

TVET FOR REFUGEES

Students celebrate graduating from an FCA catering course in South Sudan.

PHOTO: FCA / PETER CATON

How to best boost refugees' self-reliance through technical and vocational education and training (TVET).
Lessons we need to learn.

1. Permit refugees to work in the sector or occupation in which they are being trained through legal or policy frameworks.

Governments must provide pathways for refugees to access the labour market. Such opportunities should integrate with host communities. This should include tighter regulations on working conditions, written contracts and fair pay as well as provisions for self-employment, such as access to finance.

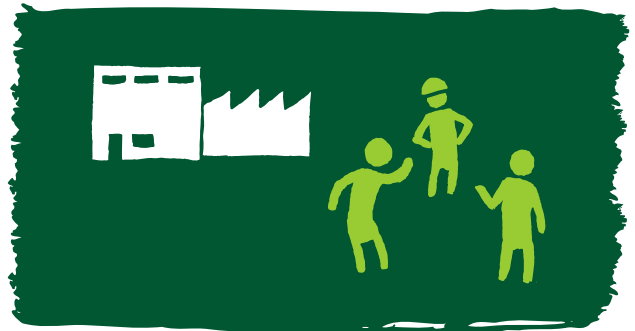
Development partners and UN agencies should continue to work with host country governments to identify solutions to the policy and regulatory issues around the right to work that act as a barrier to the labour market participation of refugees.



2. Make TVET provision relevant to what is demanded by the labour market.

TVET programmes must train to the specific job market to avoid job saturation. Training should focus on quality, based on clear and up-to-date labour market assessment to identify sectors that are likely to provide employment or livelihood. The success of programmes should be judged by learners gaining employment rather than just completing a training course.

Moreover, the design of TVET programmes should include a clear assessment of the legal and policy framework on the right to work in the relevant sector to ensure that there is a clear transition-to-work pathway for learners and information on how employment will affect benefits and right to resettle.



3. Support and motivate learners to navigate employment opportunities during and after their training.

Provision of labour market activation and post-training support is key in securing positive employment outcomes for learners.

Career guidance and counselling should be included as part of training, as well as other complementary bundled skills, such as job search, literacy and numeracy and language acquisition.





Young Syrian women in sewing training in Jordan.

PHOTO: GIZ/GHASSAN SELA

4. Tackle socio-cultural barriers to refugee employment, especially those faced by women

Change the perceptions of employers and host community members through outreach, campaigns, community mobilisation and sensitisation.

Assist female trainees and other vulnerable groups to navigate the additional barriers they face in participating in TVET and transitioning to the labour market by the provision of additional targeted support, such as tailored career counselling.



5. Build a more rigorous evidence base on the impact of TVET on refugees.

Funders and implementers of TVET programmes should invest in robust programme evaluations that longitudinally track TVET learners to determine whether the intended programme outcomes are achieved, and actively publish and disseminate evaluation results.

They should consider developing a standard approach to measuring and evaluating the impact of TVET programmes in a uniform way. TVET interventions often have wider benefits for participants beyond economic and labour market outcomes. These impacts should also be evaluated.



6. Work with the private sector to improve refugees' business skills and opportunities.

This can include cooperating directly with employers to engage them in the design of training, as well as practical internships or apprenticeships as part of the TVET training process.

Additionally, working with private businesses can reveal solutions to refugees' lack of access to finance, difficulties in formally registering businesses and limited access to markets. They can also assist in providing learners with entrepreneurship skills and business start-up support in contexts where wage employment opportunities are scarce.



These recommendations are based on the study: "Economic and labour market impact of TVET for refugees in LMICs – a rigorous review commissioned by Finn Church Aid, GIZ, ILO & UNHCR, October 2023"

