

# **GUYANA NATIONAL REPORT ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)**

**A contribution to the regional discussion on reforming TVET institutions and  
accreditation systems for improved skills and enhanced employability in  
Caribbean labour markets**

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1. Socio/economic history of the country up to present day**

Guyana with an area of 83, 000 square miles or 215,000 square kilometres has an abundance of fertile agriculture land criss-crossed by numerous rivers. Its huge watered land mass, equatorial location and preferential access to the European markets as a former colony of Great Britain shaped the economic reliance on agriculture. During the post slavery period the principal exports were agriculture-based: sugar, rum and rice. As development took place, bauxite, manganese gold, diamonds, lumber and a growing fishing sector were added. An analysis of the structure of the economy between 1995 to present would reveal an economy in which Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing contributes between 30% to 40% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

## **1.2. The major areas of economic activities and employment**

At present the major areas of economic activities and employment are

- (i) Agriculture- mainly Rice, Sugar, Forestry and Fishing.
- (ii) Mining
- (iii) Manufacturing
- (iv) Construction
- (vi) Services

## **1.3. The country's export base and competitiveness**

The country's export earnings per capita GDP in 2002 was US\$ 494.9 M. A number of incentives are being offered for foreign investment through the Guyana Office for Investment (GOINVEST), and there is considerable scope for expansion of the manufacturing sector given the low wage rates and a tradition of manufacturing bred by rice and sugar production.

However there are a number of challenges to competitiveness, such as the cost of energy and transport which exceeds that of most CARICOM countries.

## **1.4. The stated objectives for social development, economic growth, diversification and export competitiveness.**

These objectives are elaborated in Guyana's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper which includes the diversification of the country's economic base for the purpose of stimulating investment into new products and services, in order to reduce the dependence on the traditional production centres. Included in these measures are plans to counter the drastic cut in the European Union sugar price. There will be a restructuring of the sugar industry at a cost of US\$ 6 M over a 6- year period, along with the modernization and diversification of the sugar industry into new product lines, such as ethanol and other by- products.

## 2. The Current State of the TVET system in GUYANA

### 2.1. The TVET institutional structure

#### 2.1.1. Institutions (public and private), their profile and their responsibilities involved

The TVET institutions are committed to offer education and training to youths and adults in technical, commercial and scientific fields relevant to the needs of the national economy.

In addition, the TVET institutions have a responsibility to collaborate with industry and commerce in the planning of programmes which will facilitate the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for the development of self and the nation.

Table 2.1: Total number of persons enrolled and total number of persons successfully completing TVET by type of institution in 1995, 2000 and 2004.

Status/year	1995			2000			2004		
Institution <sup>(2)</sup>	Gross costs	Enrolled	Graduates	Gross costs	Enrolled	Graduates	Gross costs	Enrolled	Graduates
G.S.A	NA	81	65	NA	120	96	NA	102	62
G.T.I	380	895	494	485	1517	671	615	1816	714
LTI	93	90	91	115	136	67	300	280	164
ETI							120	257	55
NATI	271	567	131	324	634	164	340	347	126
GITC	188	228	145	233	293	173	265	253	152
CSHE	350	866	514	389	1117	931	419	1263	873
BIT	195	253	201	157	89	89	210	91	88

(1) Private sector training included

(2) Gross costs in US \$ '000

(3) NA: not available

### National TVET objectives and priorities

#### 2.1.2. Institutional reform

The depression experienced in the 1980s impacted adversely on the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system. The shortage of training facilities such as hand tools, workshop equipment, audio-visual equipment and a general rundown state of the various physical plants among other things bore testimony. The consequences has been a general erosion of standards in the delivery of TVET and an inability to provide Technical and Vocational Education and Training to meet present and future trends in science and technology, as well as satisfying the nation's need for skilled manpower.

In 1993 and 1995 the Ministry of Education developed and implemented policies and programmes for the improvement of the TVET system. The National Development Strategy of 2001 also articulates development policies for the system.

