

Dual Vocational Education and Training as an Option in Development Cooperation

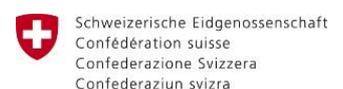
Survey of experts on behalf of the Donor Committee for dual Vocational
Education and Training
Final Report



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The statements in this study are the responsibility of the author and core study group and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Donor Committee members.



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1. Introduction

The alarming rates of youth unemployment in Europe and partner countries of development cooperation, along with the fact that countries with dual vocational education and training (VET) systems have sharply lower youth unemployment rates, has awakened international interest and demand for dual VET. On this basis, the four donor countries Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein and Switzerland have founded the Donor Committee for dual Vocational Education and Training (DC dVET). The DC dVET has started its activities in 2015. The focus during the first year was to set up the secretariat and conduct basic content preparations. To this end, the Donor Committee commissioned two studies: one to compare the dual VET systems in donor countries, and another to gather experiences in dual VET approaches in development cooperation.

The latter, on gathering experiences in dual VET projects in development cooperation was not intended as a meta-analysis of all dual VET projects implemented by the donors up to now, but as a survey of experts with many years of experience implementing such projects on behalf of the committee members. To this end, the Donor Committee commissioned a core group of experts, with the following persons:

- Matthias Jäger, Switzerland (Main Author)
- Peter-Michael Schmidt, Germany
- Gunter Kohlheyer, Germany and Switzerland
- Rudolf Batliner, Liechtenstein
- Walter Reiter, Austria

Additionally, the Donor Committee members have appointed an expanded panel of 17 experts. The survey was conducted as shown in Figure 1.

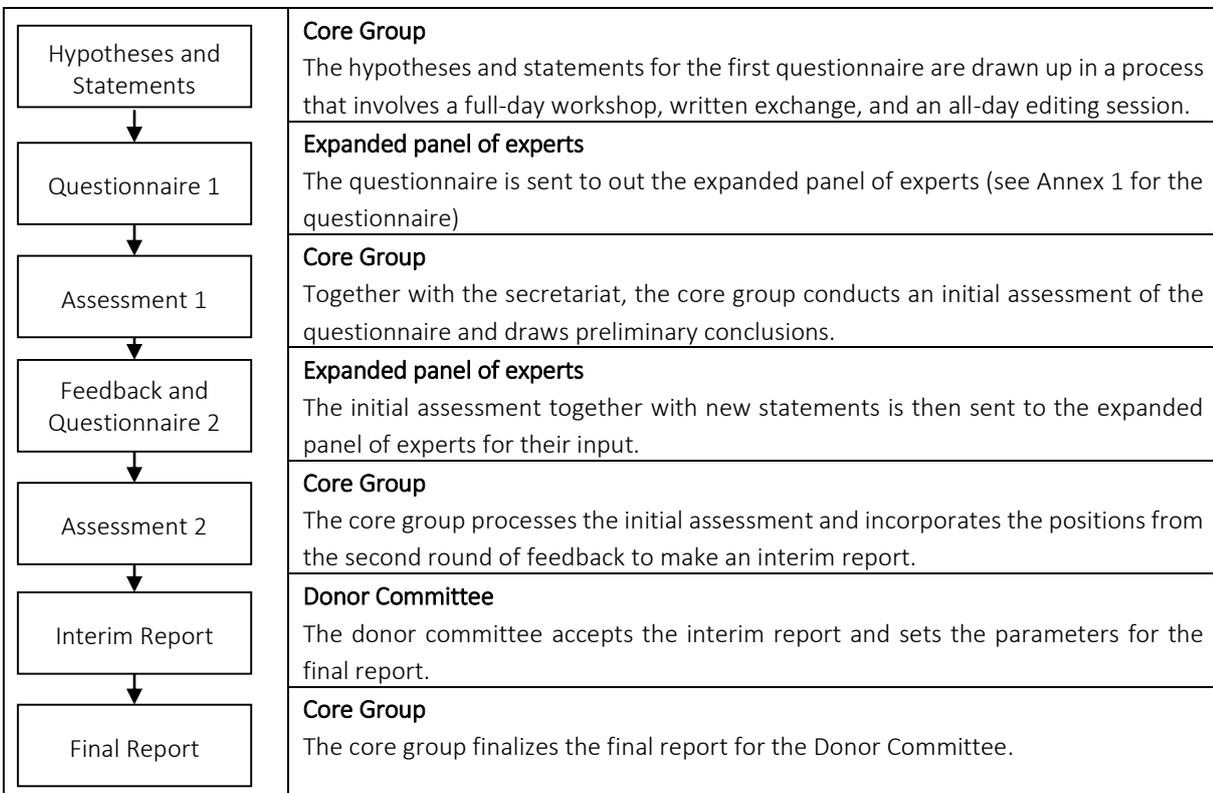


Figure 1: Process flow

2. Basic Insights and Limitations

2.1. Dual VET and the Professional Concept

In German-speaking countries, dual VET¹ is so prominent it is almost in the societal DNA. Given this reality, the question of what constitutes dual VET sounds more like a rhetorical question that would be answered exactly the same if asked at any pub in Berlin, Vienna, Vaduz, or Bern. Understanding dual VET as apprenticeship with practice learning in the company and theory at school is of course not wrong, but it is not enough for the purpose of learning for field of development cooperation.

Dual VET is more than a type of training or organisational set-up for occupational learning and it cannot be reduced merely to its institutional and organisational dimensions. Dual VET is closely intertwined with the professional concept, which in turn includes a socio-political dimension. Professions are not just embodiments of certain skills, but traditionally they occupy a specific place in society. Furthermore, society automatically associates dual VET with concepts of quality and skilled work, and it views the “Meister” (Master Craftsman) as a respected title.

Dual VET structures in and of themselves are not fully understood in many partner countries. Given that dual VET is a joint effort of public and private actors, dual structures require a dialogue and institutional collaboration at eye level between them, sometimes involving social partners. Once we begin talking about only sparsely understood concepts such as professional pride, then we are finally broaching the subject of societal values.

