TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO 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

Both Trinidad and Tobago were originally settled by Amerindians of South American origin before Christopher Columbus encountered the island of Trinidad on July 31, 1498. The Spanish settled on Trinidad, while Tobago frequently changed hands between the European sea powers, but the settlements on both islands were small and underdeveloped. After changing hands between the British, French, Dutch and Courlanders, Britain consolidated its hold on both islands during the Napoleonic Wars, and Tobago was made a ward of Trinidad in 1889. African slaves and Indian, Chinese, Portuguese and free African indentured labourers were imported to supply labour to sugar plantations in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Sugar and cocoa dominated the economy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century until the post-WWII global depression where the rise of the oil economy led to changes in the social structure. Post-colonial conditions were not auspicious for the rise of a bourgeoisie class and industrialization in the 1950s was a process supported and controlled by the ruling classes. The presence of American military bases in Chaguaramas and Cumuto in Trinidad during World War II profoundly changed the character of society. In the post-war period, the wave of decolonization that swept the British Empire led to the formation of the West Indies Federation in 1958 as a vehicle for independence. Trinidad and Tobago elected for independence in 1962 and in 1976 the country severed its links with the British monarchy and became a republic within the Commonwealth.

The industrialization of the 1950s and 1960s transitioned into a period of national state capitalism beginning with the First Five-Year plan and continuing with two more, spanning from 1964-1968 and 1969-1973. The First Five-Year Development Plan lasted from 1958 to 1962, and was known as "The People’s Charter for Economic and Social Development." Its main goal was to modify past economic models that emphasized oil and sugar production by concentrating on more direct government action to mobilize these resources. This nationalist approach targeted the cultivation of a capitalist country.

The economy began to turn outward at the onset of the oil boom, 1974-1980. The government began to cater to foreign multinationals through joint ventures to gain access to foreign markets. Trinidad experienced an economic boom wherein oil totally eclipsed the production of sugar, coffee and cocoa.

There has been a steady and significant improvement in the level of educational attainment in the population. In 1970, approximately 8% of the population had no education and by 1990, this had been reduced to about 3%. Between 1980 and 1990 there was a steady increase in the percentage of both men and women achieving secondary (from 32.7% to 44.4%) and tertiary (from 2.2% to 2.9%) education levels. The adult literacy rates also testify to sustained achievement (94% and 96% for 1970
and 1980, respectively). There is, however, growing concern about functional literacy.

The revised 1995 mid-year population estimate is 1,259,971 based on the 1990 census population of 1,238,800 and an average annual growth rate of 1.1% over the period 1990–1994 (down from 1.27% in the 1985–1989 period). The male-to-female ratio is 101:100. The slowing of population growth is partly due to declines in the total fertility rate (2.4) and crude birth rate (from 19.7 in 1990 to 15.8 in 1995), a stable crude death rate (6.7 in 1990 and 7.1 in 1995), and stabilized emigration between 1980 and 1990 (estimated at 131,918).

These trends are also reflected in a more constrictive-shaped population pyramid: 33.5% of the population is under 15 years of age and 6% are over 65. Based on present trends, however, the expectation is that by 2015 the age group under 15 years old will fall to 23.9%, with the group over age 65 increasing to 7.5% of the total population. Nearly 72% of the population is considered urban.

The currency value has remained fairly stable since the floating of the dollar in 1993 (from TT$ 5.40 to TT$ 6.30=US$ 1). There has been, however, slippage of about 10% between mid-1996 and mid-1997. Inflation rates, as measured by the change in the index of retail prices, declined to about 3.2% for 1996. In keeping with this economic recovery, there has been a reversal of the unemployment trends because of increases in the non-oil sectors of tourism and other service industries. The labour force is growing (521,000 in 1995 from 467,700 in 1990), with declining unemployment rates (17% in 1995 from 20% in 1990) and growing participation rates (60% in 1995 from 56% in 1990). Among women, unemployment rates are higher (23% compared with 19% for men).

1.2 The major areas of economic activities and employment

In 2005, the robust growth in the economy had a positive impact on the labour market. According to CSO figures, the unemployment rate averaged 8.4% in 2004, up from 10.5% for 2003. The number of jobs increased by 28,200 while the labour force grew by 17,000 persons. The largest employment gain was recorded in the Services sector where 15,600 jobs were created. Heightened activity in construction led to an increase in employment of 11,200 persons. This activity reflected the government’s accelerated housing programme and construction projects in the energy sector. However there was a reduction of 5,400 in employment in the Agricultural sector due to the restructuring of the sugar industry.