In 2003 the Secretariat of the Board of Industrial Training was upgraded to include the installation of a modern information storage and retrieval system.

The TVET Bill was promulgated in Parliament on 22<sup>nd</sup>. July 2004. The passage of that legislation was seen as a major policy initiative that will pave the way for the restructuring and further development of the system. The objective is to modernize the system and improve the quality of the delivery of the various TVET programmes that are offered at the post –secondary institutions and the pre- vocational education system.

The Ministry of Education is also implementing a new competency-based modularized curricula at the post- secondary institutions for the training of craftsman. (Level Two competency)

At the secondary level, there is also the introduction of the Basic Certificate Competency Programme (BCCP), which is aimed at introducing basic labour competencies into the secondary school curricula for form 4 or grade ten students who would be certified at Level One competency.

### **2.1.3. VET Demand Analysis and Planning of Delivery**

Demand analysis for the planning and delivery of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), is largely determined at the macro level by a Labour Market Information System (LMIS) unit in the Ministry of labour. At a macro level, the LMIS unit conducts labour force surveys, wages surveys, compile and publish labour statistics and host workshops for various sector representatives.

The LMIS Unit collaborates with the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) for the execution of training needs surveys from time to time. Such surveys would provide information on the competency and skills levels, qualifications and the kind of training or upgrading training required to boost production and productivity, especially for those industries and service groups that are significant foreign exchange earners.

A recent example is the CPEC project which was executed by the BIT for the Guyana Manufacturers Association (GMA). (Refer to 2.1.5)

### **2.1.4. TVET decentralization strategy**

There are a number of recent initiatives to decentralize TVET, foremost among these is the Government's on-going plan to establish a TVET institution in each of the ten Regions.

In Region 2, the Essequibo Technical Institute (ETI) commenced training in the year 2001, while the Upper Corentyne Industrial Training Centre in Region 6 commenced training in 2005. Similar TVET institutions exist in regions 4 and 10. Included also in the decentralization strategy is the National Training Project for Youth Empowerment. This is a community-based

on-the job training that would be delivered to 5,200 youths across the various regions of Guyana, over a three-year period.

### **2.1.5. Targeting specific labour market groups**

In response to labour market demands, the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) organizes short – term training programmes for specific groups within the labour force.

The most recent was the participation in Caribbean HRD Project for Economic Competitiveness (CPEC), in which the Board of Industrial Training collaborated with the private sector to organize upgrading training for artisans from various private sector companies. A total of 293 artisans received accredited training under the project.

In addition, the BIT conducted a Training of Trainers Workshop for 20 artisans who joined the pool of trained trainers in the public and private sector industries.

Also, 24 personnel from various public and private sector construction companies participated in a National Building Code Workshop, as part of the national plan to promote the use of the recently completed National Building Code. The resource personnel for the workshop was drawn from a sister CARICOM State.

### **2.1.6. Other objectives and priorities**

In the context of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the wider globalized world, Guyana's competitiveness will depend, to a large extent on an investment in human resources. To this end, the national budget for 2006 will continue the trend of huge investment in the education sector. Under the Basic Education Access Management Support (BEAMS) Programme, the sum of US \$ 4.5 M has been budgeted. Through this project, the first batch of schools will be completed and equipped with laboratory facilities to enhance the delivery of TVET subjects.

There is also the Education For All- Fast Track Initiative (EFA/FTI), for which an allocation of US\$ 4 M would be utilized to establish eleven (11) additional resource centres. Teachers would continue to receive incentives for teaching in remote areas, and the improvement of teachers' living quarters in the hinterland districts in Regions 1,7,8 and 9 would continue.

The 2002 National Census found that approximately two-thirds of the school age population currently attend school, which represents an increase from 59% and 55 % in 1980 and 1991 respectively.

## **Current funding arrangements**

### **2.1.7. Advantages and disadvantages of the current funding mechanism**

Current funding arrangements for TVET is done mainly by Government's allocation from the national budget, along with a limited cost recovery input in the form of enrolment and examination fees.