Of course, this is also changing in German-speaking countries. The *single* lifetime profession is an outdated model; dual VET increasingly viewed as a kind of basic education with an upper secondary level certificate. This certificate opens doors into the world of employment and continuing education. However, society's appreciation of VET, or the idea that even in the modern world vocational skills constitute a valuable alternative to the academic, higher education path, has survived rapid developments of the economies and the labour market. Permeability to choose is one of the cornerstones of this development.

Along with this socio-political dimension, VET as a dual system also features organisational, institutional, and pedagogical aspects.

Implications for Development Cooperation

Any attempt to promote the professional concept in partner countries and sell dual VET purely as a social values concept would likely fail.

In contrast, it is realistic to consider implementing an adapted version of the professional concept in development cooperation when it is understood as a broad qualification rather than focused on specific jobs or narrow skills. In other words, if it is presented as a qualification that also promotes personal development and social skills, as an education also understood to encompass professional socialisation, in addition to technical skills as such. Of course, this cannot be implemented immediately, but development projects could formulate such opportunities as development goals. Dual VET on its own, even if it offers quality and is relevant to the labour market, is not enough to dispel the negative perception in many of the partner countries and low social value attributed to VET. Efforts to introduce a modified professional concept can be central in this subject matter and help bring about deeper and more precise understanding of dual VET.

Box 1: Implications for Development Cooperation: Dual VET and Professional Concept

¹ The terms vocational education and training, apprenticeship, initial VET, continuing VET apprenticeship are used generically in this document.

2.2. Delimitation to other Systems and Approaches

In the international terminology, VET on the one hand stands for processes that prepare people for the professional world, while on the other it stands for national systems that organise these processes. This distinction, between process and system, opens our eyes to the reality that professional qualification does not only take place in the context of VET systems, but also in other systems or as temporary ad-hoc programmes.

Preparing school graduates for the world of work is normally at the heart of VET systems. Therefore, VET as a system is at the confluence of the educational and professional worlds.

Beyond VET systems, most partner countries are familiar with a system of (active) labour market measures. Using a bundle of instruments, these systems serve to integrate the unemployed and difficult-to-place job seekers into the world of work. Advancement of professional qualifications is typically one of these.

As far as temporary ad-hoc programmes are concerned, there are essentially two basic types: one involves training courses responding to market demands and privately financed; the other comprises special labour market integration programmes for specific target groups. These special programmes can be financed by the government, national or international NGOs, and sometimes even via bilateral development projects. What both types have in common is that they are only available when there is immediate demand and funding.

Implications for Development Cooperation

VET systems, labour market measures, and ad-hoc courses and programmes differ from each other in terms of their legal structure, level of institutional integration, financing, and expectations for sustainability.

For a successful work at system level, development cooperation does well to always be clear about with which interventions they are implementing in which systems.

Dual VET understood as a dual system basically belongs to VET systems. Dual thinking as pedagogical principle can also be applied in labour market programmes or special ad-hoc programmes.

The unambiguous systemic implications are far more important to the technical world than the general public.

Box 2: Implications for Development Cooperation: Delimitation to other Systems and Approaches

3. Definitions

As discussed above, although dual VET is largely understood as an organisational and institutional system, it is much more than this alone. Below, there is an attempt to define dual VET at the level of its complex, multi-dimensional concept.

3.1. Dual VET Systems

Learning venues, ownership, status of trainees, duration of training and ratio between practice and theory learning constitute the organisational and institutional aspects of dual VET.

Learning Venues: Dual VET combines practical training at the workplace with classroom-based training in schools or training centres. The two venues business and classroom can be enhanced with a third. Third learning venues are often simulated environments (e.g. labs, workshops, etc.).

Ownership: Dual VET is a joint responsibility by public and private partners, resp. schools and businesses. Dual VET “belongs” to both partners. Organisations of the world of work are essential for dual VET.

Status of Trainees: In dual VET, trainees are employees at businesses with special status. They are recruited by the businesses themselves.

Training Duration: In countries with a dual system, initial VET typically lasts from two to four years.

Ratio between Business-based and Classroom Training: In countries with dual VET systems, the ratio of business-based training to classroom education is between 80:20 and 60:40.

Implications for Development Cooperation

In principle, all aspects of the organisational and institutional definition of dual VET apply to the field of development cooperation as well. In any case, the concept needs to be adapted because development cooperation cannot be expected to address every aspect immediately.

The dual **learning venues**, business and classroom, are essential for dual VET in development cooperation. Approaches without these two distinct venues should not be considered “dual”.

Dual VET is a joint effort between private and public actors and requires respective **ownership**. Without associations or common interest groups, dual VET will not work over the long run. In many partner countries, the level of organisation of the private sector is quite low and associations are weak. Attempts to reverse this situation might initially focus on establishing informal clusters. In these cases, establishing a common ownership at system level becomes a development objective. It is essential that both state and private sector actors can interact eye-to-eye, but the actual ownership of programmes shall remain with the private sector. Private sector ownership constituted by a single company might be an option for large multinationals, but it is not an option in for development cooperation.

Status of trainees: Businesses recruiting trainees and giving them the status of employees is desirable in dual VET. If this is not always realistic at project launch, it should be formulated as a development goal.

Dual VET is not ideal for short-term courses. In development cooperation, dual VET courses should last at least one year. In many professional fields, two or three years with different levels built in would be even better.

A ratio of **classroom to business-based training** of at least 50:50 is what should be pursued in development cooperation. A higher proportion of business-based training is desirable. A higher percentage of classroom-based training is acceptable only in very science-based professions, if at all.

Box 3: Implications for Development Cooperation: Dual VET Systems

3.2. Duality as a Pedagogical Principle

Duality in professional learning can also be understood as a principle by which to structure learning processes. The switch between practice and classroom learning lies at the heart of this approach. Depending on the context, practice learning can take place at training workshops, labs, simulated businesses, or projects. In contrast with dual VET systems, practice learning takes place at training centres and not businesses in this case. The teaching content, however, can be held to the same standard as learning in dual systems. The same level of quality can be targeted as well. The key differences are in socialisation at the workplace and the costs. With technical professions in particular, trainings based on the dual principle conducted at training centres is quite expensive and therefore not suitable for the majority of job seekers.