Robust growth in the economy has had a positive impact on the labour market, reducing the unemployment rate to 8.3% in 2004, which represents a significant improvement from the 10.5% posted for 2003. However, unemployment remains high considering the fast pace of economic growth, possibly because growth has been focused on the more capital-intensive areas of the economy, namely the hydrocarbons.
sector. Despite high unemployment, nominal wages have risen considerably during the period under review; the index of average weekly earnings, which includes all sectors except petroleum and sugar, posted an average annual increase of 10.6% for the period 2000-03, well above the inflation rate for the same period. Real wage growth has lagged behind labour productivity growth, which for 2000-03 reached an average annual rate of 10.3%. This is also partly the result of stronger growth in capital-intensive industries.

The backbone of the economy remains the energy sector. New finds of oil and gas strongly indicate that the petroleum industry will continue to be the dominant sector for the foreseeable future - contributing approximately 25% to the nation’s GDP. Development in the country’s energy sector has spurred growth in many related areas, including a new methanol plant, the fourth Train for the LNG plant and plans to construct an aluminum smelter. In addition to larger petrochemical producers, many supporting small and medium-sized enterprises have flourished, producing goods such as steel, polythene and PVC.

The manufacturing sector is also an important element of the country's economy with textiles, furniture, paper and pharmaceuticals all making significant contributions. In the agricultural sector, areas such as food and beverage processing, horticulture and floriculture are all prominent.

Although Trinidad and Tobago does not benefit as much from tourism as many other Caribbean islands, the tourism industry does show signs of consistent improvement. This is in large part due to successive governments continuing their emphasis on economic diversity outside of the traditional petroleum sector. Between 1995 and 1999, the number of tourists increased by 38% with tourist-based expenditure growing from US$70 million in 1995 to US$200 million in 1999. Many hotels and guesthouses have been upgraded, and Tobago (the more popular tourist location) has doubled its hotel room capacity in the past five years.

Trinidad and Tobago's financial sector is widely recognized as the strongest in the English-speaking Caribbean. In addition to a wide range of smaller financial and insurance institutions, the country has five large commercial banks, six merchant banks, one agricultural development bank, two large corporate financing institutions and four large insurance companies.

1.3 The country’s export base and competitiveness

Trinidad and Tobago has earned a reputation as an excellent investment site for international businesses. The country's main trading partners are the United States, Latin America and the European Union (EU). A significant though saturated market is also provided regionally by members of the Caribbean Common Market, established with the objectives of promoting integration of the economies of its 15 member states.
Since the 1960s, the Trinidad and Tobago economy has been characterized by heavy dependence on the production and export of petroleum and gas. In the 1980s, the Government initiated measures of trade and currency liberalization; diversification strategies into agriculture, manufacturing (non-oil), and tourism; and restructuring, divestment, and liquidation of a number of State enterprises. The country enjoys a healthy trade surplus of $500 million, yet its heavy dependence on oil and petrochemical prices makes its trade balance vulnerable to sudden shifts.

The economy of Trinidad and Tobago has increased in recent years in its reliance on the hydrocarbons sector (petroleum, natural gas, and petrochemicals). This sector directly generates over one third of GDP and two thirds of merchandise exports. The "goods" part of the sector accounted for over 30% of GDP in 2004, while the "services" part accounted for less than 4%. However, the importance of the sector goes well beyond its direct contribution to GDP. For instance, activities such as the production of steel and the generation of electricity are largely dependent on the hydrocarbons sector. The manufacturing sector accounted for some 7.1% of GDP in 2004, while the contribution of agriculture was barely 1.3%.

Due to the extent of its exports of hydrocarbons and related products, Trinidad and Tobago traditionally posts a merchandise trade surplus. Exports more than doubled between 1999 and 2004, to reach US$6.4 billion; exports of natural gas and petrochemicals increased particularly fast. Merchandise imports also increased rapidly during the period under review, expanding by 78% between 1999 and 2004. The capital-intensive nature of the hydrocarbons sector triggers strong imports of capital goods when there is an investment boom in the sector, as experienced in the past few years.