Even though the apprenticeship programmes are funded by the participating industries, the majority are public corporations or state entities.

#### Advantages of Government funding

- It can be seen as an extension of the general education system where the funding is considered as a responsibility of the Government
- Given the weaknesses of employers' training capacity, Government can use their financial leverage to implement large scale employment programmes and technological changes
- It is widely perceived as having the power to provide equal opportunities, taking into consideration such factors as race, class, income and gender preferences.

#### Disadvantages

- Given the budgetary constraints of government funding, it often limits the ability of public TVET institutions to influence national growth
- There is also the fear of erosion of training quality due to budgetary constraints
- In its efforts to provide opportunities and reduce youth unemployment, the Government can extend the TVET output beyond market capacity.

2.1.8. Indicators –including cost indicators- used in designing and evaluating TVET funding strategies.

The main cost indicators for TVET are the full-time enrolment figures. Other cost indicators are retooling costs and labour market demands for specific programmes.

### **3. Quality assurance strategies**

#### **3.1. Assuring National Vocational Qualifications<sup>1</sup> (NVQs)**

##### **3.1.1. Describe and review current national system of assuring VET quality**

The assurance of National Vocational Qualifications is done in close collaboration with the TVET institutions under the Ministry of Education. Where apprenticeship schemes do not have the facilities for adequate classroom delivery, apprentices attend the TVET institutions on a part-time basis, as part of the preparation for the Guyana Technical Education Examination (GTEE). The latter is considered as a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).

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<sup>1</sup> In completing this section of the report, writers should be mindful that in this era education makes one trainable and training makes one employable, the issue of employability in the context of ever increasing sophisticated job competency requirements, demands a very strong and direct connection between the education system and TVET (*including lifelong learning initiatives and career guidance facilities*)

The GTEE is administered by an independent entity within the Ministry of Education. At the TVET institutions, students undergo periodic internal examinations and practical /laboratory tests.

For apprenticeship schemes, occupational standards agreed on between the BIT and industry are utilized for the periodic assessment of apprentices and includes written and practical tests.

## **3.2. BOARD OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING**

### **3.2.1. Short history**

The Board of Industrial Training (BIT) was established in 1910 under the Industrial Training Act Chapter 39:04 of the Laws of Guyana. As recent as 1984 and beyond, the work of the BIT was executed as an additional responsibility for a Senior Labour Officer in the Ministry of Labour.

In January 1985 a full-time Secretariat was established to effectively and efficiently discharge the responsibilities of the Board of Industrial Training. The Secretariat is headed by an Executive Secretary and includes a team of trained TVET professionals, along with clerical and office support staff.

The Statutory Board is tripartite in nature, comprising of ten members and include employees, employers and government representatives. Foremost among which is representation from the TVET Division of the Ministry of Education.

### **3.2.2. Role and objectives**

The role of the BIT is to promote TVET to satisfy the needs of the labour force in the industrial sector and to perform the regulatory functions for all apprenticeship schemes as well as to issue certificates of competency to apprentices on successful completion of their training. Among the key objectives also is to ensure that the industrial sector has a highly trained and competent workforce. Hence, there is also the provision of training and retraining programmes for artisans.

The BIT also arranges for the examination of artisans and if satisfied with their level of competence, issue nationally accredited certificates of competency.

### **3.2.3. Functioning within the institutional framework**

The institutional framework of TVET in Guyana is divided between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour. The latter has responsibility for the Board of Industrial Training (BIT).

There is close collaboration between the two entities for the promotion and development of TVET, such as formal arrangements for apprentices and artisan trainees under the BIT to attend classes at the technical institutions under the Ministry of Education.

Alternatively graduates from the technical, institutions can be inducted into the final two years of the apprenticeship programmes.

The preparation of the TVET Bill of 2004 that provided the legislation for the establishment of the NCTVET of Guyana, was a joint initiative between the BIT and the TVET Division of the Ministry of Education.