Implications for Development Cooperation

The first generation of development projects, especially those implemented by German and Swiss VET programmes, focused on establishing training centres in different countries around the world (often for technical professions). These focused mostly on the dual principle and at content level on the professional concept of skilled technicians. Many of these centres are still implementing this training concept as their very own brand.

The dual approach as a principle by which to structure professional learning is an option for all projects and programmes in development cooperation, applied to VET systems, (active) labour market measures and ad-

hoc programmes for specific target groups. What limits large-scale implementation of the dual principle (but not the dual system) into local education systems are the costs. For this reason, it is better to invest in strategically important professions or in training of trainers.

Box 4: Implications for Development Cooperation: Duality as a Pedagogical Principle

4. Dual VET between Economic Development and Poverty Reduction

Within the “triad” of economic, personal, and social objectives, VET by definition is located in the area between economic development and contribution to social equality. However, these effects are long-term and not achieved merely through single initiatives, but at best through comprehensively effective VET systems (not necessarily dual).

The extent to which VET is an appropriate poverty reduction tool for specific target groups with direct and short-term measurable results, has been a matter of discussion at least since the United Nations set poverty reduction as priority for development cooperation through the Millennium Development Goals. Over the course of this discussion, many donors have reoriented their portfolio from establishing, enhancing, and reforming VET systems to trainings as a tool within a package of measures to reduce unemployment. Systemically such trainings together with other support measures belong rather to the system of labour market measures than to a VET system. Current donor portfolios also include ad-hoc programmes for labour market integration of specific target groups. Once again, this discussion is important in light of the political desirability to strengthen dual VET in partner countries. Moreover, dual VET needs institutional and systemic development.

Dual thinking, duality as a principle upon which to structure professional learning, is a viable option when using VET as a tool in the framework of (active) labour market measures. In addition, labour market measures also include apprenticeships, temporary employment, subsidized salaries, development projects, simulated companies, and internships. In such programmes, it is essential and desirable to engage the private sector as partners. In contrast to dual VET systems however, programme ownership remains with state employment offices, while the private sector takes on the role of the implementing partner. Against this background, labour market measures do little to advance dual VET structures. In dual systems the situation is quite different. According to the definition in the previous section, dual VET systems feature learning venues that alternate between businesses and classroom: Efforts are made to establish a joint responsibility with private sector involvement, that the businesses recruit their trainees, as well as to have dual VET courses last for at least one year.

This has direct practical effects on outreach and target groups. For businesses, their business interests are crucial, both over the short and long term. Even when corporate social responsibility (CSR) plays a role for participating businesses, the number of available training places at their premises always limits the absorption capacity of dual VET systems. Businesses will recruit the best available candidates, not the poorest and most vulnerables.

To build and establish a dual VET system takes time. Therefore, given the today typical development project timeframes, one should, at least during the first project years, not expect any major contributions to labour market insertion, in particular as regards to specific target groups.

Dual VET understood as a dual system is a viable option for dynamic economic sectors with high demand for a qualified workforce, which in the local context is often hard to find. Thus, dual VET tends to be more successful in transition economies and middle-income countries.

In the long run, dual VET requires an organised private sector with sector-specific associations and interest groups. Chambers of commerce cannot cover all of this.

Dual VET might also be an option in fragile contexts and economies with a large informal sector. It is an especially promising option if it integrates traditional apprentice systems, reorganising them with dual approaches.

In countries with dual VET systems, VET usually follows mandatory schooling and is therefore typically at the upper secondary level. The extent to which partner countries can incorporate this depends on the context. In countries and regions where the majority of a given age group leaves the education system already after primary school, initial VET (also dual) must be able to take on trainees at this relatively lower level. Here, it is to be considered that for businesses - just as in countries with dual VET systems in place - dual VET is rather a viable option to train qualified technicians. The availability of businesses willing to collaborate at this level of training needs to be clarified in the individual context. Ideally, it is possible to build upon traditional apprentice systems and to offer possibilities for further advanced training.

In contrast, in countries where the majority of a given age group achieves an upper secondary level certificate, VET can even be classed at the post-secondary level and constitutes a viable alternative to academic education. In such a context, dualisation of selected fields of higher education can also be an option.

An exception is child labour, which was discussed controversially by the expert group. Without a doubt, child labour is ideally avoided, but in many countries it is a reality and economically necessary for affected families. Over the long run, there should and will be nothing less than a ban on child labour. Meanwhile, over the short term, dualisation of child labour can bring much-needed relief. Labour conditions are formalised as much as possible, work times kept within limits, and working children are given the opportunity to attend school. This will not result in a dual VET system, but at least affected children will have access to a basic school education, improved labour conditions, and if successful, willingness on the part of firms to cooperate. Concrete examples in this field are few and far between.

Implications for Development Cooperation

VET systems unfold their effects on social integration only long-term and after a considerable period of maturation. For this reason, dual VET in development cooperation is more suited as a tool for promoting economic and institutional development in a dynamic environment than as an immediate labour market integration measure for specific target groups.

Dual thinking as a principle to structure learning processes and cooperation with the private sector is also advisable for target group specific initiatives as well as for (active) labour market measures. However, collaboration with the private sector is based on other modalities than in dual VET systems and therefore does little to develop dual VET.

Box 5: Implications for Development Cooperation: Dual VET between Economic Development and Poverty Reduction

5. Ownership – Dual VET as a joint Responsibility

As mentioned in the previous section, VET connects the following three targets: economic (quality productivity, and competitiveness), social (education, social equality, and integration), and individual targets (employability, mobility, and professional advancement). VET thus belongs to different policy areas such as education, social, economic, and employment policy. This overlap in policy jurisdiction sometimes can create conflicts of interest which has direct consequences for the ownership and sponsorship of dual VET, in particular in relation to the balance between economic and education policy objectives.