In 2005, the Central Bank recorded an overall balance of payments surplus of $258.7 million for the first quarter. This surplus was 68 per cent higher than the fourth quarter of 2004 and 293.6 percent higher than that a year earlier. The continued solid performance on the external accounts owed much to the burgeoning trade account, particularly the increases in export revenues arising from higher volumes of hydrocarbon exports. Exports in the first quarter of 2005 amounted to $2 billion, which represented more than doubling of the total in the corresponding period of 2004. Conversely, imports fell off slightly, mainly due to lower imports of machinery and transport equipment. Net capital outflows slowed when compared to the first quarter of 2004 because of lower levels of net outward portfolio investment and reduced investment abroad by commercial banks. At the end of May 2005, gross official reserves stood at US$3,383.2 million or 7.3 months of prospective imports. The outturn in the first quarter 2005 came on the heels of another strong performance of the external sector in the fourth quarter of 2004, when an overall surplus of $153.1 million was recorded, to bring the 2004 surplus to $734 million or 6 per cent of GDP.
1.4 The stated objectives for social development, economic growth, diversification and export competitiveness

Social Development

In 1995, Trinidad and Tobago joined with other governments and pledged to counter the effects of poverty by adopting initiatives which would deliver the objectives of full employment and the fostering of stable, safe and just societies. Trinidad and Tobago sought to institute strategic policies to alleviate problems hindering growth and social development. It adopted an integrated focus in order to ensure that social development objectives are incorporated in all areas of governmental decision-making.

Attempts have been made to move away from the traditional social welfare approach to one that is developmental and participatory, and to create an enabling environment for social development through economic reform. Such reform has been geared towards the stabilization of the economy as a prerequisite to improving the quality of life of its citizens.

This dictated that Trinidad and Tobago formulate and implement policy measures that would:

- ensure the sustainability of the growth process;
- promote a greater diversification of the economic base;
- establish a dynamic and energetic business climate conducive to both local and foreign investment;
- keep inflation to a minimum and under control; and
- create employment opportunities.

Initiatives are also being taken to strengthen the family to promote social integration. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has sought to build the necessary legislative framework to engender equal partnership between men and women in family life.

Emphasis is placed on education as a means of combating poverty at the forefront of its strategies to tackle the problem. Accordingly, a National Distance Learning System Secretariat was established to review national programmes and liaise with the International Centre for Distance Education and other international development agencies working in the area of distance learning.

The expansion of productive employment is a focal point in achieving sustainable development. Trinidad and Tobago's major policy is to increase investments in the non-petroleum sector with the intention of job creation while simultaneously promoting sound labour relations. Trinidad and Tobago has also ratified the ILO Convention No. 144 concerning Tripartite Consultation. Entrepreneurship is encouraged by the Business Development Company Limited which was established to facilitate the growth of the small and medium-size business enterprises.

In an effort to promote integration of all persons into the mainstream of community
life and to ensure their productive involvement, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago established a Disability Unit and a Social Displacement Unit.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was earlier ratified by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and, in collaboration with UNICEF, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to protect children. One significant initiative is Trinidad and Tobago’s declaration of the year 2000 as the Year of the Child with priority programmes for children.

**Economic Growth**

The Central Bank considers that monetary stability, understood as a low rate of increase in domestic prices and the stable behaviour of the foreign exchange market, will provide the monetary environment most conducive to growth. In this quest for monetary stability, the main objective of monetary policy is to achieve a low and stable rate of inflation. The Central Bank has set an unofficial headline inflation target of 4-5% for 2005. Having reference to this, the Central Bank views a stable foreign exchange market as critical to keeping inflation low.\(^1\) This has resulted in a virtual peg of the Trinidad and Tobago dollar with respect to the U.S. dollar.

Until early 2005, the Central Bank had pursued an accommodative monetary policy stance, initially by lowering the reserve requirement and then by maintaining the repo rate at a low level. The reserve requirement was lowered from 24% to 21% in 1998, and to 18% in 2002. In October 2003, the Central Bank announced a phased reduction in the reserve requirement applicable to commercial banks from 18% to 9% of prescribed liabilities over an 18-month period, and lowered it initially to 14%. The Central Bank also abolished the requirement to maintain non-statutory reserves of 5% of prescribed liabilities in the form of treasury bills. Reserve requirements for non-banking financial institutions were left unchanged. These measures were intended to reduce intermediation margins and unify the reserve requirements between banks and non-banks. In September 2004, the Central Bank announced a further reduction in the reserve requirement for commercial banks from 14% to 11%.