#### **3.2.4. Availability of professional expertise and institutional sustainability**

Efforts are continuing to create a harmonised national training agency NCTVET / BIT. There exist a very close collaborative approach to the delivery of TVET at the national level. The shortage of professional expertise is evident throughout the education system, largely due to the outward migration of trained professionals. However, efforts towards institutional sustainability is at the forefront of policy initiatives.

#### **3.2.5. The need for reform of the Board of Industrial Training**

Such reforms should include:

- The development of a certification system that includes knowledge and skills acquired outside of the formal system
- A re-orientation to competency based approaches based on occupational standards
- The development of a skills register that is similar to other national training agencies
- National standardization of occupations that is in harmony with regional standards

#### **3.2.6. Indicate technical assistance and other support needed to implement current strategies including the harmonization of NVQs and CVQs**

The hosting of a workshop for the local TVET professional and other interest groups to outline the development of NVQs with emphasis on the importance of a regional co-ordinating mechanism for TVET.

## **4. The CARICOM Single market and CARICOM Vocational Qualifications<sup>2</sup> (CVQS)**

### **4.1. Differences between NVQs and CVQs**

The traditional certification system may need reform to provide compatibility with the ideals of a NVQ system as envisaged by COHSOD (Article 35).

The development of a strategy for the adaptation of the approved occupational standards may also be required at the local level.

### **4.2. Reform the quality assurance system, adopted reforms and implementation**

Initiatives for the reform of the quality assurance system include:

- The introduction of the BCCP project in the secondary school system for a Level One output.
- The introduction of modularised competency based curricula at the TVET institutions for the Level Two output.

Recognizing that systems for certification and accreditation are integral to the functioning of integrated markets such as the CSME, the National Accreditation Council (NAC) was established in 2005. The NAC will have a direct bearing on Guyana's role in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). Among its aims is to set standards for certificates in education at the tertiary institutions and establish accreditation criteria and procedures for various levels of certification. These are all initiatives towards the harmonization of national quality assurance practices at CARICOM level

### **4.3. Harmonizing national quality assurance practices at the CARICOM level**

There are on-going efforts to create harmonization of the national quality assurance practices, in consideration of the firm decision to be actively involved in the CSME.

With the development of the NCTVET it is anticipated that these initiatives will take shape as a collaborative effort or otherwise.

## **5. Reforming the TVET system in Guyana**

### **5.1. Main factors driving the need for change of the TVET system**

- The need for a common approach to workforce development and recognition of occupational qualifications in CARICOM

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<sup>2</sup> CARICOM has established and institutionalized a framework for work/labour force competency certification (NVQs and soon CVQs). This framework is based on approved occupational standards of Competence for over 120 occupations from entry level 1 to profession level 5. The CVQ certification is intended to facilitate the movement of skilled certified workers within the CSME as well as to enhance the quality profile and investment attractiveness of the work/labour force of the CARICOM member states.

- Guyana's commitment to the management of free movement of skilled labour, as a key feature of the CSME
- The need for the national Human Resource Development system to ensure that its labour force at all levels, are equipped not only with knowledge and skills, but also the attitudes and orientations necessary to convert the provisions of the CSME into real opportunities.
- The need to seize the opportunities presented through the advent of globalization, by the transformation of the labour force into a highly trained knowledge-based workforce.

## **5.2. Reforms needed to better address the needs for skills training and enhanced employability**

The harmonization of the national TVET system, and the introduction of policy initiatives that will provide an adequate response to the demands of the labour market are the reforms needed.

