

Policies and Strategies to Improve the Institutional Framework for Informal Apprenticeship Training: The Case of Ghana



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Informal Apprenticeship Training in Ghana



- IAT is responsible for some 80-90% of all basic skills training in Ghana, compared to 5-10% from public training institutions and 10-15% from NGO for-profit and non-profit providers

The current institutional framework for IAT



- National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) set up in 1970, responsible for the nationwide coordination of all aspects of vocational training including apprenticeship.
- However, NVTI's main programmes under its Department of Apprenticeship have been targeted at training 'formal' apprentices

The current institutional framework for IAT (II)



- National Coordinating Committee on Technical and Vocational Education & Training (NACVET) set up to coordinate a national skills development system, formal and informal across ministries... but
- > failed to develop a national policy for skills development; continues to suffer from capacity problems and on-going tensions between the two parent Ministries [education and manpower].
- Being replaced by a Council for TVET (2006/7)

The current institutional framework for IAT (III)



- 1998 Children's Act outlines the legislative framework for IAT (Part V, sub-part II):
 - specifies min age of informal apprenticeship should be 15 yrs or after completion of basic education; Sets out masters' responsibilities towards their apprentices regarding training, the apprenticeship agreement, duties and release of apprentice.
- ISAs represent one of the strongest elements of the current institutional framework for IAT and are actively involved in the supervision of skills training.

The current institutional framework for IAT (IV)



- However, ISAs are not necessarily either strong, effective or always representative of their members.
- ISAs set up as intermediaries between member enterprises and the govt./other agencies, but the establishment of many had more to do with politics (and tax collection!) than self-help.
- *An evaluation team for the World Bank funded VSP concluded that 'most of the associations identified by the study team only exist in name and are not functioning as mobilizers of the local artisan corps'*

The current institutional framework for IAT (V)

- Currently youth trained IAT have two certification options:
 - ISA awarded certificates
 - NVTI proficiency certificate - a non-written competency-based skill test. Many informal apprentices do not register for this NVTI examination.



Policies and Strategies to Improve the Institutional Framework for IAT

- Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategies (GPRS I and II)
- The 2004 Education Reform White Paper
- The 2004 TVET Policy Framework



TVET Policy Framework



- Establishment of a Council for TVET (COTVET), to coordinate and oversee all aspects of TVET across ministries and the broad spectrum of formal, informal and non-formal education and training.
- COTVET includes an Informal Sector Affairs Division which will develop policies and programmes for strengthening IAT

TVET policy framework: objectives re IAT (I)

- Reform & strengthen informal apprenticeship system by intro a CBT and assessment system;
- Develop training systems and mechanisms to facilitate the articulation of the informal level and standards of skills acquisition with those of the formal TVET system.



TVET policy framework: objectives re IAT (II)



- Encouraging the formation of trade associations as a means of delivering training-related assistance to members;
- Integrate IAT into a proposed NQF;
- Integrate TVET into poverty alleviation;
- Provide guidelines for NGO activities in informal sector training

GoG to assume full responsibility for
the first year of all approved IAT



- Payments are expected to be made directly to masters to cover the cost of an apprentice's first year of training.
- A figure of US\$500 per apprentice is being discussed - an amount many times higher than the cost of the entire three years of the present IAT.
- This figure will undoubtedly be reduced.

Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP) 2003-2005

- A GoG-supported training prog. intended to reduce poverty by providing employable skills and other assistance (including access to micro-finance) to the 'unemployed' enabling them to join the informal economy
- A direct response to policy and political concerns regarding 'unemployment'



STEP components

- i) Skills training delivered through vocational training providers;
- ii) Skills enhancement for master-craftsmen and skills training delivered through apprenticeship placements;
- iii) Micro-finance component



STEP: Skills enhancement for master-craftsmen (MC) and skills training delivered through apprenticeship placements.



- MCs undertook a few days pedagogical skills enhancement with Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology Industrial Service (GRATIS) to make them more effective trainers.
- Skills training was then delivered by attaching up to 10 trainees to a MC to undertake a workshop-based apprenticeship for up to 12 months.

STEP: Skills training delivered through apprenticeship placements (I)



- Apprenticeship training organised by GRATIS either took place in their own facilities where 'adequate' equipment and machinery existed for the training, or in informal enterprises with MCs identified by GRATIS.

STEP: Skills training delivered through apprenticeship placements (II)



- The approved STEP budget provided for 1,000 MCs to undergo skills enhancement to take on 5,000 new apprentices and to be paid ₦500,000 (US\$55) per apprentice for tuition costs.
- The actual outcome, according to GRATIS, was that 1,140 STEP apprentices were placed by GRATIS with 120 MCs who had received limited pedagogical training.

STEP: Skills training delivered through apprenticeship placements (III)



- Many MCs given apprentices to train by GRATIS could not provide a decent training environment and were ill-resourced in tools and equipment.
- MCs complained about receiving insufficient funding to adequately train apprentices (MCs got ₦300,000, c.US\$33. while GRATIS got ₦500,000, c.US\$55, per apprentice).
- Both GRATIS and the MCs complained that much of this was spent by them feeding the apprentice throughout the training.
- Training duration was not considered long enough, especially in trades like welding and carpentry, leading to the creation of 'half-baked' apprentices. Most apprentices being trained had no prior knowledge of the trades.
- Inadequate post-training support and huge delays in STEP graduates accessing micro-finance; by October 2006 only 10% had received loans.

STEP lessons learned

- Need more effective mechanisms to assess suitability of the training environment in informal sector enterprises before apprentices start training;
- Need to pay master-craftspeople sufficient funds to cover training costs;
- Need to be clear about who has responsibility for providing apprentices with food during training;
- Short training duration is not suitable for all trade areas, especially where new apprentices don't have prior trade knowledge;
- Post-training support is often promised to all but only seen by relatively few.



Ongoing concerns

- Usual warning re the danger of undermining the strengths and sustainability of IAT.
- Concern that some of the lessons learned in VSP, REP and STEP will be ignored in GoG current plans to formalise IAT.
- Specific concerns re:
 - US\$500 for first year of IAT;
 - Integrating IAT into the NQF;
 - Politics interfering too much with policy;
 - The creation of an enabling environment for private sector development in the informal economy.



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COTVET Informal Sector Affairs Division



- Develop policies and programmes for strengthening the informal apprenticeship system.
- Promote the technological proficiency and advancement of the informal sector labour force through TVET.
- Develop and implement plans for strengthening the links between the informal sector TVET and the formal TVET system.
- Provide technical support to improve the organization and operation of the informal apprenticeship system.
- Coordinate the development of training packages for the informal apprenticeship system.
- Collaborate with NVTI in organizing trade and professional associations for integration into the National TVET Qualifications Framework (NTVETQF).
- Collaborate with NVTI and trade associations in integrating writing, reading, and numeracy skills into the informal apprenticeship system.
- Advise the COTVET Board on policies intended to improve the effectiveness of the informal TVET system.

IAT and Ghana's NQF (I)



- NQF aims 'to bring all post-basic occupation-oriented qualifications into a unified qualification framework'
- to facilitate access to further education and training for individuals in vocational and technical occupations;
- to promote and facilitate access to lifelong learning for all, especially operators in the informal sector; and,
- to improve product and service quality by ensuring uniform standards of practice in the trades and professions.

IAT and Ghana's NQF (II)



- The intention of the GoG is to pilot test the core elements of the NQF in two selected occupational areas: secretarial and mechanical engineering.
- For a five year period, followed by a major review.
- Expected that ten years after the pilot test that the NQF will be applied to all occupational areas.