Trinidad and Tobago’s overall fiscal situation has improved, reflecting the Government’s prudent fiscal policy stance. In an attempt to keep current expenditure under control, the pace of public sector wage increases has been kept below growth in nominal GDP; however, the share of subsidies and transfers in GDP has increased. The Government is also in the process of designing a reform of the pension system, including a fully funded contributory pension scheme for government employees.

One of the most important fiscal developments in recent years was the creation in 2000 of a stabilization fund, in which the Government must deposit any additional revenues from a base petroleum price of US$25 a barrel, to act as a cushion against any unexpected drop in petroleum prices, and strengthen the public sector savings.

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effort. In addition, increased government spending in the non-energy sector is expected to stimulate activity in the economy, in general, and the construction sector in particular.

The Government has launched a long-term plan to achieve developed-country status by the year 2020. The Vision 2020 initiative encompasses a wide-ranging structural reform agenda, aimed at addressing competitiveness issues, fostering economic diversification, promoting employment, and reducing poverty. In this respect, the main pillars of the programme are:

(a) maximizing returns from the hydrocarbons sector, through increased participation in the value chain and by raising the Government's tax intake in a manner consistent with the encouragement of investment;

(b) diversifying the economy with a focus on six main sectors: traditional manufacturing, a new technology-based industrial sector, tourism, financial services, agriculture and the small business sector; and

(c) ensuring that the benefits of economic growth and development are shared by all sections of the population.

Underpinning the thrust towards Vision 2020 is the intention to leverage the revenues derived from the energy sector and other sectors to create conditions for long-term sustainable growth and development. Investment growth has been triggered in recent years mainly by foreign investment and joint ventures in the natural gas industry, and by investment in some manufacturing activities such as petrochemicals and iron and steel. The Government is also pursuing an ambitious public investment programme.

Export Competitiveness and Diversification

Trinidad and Tobago's main policy objectives are to position itself as an economic hub of the Western Hemisphere and to achieve full integration into the Latin American economy while perfecting the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM).

Through its participation in CARICOM, Trinidad and Tobago has concluded preferential trade agreements with Venezuela, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Costa Rica, the latter three since 1998. Trinidad and Tobago's exports also benefit from preferential market access under non-reciprocal preferential trade arrangements offered by a number of developed countries, such as the Generalized System of Preferences, the Caribbean Basin Initiative, the Cotonou Agreement and CARIBCAN.

The authorities' overall trade policy objective is to position Trinidad and Tobago as a manufacturing base and the commercial, trans-shipment, and financial hub of the
Western Hemisphere. This envisages the full exploitation of Trinidad and Tobago's location as the gateway to South America and its "integration into the Latin American hinterland". To achieve their overall trade policy objective, the authorities intend to place emphasis on expanding Trinidad and Tobago's trade frontiers, ensuring a supportive tax regime for the re-tooling of industry, lowering the cost of doing business in Trinidad and Tobago, promoting investment in human capital, and improving overall economic efficiency. The latter is sought through the execution of effective trade, investment, and industrial policies and programmes.

Trinidad and Tobago's trade policy is based on diversifying the economy by facilitating the expansion of the non-oil manufacturing sectors through the provision of enabling policy legislation and the negotiation of trade agreements with third countries. The authorities have noted that trade policy would "focus on the further liberalization of domestic markets, the continuation of the divestment programme and the upgrading of all aspects of infrastructure". In formulating trade policy, the authorities recognize the trend towards the elimination of trade preferences in favour of reciprocal trading agreements.

Trinidad and Tobago also seeks to enhance competitiveness and promote growth by encouraging foreign and domestic investment. In this regard, investment procedures have been streamlined, and measures to diminish trade barriers, such as the gradual reduction or removal of import surcharges on agricultural products, have been put in place.

Trade policy is formulated in the context of Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), which established a CARICOM Single Market and Economy in 2005. The authorities note that Vision 2020 was devised in the context of Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the CSME, and they consider that such participation will strengthen Trinidad and Tobago's position in negotiations with developed countries and the larger trading blocs and contribute to the achievement of Vision 2020.