When firms employ trainees in dual VET systems for at least 50% of their training over a period between one and three years and give them a special status as employees, they are only doing this because they see an economic benefit for themselves. Whether they see this as a short-term benefit or rather as a long-term investment in the future does not really matter as regards the ownership and the role of the private sector therein.

In any case, dual VET is a joint effort between private and public sector partners resp. businesses and schools. Thus, collaboration should not only occur at eye level but the private sector should take ownership of the programmes. This includes the understanding that the capacity of dual VET systems depends on the number of available training places at businesses, which in turn is a function of business growth, workforce strength, and work productivity. Schools fill their classrooms according to administrative directives. In dual VET systems, firms recruit according to their capabilities and business interests.

Participation of businesses in dual VET systems is volatile, and they do not necessarily want to be told what to do. Practice training at businesses is governed by production or sales needs, while classroom-based training is dictated by course curricula. Businesses can neither be forced to curriculum-based training, nor on tests this entails. However, there can and should be documents that describe competence profiles and the respective practice training at businesses. On the next level, however, classroom curricula and directives for the business-based training component follow a different set of rules.

While businesses tend to follow narrow, short-term business objectives, state and classroom partners have an education policy perspective and strive for much broader goals. Administrative directives to harmonize such contradictions do not work. Joint ownership must be strong enough to withstand such conflicting objectives and work out solutions to ensure that businesses remain on board.

Over the short term, joint ownership in dual VET systems can be based on a single firm's involvement and be built up by pioneer firms. However, over the long term this will not suffice. With time, dual VET systems require associations with dynamic members. If the level of organisation in partner countries is low or existing associations are weak, then establishing and strengthening associations should be a development objective.

Joint ownership for dual VET systems need a sector-specific perspective. When the ownership and steering mechanisms are rooted only in chambers of commerce and government offices, private businesses tend to feel poorly represented. This undermines the chances for success.

In countries with dual VET systems there is no agreement on the role of social partners. While employees organisations in Austria and Germany play important roles, in Switzerland they are only involved at the macro-steering level only. They play only a secondary role in structuring and implementing trainings at the operational level. Therefore, there are different expectations also in development cooperation. While for some the role of social partners is important, for others, private sector participation is more important.

Implications for Development Cooperation

Dual VET is a joint effort between private and public partners. If it is governed unilaterally, either through state authorities or the private sector, it will not function in the long run.

Over the long run, dual VET systems require associations. If these do not exist or are too weak, creating or strengthening them is a development goal in and of itself.

Responsibility for dual VET systems and programmes must lie with the private sector. To ensure success, ownership and steering mechanisms need to take a sector-specific perspective.

Private sector participation is an essential aspect of dual VET. The role of social partners will depend on the individual context.

Box 6: Implications for Development Cooperation: Ownership – Dual VET as a joint Responsibility

6. Scenarios for Creating dual VET Systems

6.1. Scenario 1 – Informal Professional Introduction Programmes

Many mid-size and large firms in partner countries cannot find the qualifications they need. For example, these businesses might be grocery chains, call centres, textile companies, factories, hospitality companies, etc. A self-help-solution is for firms to create their own more or less structured, shorter or longer professional introduction programmes. From their apprentices businesses require a general education, language skills, ability to learn, punctuality, and other similar skills, but not necessarily specific technical skills. These programmes tend to target employees with general skills rather than those with higher technical work skills. They are not dual, but in principle they can be standardised, formalised and dualised. To this end, however, they will need inter-firm cooperation. In this situation where a firm has found its own solution, inter-firm cooperation over the short term is not necessarily a given and many firms need convincing. However, a sector-wide solution could be useful as it addresses the problem of employee poaching.

6.2. Scenario 2 – Pioneer Firms

For companies with high demand for employees with specific qualifications at the middle and higher level the situation is somewhat different. Self-help through informal professional introduction programmes has its limits. It can be too expensive and drain resources. Furthermore, learning at the workplace is not enough and needs to be complemented by systematic skills learning and theory. A single company's needs are often too little to justify implementing a company-internal introduction programme. In many places, also large multinationals belong to this category. These firms are potentially ideal candidates to involve as partners in dual VET models. They have a genuine business interest and tend to think beyond short-term, intra-company interests. They have the required financial resources to bring to the table as well as the networks needed to implement changes. In the case of international businesses from countries with dual VET systems, they even bring experience and understanding of dual solutions to the table.

Dual models with such businesses focus quality and business objectives and thus represent a form of high-level VET. Such approaches are therefore less suited to labour market integration of specific target groups.

6.3. Scenario 3 – Associations or Clusters

The ideal scenario for starting a dual VET programme is when there already are strong associations or at least informal business interest groups in place in selected regions, sectors, or industrial parks. Which sectors or industries these associations include is only a secondary concern. What is important is that these interest groups have recognised that limited recruitability of skilled labour is a common problem and that they are willing to find a solution together. Content-wise, a specific dual VET system's structure may be modelled on scenario two or three, depending on the situation and context.

6.4. Scenario 4 – Innovative Training Institutes

Innovative training institutes (e.g. training centres, vocational schools, private continuing education entities, or skills centres) can initiate dual VET if they have solid contacts in industry and are sufficiently organised and independent. A condition for eventual success is that training institutes should coordinate with private sector partners on an equal footing and talk the same talk without compromising their educational policy objectives. They must also keep in mind the most important concepts of dual VET as presented above. This particular scenario might feature conflicting interests in terms of the number, recruitment, and status of trainees. Public training institutes are obligated or strive to meet classroom quotas for administrative, private, and economic reasons. In dual systems, the number of available apprenticeship places in businesses determines the number of trainees the system can absorb. Public institutes follow their administrative directives for recruiting trainees.

For providers, trainees are an essential part of their reputation. The contracts and rules to follow deserve careful attention. Dual VET has better chances of success in professions with comparatively high social status and corresponding demand.

The shared challenge for scenarios 2, 3 and 4 involves bringing public sector actors on board without them imposing the logic of the existing system that is inadequate for businesses on the new dual VET system. As long as national qualification frameworks really target competences and not training paths and fragmented, narrow skills, in theory they can be a useful tool for accrediting new dual VET curricula.

