decent work.

As a second activity, determine which are the three most **unlikely**.

Be prepared to participate in a discussion in the plenary session about the likelihood or not of workers' organizations in your country or sector contributing to skills development and lifelong learning for employability and decent work.



## ▶ Selected references and suggestions for further reading

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