An important element of Trinidad and Tobago's trade and development policy is to encourage domestic investment and attract foreign investment. The Government's policy of attracting foreign investment has resulted in a number of large investments in the hydrocarbons sector and related industries in recent years (Chapter IV(3)). The Foreign Investment Act, 1990, governs the foreign investment regime.

Despite the increased emphasis on diversification, the hydrocarbons sector is critical to the attainment of Vision 2020. The main goals of the Government's policy in the sector are to attract foreign investment in exploration activities so as to increase hydrocarbon reserves, to increase the value added from natural gas production, and to bolster revenue intake through the introduction of a new energy tax regime for oil and gas. A strong agriculture sector is also considered crucial to the Government's Vision 2020, as is the development of the tourism sector. Other sectors of specific focus are high-tech growth industries, light-manufacturing, and services and construction.
As part of its diversification plan, the Government aims to develop a knowledge-based economy. To achieve this goal, it launched the National Information and Communication Technologies Strategic Plan (ICT Plan) in October 2002. The ICT Plan was completed in September 2003, and has been approved for implementation.

Trinidad and Tobago enjoys preferential access to the Canadian market through CARIBCAN, a programme for trade, investment, and industrial cooperation between Canada and the Commonwealth Caribbean countries, which extends duty-free treatment to nearly all qualifying imports from these countries. Created in 1986, the programme covers textiles, clothing, footwear, luggage and handbags, leather, oils, lubricating oils, and methanol.

Trinidad and Tobago's products are eligible for the GSP schemes of Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, Switzerland, and the United States.

The FTAA was launched at the Summit of the Americas in Miami in December 1994 when 34 countries from the Western Hemisphere agreed to form a free-trade area, while maintaining consistency with WTO rules as well as pre-existing bilateral agreements between member states. Trinidad and Tobago is vying for Port-of-Spain to be the permanent site for the headquarters of the eventual FTAA Secretariat.

2. The current state of the TVET system in Trinidad and Tobago

As part of the reform strategy for the TVET system in Trinidad and Tobago, the following has been completed:

- Formation of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in TVET
- Introduction of a Seamless System of Education
- Articulation in a Quality Assurance Framework (5 levels – See Appendix A)

Vocational education and training demand analysis and planning of delivery is informed through

- Labour Market Reports produced from employers’ surveys to provide demand-led training
- advice from Industry Training Organizations (ITO) in developing National Occupational Standards
- forecasts for demand of occupational areas in the labour market
- delivery through career guidance sessions, career fairs which include career advice and counselling based upon the findings of the Employers’ Surveys
• delivery through the TTNVQ in areas in need of certified, skilled labour as highlighted by labour market reports.

Within the TVET system in Trinidad and Tobago, the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) is responsible for the accreditation of all training programmes; the National Training Agency (NTA) is the coordinating body for TVET and NTA-approved centres offer the delivery of training programmes. Secondary and post-secondary students are targeted for training programmes as well as labour market groups in the construction, and tourism and hospitality sectors.

Other priorities for the TVET system include Prior Learning Assessment Recognition, a National Apprenticeship Programme and a seamless system of learning within the secondary school system.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago – through the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education, disburses funds to the NTA.

3. Quality Assurance Strategies

3.1 Assuring National Vocational Qualifications

3.1.1 Describe and review current national system of assuring VET quality

Quality Assurance is a systematic process of checking a product or service to determine how well it meets specified requirements.

-Jennifer Walke
(Heart Trust/NTA, Jamaica)

‘Developing a TVET Operating Model for CARICOM’ Workshop

Prior to 1999 there was no coordinated approach in the quality assurance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). In the year 1999 the National Training Agency (NTA) was established to rationalize and quality assure TVET. This is being accomplished through the use of labour market information, the development of National Occupational Standards and
the centre approval process, which is a checklist of set criteria the centre has to meet for subsequent approval.

In 2005, the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) was formed to quality assure the entire system for education and training to ensure the imminent existence of a seamless education and training system. This would enable vertical and horizontal mobility through the education system and by extension guarantee a well-educated population.

There have progressively been reviews to ensure an efficient national system of assuring TVET quality.