6.5. Scenario 5 – Traditional Apprenticeships in the Informal Sector

As dual VET in principle requires an organised private sector with contractually governed collaboration, the informal sector at first glance is not the ideal scenario for starting a dual VET programme. The picture is different in situations with traditional, informal apprenticeship models. This is the case in many partner countries in Africa and Asia. Traditional apprenticeship models are usually not dual, but there are examples to which it can be referred to and which can be reorganised on a dual VET model. These programmes can be dualised by adding classroom components - initially without necessarily changing the practical component. Depending on the context, classroom components can include basic education, business skills, technology, or business administration. Experience suggests that initially, the focus should be on advanced qualifications of business owners themselves.

6.6. Scenario 6 – Dual VET as part of a National Vocational Education Policy

Official VET policies and strategies are an exceptionally helpful and often necessary condition for creating and strengthening dual VET systems. This applies to all scenarios 1 through 5. Finally, dual VET will not function without state recognition and integration into official national systems, certification, or legal frameworks. If these are not in place, then the initiatives are destined to remain isolated cases instead of becoming models and beacons for moving forward.

In any case, the reverse does not work: Dual VET as part of state policy is of course a good condition, but it is not enough to justify starting a dual VET programme. Moreover, state actors are not the first partners to consider. In partner countries with a weak private sector, it is often advisable to observe caution before lobbying the government on behalf of dual VET. Even if dual VET is official policy, one first must bring the private sector on board. Ideally, this occurs as per any of scenarios 1 through 5.

Implications for Development Cooperation

For the dual VET system to take off, the private sector must be on board. Whichever starting points exist will depend on the specific context and follow one of the scenarios described above.

Whichever of these is the leading scenario will be dictated by the situation at hand. In a first step, the starting point for a programme to build a dual VET system will be to identify positive dynamics (*catching opportunities*). This means the starting point (a specific profession, sector, or geographic region) will be determined less by strategic considerations (of the donor) than by areas where favourable conditions and interested partners are available. To ensure this approach does not end up as a collection of isolated initiatives, we must never forget to make embedding the dual VET concept into national structures a development goal.

In many partner countries, dual VET is an unknown and foreign idea that is difficult to grasp. Verbal advocacy and trips abroad have their limits. In the local context, functional models are helpful and essential tools to demonstrate and promote dual VET. Strong partners, professional fields with solid social status, high-profile lobbyists, and functional examples are helpful conditions for models to be alluring.

Box 7: Implications for Development Cooperation: Scenarios for Creating dual VET Systems

7. What Else is important for dual VET in Development Cooperation

Given that demand and qualifications are multifaceted, that work in different sectors each multiple characteristics and that learning a profession is rooted in various traditions, philosophies, and approaches, and not least because private sector involvement – in whichever form it takes – is so essential, VET systems are always diversified and multi-coloured, an assortment of various approaches. For this reason, dual VET approaches and systems in partner countries are merely one among many. The aim is therefore never to “dualise” entire national systems.

National qualification frameworks have developed into a global megatrend in VET. Even if national qualification frameworks originate in another VET concept, dual VET and qualification frameworks are not mutually exclusive. However, this can only be achieved under the condition that qualification frameworks focus on competences in terms of professional capabilities, regardless of where and how they are obtained. Qualification frameworks for dual VET might be advantageous in this case as they provide an institutional framework for the skills obtained through both channels, forming the basis for formal recognition of certificates. The reality of implementing qualification frameworks is often quite different, as the focus is on a narrowly defined concept of *skills*. In such cases, qualification frameworks more likely constitute a barrier to dual VET. The worst-case scenario would be when learning is assessed and graded based on credits, that skills acquired during dual vocational training at the workplace might even be discounted from those acquired in the classroom. Essentially then, the question comes up as to why dual VET needs to last so much longer than classroom-based courses.

In one form or another, dual VET must be tied to national systems. It is essential that dual VET feature certificates that open doors for graduates into further, more advanced training and higher education.

Dual VET needs the private sector, and private businesses will only get involved if they see their own business interests in it. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is not an adequate vehicle to engage the private sector in dual VET. International firms with production facilities in partner countries, especially companies from countries with dual VET systems in place, might offer other opportunities. These companies are easier to engage based on CSR principles. However, over the long run they too will only stay committed to such programmes if it is good for business.

As long as dual VET is not regulated by law, then financing and cooperation, as well as distribution of responsibilities among various partners and steering mechanisms will need to be defined contractually. Apprenticeship contracts also require a trilateral format and need to be concluded under an agreement between the trainee, private business, and the VET school.

Dual VET is essentially gender-neutral and lends itself to all professional fields. It encompasses traditional artisanry, technical professions, healthcare professions, and a whole slew of service jobs. The extent to which working within a business outside of the community will be socially acceptable to young men and women depends on the individual social and cultural context. If there is resistance, then the necessary preparations will need to be undertaken well beforehand.

VET is often the second choice after an academic education and only an option if access to other education (e.g. upper grammar school) is unavailable. In many countries, VET suffers from low social status. Dual VET alone cannot rectify this societal perception. However, it is possible to implement successful models to enlighten, demonstrate, and raise awareness in the public domain. For this to work, dual VET models are best rooted in attractive sectors and professions or in classic artisanry enjoying high societal recognition. Dual approaches in the framework of special programmes for specific target groups and professions with inferior social status are more likely to reinforce the image of dual VET as a backup solution for disadvantaged segments of society.

Apprenticeship-based dual VET requires financing from three sources: businesses, the public sector, and trainees themselves. There are numerous models for determining how contributions from each are to be determined. Contributions from trainees to finance their training are often not in monetary form, but paid in productive, in-kind labour at a reduced salary (or none at all). This can happen due to an apprenticeship duration that lasts for a period exceeding the time necessary to acquire the required skills. In the additional time, trainees can pay back their employers for their education through productive work. However, it also serves to make processes routine, as well as to make them faster and more secure, eventually resulting in better exam results. This form of cheap labour is a facet of dual VET systems. Such considerations and arrangements are not compatible with approaches based on academic credits.