## **5.3. Adopted (actual) education and training reform policies and implementation**

### **5.3.1. New legislation and reforms of the regulatory system**

(i). The TVET Bill of 2004 provided legislation for the establishment of a National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET). When this agency becomes fully operational it will assume the overall responsibility for technical and vocational education and training in Guyana, and will proceed with the following tasks:

- undertake curriculum review analysis and design and cause to establish training and apprenticeship programmes and vocational qualifications that are relevant to the needs of Guyana and where appropriate, the needs of CARICOM Members States;
- undertake the development and implementation of a national system of Competency-Based Modularized training;
- establish national training standards and performance testing;
- establish an inspectorate to ensure that curricula, standards, schemes and guidelines that are formulated are implemented by every registered training organisation and technical institution; and
- monitor and evaluate the delivery of all the technical and vocational education and training programmes.

The NCTVET of Guyana will function as a semi-autonomous agency under the Ministry of Education. While the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) will continue its supervisory functions for apprenticeship and short – term artisan training in the industrial sector, as a Supervisory Registered Training Organization, its operations will now be monitored by the NCTVET.

(ii) The other recent legislation was the Accreditation Bill of 2004, by which the National Accreditation Council (NAC) was established in 2005. The NAC would have among its responsibilities the following:

- the establishment of standards for qualifications in education and training in tertiary institutions;
- establish accreditation criteria and procedures for the various levels of certification;
- ascertain equivalencies for levels of certification obtained both locally and overseas; and
- compile and disseminate information related to the accredited institutions and programmes regionally and extra-regionally.

### **5.3.2. New ways to provide access to job training and certification**

#### **5.3.2.1. Educationally disadvantaged, uncertified drop-outs and marginalized youths.**

In June 2005 the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) launched the *National Training Project for Youth Empowerment*. This project will provide TVET to 5 250 unemployed youths between the ages of 15 -21 years over a 3 year period. The project would be implemented across the various Regions in order to equip the youths with entry- level skills to join the labour force. It is primarily intended for the educationally disadvantaged youth and uncertified drop outs who are not likely to gain entry into the TVET institutions and apprenticeship schemes, because of their present academic attainment. The latter weakness is addressed by the project, through the inclusion of a Life Skills Education Curriculum that includes literacy and numeracy upgrading.

The main objectives of the project are:

- to train 1750 unemployed youths annually in skills that are vital to the development of the country;
- to provide those youths with knowledge and skills that will enable them to gain employment and access to further Technical and Vocational Education and Training; and
- to provide industries with the skills to fill existing vacancies.

#### **5.3.2.2. Students about to graduate from the secondary school system**

In order to have a cadre of skilled personnel at the professional, technician and craftsman levels, it is necessary to provide basic skills training at the secondary level. The Basic Competency Certificate Programme (BCCP) at Grade 10 is intended to satisfy this need. The certificate will facilitate employment, access to CSEC and post- secondary institutions and also serve as an entry requirement for apprenticeship training, more or less offering alternative pathways. In general, the terms the BCCP aims to:

- provide an opportunity for secondary school students to develop technical competencies, functional literacy and numeracy at Grade10;
- equip citizens with life, citizenship and vocational skills to support national development;
- expose students to a modularized career education programme with emphasis on supervised work experience/attachments or individualized work-related projects;
- develop students' potential in good occupational and environmental health and safety practices;
- develop problem – solving and creative thinking skills through project work.

#### **5.3.2.3. Existing members of the labour force (employed and unemployed)**

It is a policy of the BIT to collaborate with the Ministry of Education to provide training for targeted sectors of the employed labour force and retraining for unemployed workers who are faced with retrenchment. A recent exercise of this nature was done in 2003 for workers in the bauxite industry.

#### **5.3.3. Reform of secondary education**

Activities towards the reform of the secondary education system are in progress, among which is the US\$19 M Secondary School Reform Project (SSRP). This project aims at a significant upgrading of education in the first three grades of the secondary level. Its main components include curriculum reform, acquisition of teaching/learning materials (including) textbooks, teacher training, the training of school administrators, infrastructure improvements and institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Education, in particular the Management Information System (MIS).