3.2 The National Training Agency (NTA)

The National Training Agency is the new umbrella agency for effecting reform in TVET in Trinidad and Tobago. It was established in January 1999 under the aegis of the Ministry of Training and Distance Learning to perform its functions as a private State-owned agency. The agency works in close collaboration with the relevant partners in industry, the professions, education and training.

The role of the NTA is to co-ordinate and regulate technical and vocational education and training, promoting and facilitating a coherent system of quality TVET. Its specific objectives are to:

- Identify which industrial sectors might be the most appropriate to prioritize in the short and medium-term for attention
- Develop and adopt a coherent set of occupational standards and vocational qualifications for each of these sectors
- Build a rigorous system of assessment based on the competence-based approach to vocational education
- Provide high quality guidance and support to those responsible for the delivery of training and ensure the role of all the key stakeholders is well understood
- Enhance participation in lifelong learning
- Work efficiently, effectively and in partnership with others to ensure this meets the needs of the labour market.
Through NTA’s quality assurance process, the level of the institution is determined using a 5-level classification submitted hereunder. It is important to note that this classification system is CARICOM-approved.

Level 1: Semi Skilled
Level 2: Skilled
Level 3: Technician
Level 4: Professional
Level 5: Advanced Professional

Guide to levels in the Trinidad and Tobago National Vocational Qualifications (TTNVQ) framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>Competence which involves the application of knowledge in the performance of a range of varied work activities, most of which may be routine and predictable. In the world of work this equates to foundation skills in occupations. Equivalent to operative or semi-skilled operations.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Assists or works under the direction of a skilled person, acting on mainly verbal instructions. Prepares materials prior to skilled operations. Repetitive work using hand or machine tools. Service tasks of a simple nature, which do not require, independent decision-making, problem solving or complex calculations. Generally routine or predictable work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi Skilled</td>
<td>Competence which involves the application of knowledge in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. Some of these activities are complex or non-routine and there is some individual responsibility or autonomy. Equivalent to craft or skilled occupations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Applies psychomotor and manual skills to make products. Performs skilled services. Maintains and adjusts equipment. Works independently to make and assemble components in accordance with design specifications. Prepares and evaluates products in accordance with standard procedures, menus, job sheets, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>Competence which involves the application of knowledge in a broad range of varied work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility and autonomy, and control or guidance of others is often required. Technician and supervisory occupations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Under guidance of a professional, applies technical, scientific and management techniques and principles in design, testing and problem solving. Assists professionals in research and design. Supervises the work of skilled workers. Assists in the development of standardized procedures, prepares requests for quotations. More complex non-routine work with opportunities for considerable responsibility and autonomy including responsibility for the work of others as well as allocation resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technician</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Professional</td>
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<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Advanced Professional</td>
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There is a sufficient complement of professional experts to achieve the objectives of the NTA. The movement toward regional integration, through the CSME and FTAA, has enabled the institutional sustainability of the NTA, as its input is necessary for the foundation in the process of harmonizing NVQ’s with CVQ’s.

The NTA has employees trained in NVQ certification from the UK who further trains other employees in the organization in National Occupational Standards (NOS) Development, NVQ development and centre approval.

The NTA is also in close contact with counterparts from Jamaica and Barbados, ensuring that knowledge of any changes or developments in TVET is acquired.

There is a continuous need for labour market information provided by the NTA for the identification of skill shortages and demand side information of the labour market to inform training plans and policies. Phase I of the Multi-Sector Skill Training programme is one such initiative from the Ministry of Science Technology and Tertiary Education (MSTTE) derived from labour market information provided on the construction sector. Sustainability of the NTA is also guaranteed through
collaborative efforts with the Ministry of Education in implementing the NVQ system in secondary schools.

3.3 Harmonizing National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and CARICOM Vocational Qualifications (CVQs)

In an effort to harmonize NVQs and CVQs, it is important to develop a common regional understanding and acceptance of terms, definitions and guidelines in the quality assurance and accreditation processes. To facilitate this harmonization process, regional experts in the related fields should comprise a committee to develop the foundation as well as control systems for the implementation phase of the CVQ’s.

To further assist in harmonizing TVET regionally, it is recommended that a CANTA website be developed to disseminate Caribbean labour market information and developments as well as information on institutional frameworks used in TVET in the region.