If there are no public funds to co-finance dual VET, then business sectors can find their own solutions (e.g. through sector-specific training funds). In any case, dual VET needs financing sources beyond just trainees and individual businesses.

The contents of the classroom component of dual VET are not defined beforehand. Depending on the context, they may include remedial education, advanced general education, business theory and administration, and individual trainee projects. Dual VET can also be expanded with a third learning venue, extracurricular courses in basic professional skills at training workshops, “mock” companies, or training institutes.

8. Limitations – What dual VET cannot be expected to achieve.

Even when dual VET is a proven approach to mitigate youth unemployment in countries with dual VET systems, to effectively link trainees with jobs and to improve productivity and quality of participating businesses, it also has its limits. It takes time to build and establish a dual VET system. When dual VET systems can help decrease youth unemployment, then only over the long term. Over the short term, dual VET at best helps mitigate frictional, but not structural, unemployment.

It not only takes time to build and establish a dual VET system, it is also extremely complex in terms of the demands for ownership and joint responsibilities. Compared to a system based on modular short courses, dual VET is significantly more complex and involves fewer participants over the long run. However, as soon as modular short courses shall achieve the same results in terms of employability, quality and productivity, then the comparison of complexity evens out.

The number of apprenticeship places in participating businesses limits the capacity of dual VET systems to enrol new trainees. If the objective of public VET systems is not only to satisfy business demand, but also to address social needs, then the system will need to seek other answers in addition to dual VET. If businesses in difficult economic situations wish to remain competitive, they tend to scale back number of apprentices to save costs. This is where the public sector will need to provide crucial support.

In order to overcome a situation of isolated, segmented solutions, dual VET needs to gain critical mass. It is therefore crucial to pay attention to the potential for replication and the possibility to make adjustments to the system as it develops.

Dual VET needs to involve many small and medium enterprises as partners. In many partner countries, these are precisely those businesses that most often fear the competition and are hesitant to collaborate with other businesses in their sector. However, without their participation it will not work. Initially, larger firms might be easier to engage as partners, but without the participation of small and medium enterprises, interventions with a few large firms will be relegated to isolated one-off solutions.

9. Dual VET Projects: More Pointers for Development Projects to consider

It takes a long time to build dual VET systems. Through trust building, collaboration with businesses, bringing educational partners up to speed, model development, creating a solid ownership, strengthening associations and interest groups, working at the structural level to integrate dual VET into the regulatory framework, implementing three course cycles – each lasting from one to three years – and an initiative quickly adds up to a 15-year horizon at least.

During the first phase, while working at the trainee level it is often appropriate to work at the same time with businesses and their interest groups and associations not only to build trust, but also to see them as a target group in and of themselves for further advancement and to prepare them in their roles as advisors to the trainees. The main objective during this first phase is to show that the arrangement works. Consequently, working with a smaller number of motivated businesses is essential.

Along with focusing on system development, dual VET projects require a sectoral focus and corresponding expertise. Technical expertise has a trust-building effect for training institutions.

Along with integration of dual VET into national VET systems and the corresponding steering bodies, dual VET requires sector-internal structures as well. Depending on the context and situation, these can take the form either of associations, a higher trusteeship, or, during an initial period, informal platforms.

There must be ideas and concepts of long-term financing and sustainability of dual VET programmes from the very start, even if setting up these mechanisms and facilities can take a long time. Over the long run, dual VET requires public sponsorship or at least corporate funding in order to finance the classroom component. Financing sourced merely from the immediate businesses and trainees involved will not work over the long run. This would provide headhunting firms with a double advantage.

Development projects and programmes must be extremely careful when deciding what exactly to finance. Most important are the development costs and measures to advance and strengthen all project partners (businesses, associations, schools, public partners etc.). It is important to avoid subsidizing operating costs for the classroom component. It is only an option if there is a clear plan for some other entity to take over this responsibility.

Offering financial incentives to participating businesses is a tricky affair and can send the wrong signals. These should only be offered, if ever, when the rules are clear and the funds will be available over the long haul. It is best not to give financial incentives to businesses out of the project budget. If ever, then promoting small investments would be preferable to subsidising operational training costs.

Countries with dual VET programmes have a proven lower rate of youth unemployment than those with weak VET systems. This does not mean that introducing dual VET will have an immediate and tangible effect within a given project cycle on youth unemployment. If such effects do become manifest, then only in mature systems and reflected in the entire VET system. Partner countries will never dualise their entire VET systems. Given this reality, dual VET projects need carefully selected indicators. These indicators should not target numbers of graduates as a primary goal. Instead, they should assess labour market health and things such as effects on quality and productivity, development processes, systemic and institutional development, and multiplier effects.

10. Annex 1: Questionnaire Round 1 (in English)

Policy Issues		With this statement I:			
		1- agree wholeheartedly	2- agree	3- disagree	4- disagree completely
A	Dual vocational education is such a superior approach that donors and development projects are well advised to initiate, promote and support it wherever possible.				
B	As soon as dual training becomes a viable idea in partner countries, the German speaking countries are the natural and competent partners for its advancement.				
C	Graduates of dual VET programmes generally have comparatively better opportunities.				
D	Approaches might be called “dual”, but they don’t always fulfil all the necessary criteria, in which case they should be denounced as fakes.				
E	Dual training is generally a good option for transitional economies and middle-income countries.				
F	In a more precarious/fragile context, traditional apprenticeship schemes lend themselves as entry points into dual vocational training.				
H	In order to give a boost to dual vocational education, the Donor Committee should be enlarged to include other countries like Denmark, The Netherlands and Poland.				