#### **5.3.4. Tertiary education and skills training**

In order to make tertiary education more relevant and capable of contributing to the development of Guyana, the Government of Guyana proposes the following strategies:

- create a task force to decide on actions in tertiary education;
- maintain institutionalized lines of communication to coordinate actions with the University of Guyana;
- establish a body to oversee tertiary education and promote cooperation among the institutions; and
- promote technical education in each region, with at least one TVET institution in each region that is specifically designed to respond to the region's needs.

#### **5.3.5. Current policies and programmes that address the needs for skills training in the informal economy**

There are various programmes that address the needs of the informal economy, among which are the Craft Production and Design Division of the Ministry of Education. This division provides training in indigenous craft, textiles designs and other creative home furnishing and souvenirs. There is also training for the informal agriculture sector. (see 7.1)

## **6. Impact evaluation and sustainability of the TVET system**

### **6.1. Board of Industrial Training (BIT) and impact evaluation**

The evaluation of training programmes organized by the BIT is a standard practice, including short-term training programmes for the disadvantaged and school dropouts.

The BIT conducts surveys and tracer studies to determine the number of graduates who have joined the labour force, those who opted for self employment, the social impact and improved income generation in low-income households as well as the performance of those who choose to pursue higher technical studies.

### **6.2. Assessing training needs; institutions, sources and methods**

Training needs assessment by the BIT involves many stakeholders. Labour market analysis conducted by the LMIS unit would examine the changing patterns of supply and demand in the labour market. Such information enables the BIT to determine the occupations that are declining and growing and to recommend adjustments to the training programme cycle.

For the coordination and development of new artisans training programmes, stakeholder consultations are held to determine sector/ industry needs before the design of the training curricula. A needs assessment of the participating TVET institutions is also conducted to ensure that laboratory facilities and resource personnel have the capabilities to satisfy the needs of the particular training. In that regard, where there is a lack of expertise, arrangements would be made to recruit part-time tutors from the industrial sector for the delivery of a programme. A curriculum-writing workshop would be organized to adjust the existing curriculum to meet the needs of the targeted sector.

### **6.3. TVET annual output specifications**

The average annual output from the current TVET system is as follows:

Home Economics	773
Engineering, commercial and science	1084
Agriculture	74
Engineering apprenticeship	<u>126</u>
	<b>2057</b>

### **6.4. Impact assessment**

Impact assessment of training is conducted with the collaboration of employers.

For the planning of new training programmes, the BIT recognizes the importance of the information generated concerning the relevance of the previous programme to the employment situation and also the weaknesses in the training delivery. Another important purpose of the feedback is the need to restructure the curricula of upgrading training programmes for artisans, in keeping with changing technology. Even the mobility of the graduates is seen as a useful indicator of the relevance of the training to the labour market, since internal or external migration of the skilled worker can be seen as a positive indicator in training programme assessment.

## **7. TVET institutions and in sectoral (employment) policies**

### **7.1 Restructuring of agriculture and the response of the TVET systems**

The TVET response to the restructuring of agriculture includes the revision of existing curricula at the Guyana School of Agriculture and the introduction of new programmes such as Sugar Agronomy and Forestry studies.

In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture introduced the Agriculture In-service Training and Communications Centre (ATICC) that provides extension support material and training with a built-in process of documentation and evaluation procedures.

The general objective is to satisfy the continuing needs of the client farmers through the resources of the Ministry in conjunction with other public, private sector and donor institutions. The programme also assists in the training of youths and high school students in crop and poultry production and organize garden and vegetable competition among schools and youth groups.

### **7.2. TVET and the response to growing/changing demand for skills in tourism, international business and financial services**

In recent years, tourism has been given a high priority in Guyana's economic development strategy. This has been due mainly to changing market forces and the dismantling of secure and preferential markets for traditional sectors of Guyana's economy.

The Government of Guyana encourages investment in the tourism sector through a generous package of incentives including custom duty and tax concessions.

The TVET response to the development of Guyana's tourism sector includes the introduction of a Tourism Studies Unit at the University of Guyana and more recently, the introduction of the International Diploma in Tourism Studies by a local private institution in collaboration with the University of Cambridge.