Statement		Agreement					Importance for partner countries
		Scale					
		1: 1-agree wholeheartedly					
		2: 2-agree					
		3: 3-disagree					
		4: 4-disagree completely					
		n/a = no answer					
		With this statement I:					
1.1	Basic principles	1	2	3	4	n/a	
1.1	A	Variation between different VET systems, an active labour market policy, and ad-hoc programmes for specific target groups are all important factors in international development cooperation.					
	B	Dual vocational training belongs exclusively to VET systems.					
	C	In dual vocational training, employers actually own the programmes, whereas in other programmes supporting labour market integration they are merely contributing partners.					
	D	As a rule, the private sector should not be told what to do, and it should not be forced into dual VET through regulations.					
	E	The call to practice corporate social responsibility alone is not enough of an incentive for the private sector to participate in dual VET. Dual VET only works if it aligns with participating employers’ own business interests.					

Definitions			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
1.2	A	Dual VET is a combination of on-site, practical training inside company structures and theoretical, classroom-based training at a school or training centre.						
	B	For an approach to be called “dual”, workplace-based learning should comprise at least 50% of the entire curriculum.						
	C	In dual VET, trainees are not students but special employees. Companies select and hire the trainees according to their own criteria and preferences.						
	D	Recruitment through the company and the contractual relationship between the company and the trainee make the difference between dual VET and other forms of industry integration approaches.						
	E	Classroom-based training might comprise various components such as general education (including literacy), occupational theory, technology, business administration, and entrepreneurial skills.						

Scope of dual VET systems			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
1.3	A	There is no such thing as a SINGLE dual vocational education system. There are differences among the dual vocational education systems in German speaking countries, as well as variations within the national systems between industries, professions and/or regions.						
	B	In German speaking countries, the upper secondary level forms the backbone of the dual VET system. In our partner countries, dual vocational training may be encountered at even lower levels.						
	C	In some partner countries, dual VET is also an option at the post-secondary and tertiary level.						
	D	Dual VET is one option for improving the working conditions of underage labourers.						
	E	Dual VET can also be fully de-coupled from the education system and made available to young people regardless of their age.						
	F	Dual VET shall be based on catching opportunities in industries, occupational areas, or regions with favourable enabling environments and interested private partners.						
	G	The dream of establishing a uniform VET system is common in highly centralised partner countries. Diversity is anathema to bureaucratic thinking.						
	H	If a partner country opts for dual VET, it should convert and ‘dualise’ its entire vocational system.						
	I	Qualifications frameworks and dual VET are not mutually exclusive. If qualifications frameworks focus on learning outcomes and professional competence (irrespective of where and how they were acquired), then they could even facilitate dual VET.						

Added value of dual vocational education			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
1.4	A	Dual VET is the “magic wand” that facilitates a smooth transition from the world of education to professional life.						
	B	Improvements in quality and productivity from a qualified workforce are not unique to dual vocational education systems, but they are more likely.						
	C	Dual VET is more appropriate for training skilled professionals (technical specialists, shop floor supervisors, SME senior staff, and potential job creators) than the mass of unskilled job seekers.						
	D	Dual VET helps to prevent or rectify wrong occupational choices at an early stage by providing the job seeker with realistic exposure.						
	E	If trainees receive small salaries from their employers for productive work, dual VET increases inclusion of poor applicants.						
	F	Because of cost sharing, dual vocational education is a sustainably financed VET system.						
	G	VET is frequently a second choice. Dual vocational education on its own does not necessarily improve this negative connotation of VET.						

Enabling environments for dual VET			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
2.1	A	In a scenario a), which features a strong informal sector; projects preferably build on the existing traditional apprenticeship schemes and ‘dualise’ them by adding a classroom component.						
	B	In scenario b), which features larger firms (e.g. retail chains, call centres, textile factories, etc.) running informal training schemes, projects may build on them and ‘dualise’ them by adding classroom components.						
	C	It is relatively easy to convince pioneering firms (including international companies) with problems recruiting a qualified workforce (scenario c) to become partners in quality dual vocational training systems.						
	D	Pioneering firms (so-called "champions") are showcases for promoting dual VET in other sectors, industries, or regions.						
	E	Scenario d), featuring strong associations and industry clusters, is more conducive to initiating dual VET from the ground up.						
	F	Dual vocational education in official government policies or strategies (scenario e) is an optimal starting point from which to launch a dual vocational training system.						
	G	If innovative providers (scenario f) want to initiate dual VET, they have to speak the language of the private sector and understand the mentality of private business and leave behind their own educational logic and jargon.						

	H	As initiators of dual VET, innovative providers are more likely to succeed in fostering occupational profiles with a comparatively high social status and good reputation.							
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Favourable factors for dual VET			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
2.2	A	Dual VET is a promising practice in dynamic industries with high demand for skilled human resources.						
	B	Dual VET is potentially effective at the lower end of the qualification ladder in more traditional and manual occupations.						
	C	Dual VET is comparatively easy to introduce in production, manufacturing, construction, and tourism, as opposed to office-based occupations such as marketing and sales.						
	D	Small and medium enterprises are potentially more open to dual vocational training.						
	E	It is easier for providers to develop brand-new dual vocational training courses and programs than to 'dualise' existing curricula.						
	F	It is difficult to explain the unfamiliar concept of dual VET and to convince potential partners in words. Functioning models and showcases are better door openers.						
	G	The promotion of dual VET requires highly regarded individuals and opinion leaders willing to advocate dual vocational education actively.						
	H	Certification that opens pathways into more advanced training for its best performers increases the attractiveness of dual VET.						

Limitations of dual VET			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
2.3	A	The capacity of dual VET is limited by the number of available internships in participating companies (and the underlying demand for corporate manpower). Thus, dual vocational training on its own is not the first choice to solve the problem of high unemployment.						
	B	Dual VET requires critical mass to succeed. The potential for scaling up, expanding and replicating must be explored at the very beginning of any dual education project.						
	C	Dual VET can help reduce frictional unemployment. However, it does not solve structural unemployment.						
	D	The curricula offered at dual VET institutions depend on the business cycle. Dual vocational education is no remedy to cyclical unemployment.						
	E	Dual VET generally works better in traditionally male-dominated occupations.						
	F	Countries with dual VET systems generally have lower youth unemployment rates. However, dual VET on its own does not solve the youth unemployment problem.						
	G	The development of dual VET schemes is more complex and takes more time than modularised skills-training approaches with short courses.						

	H	Dual VET is not the first choice for quickly assessing social inclusion tangibly.							
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Steering mechanisms			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
3.1	A	Agreements and contracts between stakeholders and joint steering bodies are the key instruments for steering dual training.						
	B	Steering bodies need to be industry-specific. Such bodies are more likely to develop a common identity and take ownership.						
	C	Unilaterally steering dual vocational training e.g. through training providers or the public sector does not work.						
	D	Centralised steering of the dual VET system at the national level with the private sector represented through national chambers does not work.						
	E	Over the long run, dual VET requires associations. However, in the absence of established organisations, projects may start with industry clusters or like-minded interest groups and develop them into associations over time.						

Finances			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
3.2	A	Dual VET requires financing through the triad of employers, the general public, and trainees themselves. This principle is universal, whereas implementation modalities may vary widely.						
	B	Trainees' financial contributions may come either in the form of a fee paid to their employer, working for free, or working at a reduced salary.						
	C	A duration of the apprenticeship or internship period exceeding the immediate necessity of skills acquisition allows the enterprise to recoup the costs of their training input through productive work.						
	D	In the absence of public funds, industries might develop their own solutions (e.g. through sectoral training funds or levy-grant systems). Otherwise, dual vocational education is not sustainable.						
	E	Financing of dual VET through NGO development projects is not sustainable. The questions of who pays what, who receives what, and what are potential financial resources need to be answered from the very beginning.						
	F	Financial incentives and payments to companies send the wrong signals and have the potential to destroy informal in-company training and traditional apprenticeship schemes.						
	G	Project financing shall be limited to capacity development of training companies and their associations in managerial, technical and pedagogical aspects. Project funds shall not be used to subsidise salaries or other running expenses.						

Implementation of dual VET			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
A		Workplace-based learning is not structured through curricula, but through participation in productive processes. Thus, the quality of dual apprenticeship-based education depends on the scope and quality of the work in the company.						
B		Instead of curricula, the system may offer profiles and the required professional competencies. It also may provide guidelines and checklists for the integration of trainees into the work process.						
C		Companies providing dual training must use adequate tools and equipment in their work processes.						
D		Teachers of theory and trainee instructors/supervisors at the workplace require open doors and should be communicating with each other regularly.						
E		The company conducts performance assessments of workplace-based learning, and these constitute an integral element of the overall assessment/certification.						
F		A third learning venue, in addition to company and theory classes improves the quality and attractiveness of dual VET. This venue might be anything from centre-based training workshops, to practice firms, and training kitchens, etc., depending on the situation.						
G		The practical component of final examinations is implemented in the workplace and assessed by practitioners.						

Dual VET projects			Degree of agreement					Importance
			1	2	3	4	n/a	
4.2	A	Projects to promote dual VET require a long horizon for planning and implementation.						
	B	With confidence building, model development and piloting, capacity development of employers/associations and training centres/vocational schools, implementation of training cycles, it can easily take a decade for outcomes on graduates to come to fruition.						
	C	Prior to model development and piloting, building confidence with employers may take substantial time.						
	D	Employers and partners in dual VET schemes will also be beneficiaries, e.g. by benefiting from upgraded skills of workers, master craftspeople, and co-workers (coaches), as well as through exposure to new technologies, etc.						
	E	Model development and piloting of dual VET requires a sector-specific perspective and expertise, and it also involves establishing or strengthening sector-specific structures.						

11. Annex 2: Questionnaire Round 2

		Yes	No	n/a
1	The presence of many actors intervening in the dual vocational education system, in addition to interventions such as study tours to learn about other dual VET systems, can confuse partners in developing countries. For this reason, the DC dVET programme needs a position paper with a universal definition of dual VET.			
2	A position paper must work out what is universally valid in dual VET vs. what can or should be developed specific to the context.			
3	Dual VET must clearly distinguish between dual in terms of a system (on an organisational and institutional level) and dual as a pedagogical concept (related to the training process).			
4	In order to be sustainable, an international intervention in dual VET should have a time horizon of at least 15 years (e.g. 3 years of planning and preparation plus 12 years of implementation). Implementation includes following up on the results and impact within businesses.			
5	Donors and projects should be careful with lobbying for dual VET through government channels in countries with a weakly organised private sector.			
6	International development should place more emphasis on training experts, potential future economic drivers and job creators. Dual VET is a suitable tool for this purpose.			
7	In the first years of a dual VET intervention, no quantitative results on the number of graduates and effects on employment should be expected.			
8	The DC dVET should develop the following products:			
	a) a synopsis of functional dual VET approaches			
	b) guidelines for sector and feasibility studies (including model TOR)			
	c) recommendations for national policy papers on dual VET			
	d) financing guidelines for dual VET			
	e) core concept papers on programme development, design, and duration of interventions in dual VET			
	f) evaluation grid with key indicators to measure success of the project and training			
	g) a list of institutions in German-speaking countries as well as Netherlands and Denmark that might be able to support dual VET.			

9	The DC dVET defines vocational education and training as a system with one or more of the following institutional and organisational components:			
		essential	desirable	n/a
	a) <i>Learning venues</i> : Dual VET combines practical training at the workplace with classroom-based training in schools or training centres.			
	b) <i>Funding</i> : dual VET is sponsored jointly by public and private (i.e. schools and businesses) partners in a common effort.			
	c) <i>Status of trainees</i> : in dual VET, trainees are employees at businesses with special status and an employment or training contract.			
	d) <i>Duration of training</i> : training courses in the dual VET system must have a minimum duration.			
	... and, if necessary, at least	1 year	2 years	3 years
10	Dual vocational education is closely intertwined with the professional concept. The professional concept is more than merely a pedagogical principle: it has values and represents a form of social organisation. Thus, dual VET is tacitly equated with a certain level of quality. What does this mean for international development cooperation? Can dual VET projects advance in our partner countries without the corresponding professional concept, or should such projects also promote the professional concept?			

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