### Differences between National Vocational Qualifications and CARICOM Vocational Qualifications

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<tr>
<th>National Vocational Qualification</th>
<th>CARICOM Vocational Qualification</th>
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<tr>
<td>• The respective country develops its own standards.</td>
<td>• Any person certified with an NVQ in an occupation in their respective country, is equally competent with his or her counterpart certified with their NVQs in that occupation anywhere else in the region. This enables the free movement of certified workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NVQ prepares the candidate with the required skills to competently perform the job, according to the standards required by industry within his/her own country.</td>
<td>• Standards will be organized in a regional qualification framework.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NVQs are validated by the industry by piloting the qualifications with a sufficient number of candidates.</td>
<td>• The awarding bodies should institute a system of centre approval/accreditation for training providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NVQs are accredited against quality criteria. This criteria is benchmarked against the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Scottish Qualification Association (SQA) accreditation criteria for N/SVQs.</td>
<td>• National Occupational Standards are benchmarked against international standards and validated locally to meet industry requirement. This will ensure international, regional and local acceptance.</td>
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| • Standards will be approved by CARICOM. | }
4. The CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and CARICOM Vocational Qualifications

In order to reform the quality assurance system to embrace the CSME, there should be:

- a clear vision, mission, policies and goals
- clear links between the policies and the goals and operational plans
- a strong feedback mechanism
- strong leadership
- accountability
- a common understanding of the area of knowledge
- the establishment of a structured database of regional experts in QA
- a common understanding of the methods for quality assurance – accreditation, quality auditing
- agreement on principles or guidelines for External Quality Agencies

Harmonizing national quality assurance practices at the CARICOM level, can be made possible if there is:

- a common glossary of terms, words and definitions
- an accepted/agreed upon set of common guidelines of good practice in quality assurance operation (documentation and implementation procedures)
- guidelines for the training of auditors/evaluators

5. Reforming the TVET system in Trinidad and Tobago

5.1 Main factors driving the need for change in the TVET system

The main factors driving the need for change in the TVET system are:

1. Lack of properly trained workforce
2. Levels of competency not at an international standard
3. High levels of informal apprenticeship (without certification)
4. Movement of skilled labour through region
5. Need for training to be demanded
5.2 Reforms needed

Some of the reforms needed to better address the needs for skills training and enhanced employability include:

1. a training policy with a seamless system of education/training
2. adherence to a National Vocational Qualifications Framework
3. the use of Research and Development to guide training initiatives
4. more incentives for training
5. better / more equipped technical vocational laboratories
6. the use of standards to benchmark training internationally

5.3 Adopted (actual) education and training reform policies and implementation

Training initiatives for the educationally-disadvantaged, uncertified drop-outs and marginalized youth include Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR), Apprenticeship through On-The-Job Training Programmes(OJT), Multi-Sector Skills Training Programme (MuST); and Retraining Programmes.

Current policies and programmes that address the needs for skills training in the informal economy are: MuST, Retraining, Servol, OJT, Youth Training & Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP), (SoCS), Military-led Academic Training Programme (MILAT) / Military-led Youth Apprenticeship Re-orientation Training Programme (MYPART).

6. Impact evaluation and sustainability of the TVET system

Training needs are assessed through the administration of surveys via quantitative and qualitative data collection from employers’ which provides demand side information on training needs. Assessment is also done through bodies such as ITO’s and key stakeholders in the labour market.

7. TVET institutions and sectoral (employment) policies

Despite the close of Caroni (1975) Ltd and restructuring of the agricultural sector, the response for TVET systems to retrain these persons has been limited. The NTA has identified only two requests of that nature for the development of Standards and later NVQs for persons who fall into the age group of former Caroni workers (between the ages 18 to 45). These include Inland Aquaculture and Grow Box Operations, both of which were requested by the Ministry of Science and Tertiary Education as part of their Retraining Programme.
Other requests for NVQs in this sector were made by the Ministry of Education, for ornamental aquaculture, agro-processing, agricultural operations and horticulture, as part of their Secondary School Technical Vocational Reform programme. This programme introduces students to Biological Technology.

The Ministry of Agriculture has also initiated another programme - the Youth Apprenticeship Programme (YAPA), which targets the ages 17-25 and is viewed as ways of encouraging youths to enter the agricultural sector. Over 15,000 youths have been exposed to agriculture through this programme. Although this does not target displaced workers of the Caroni restructuring process, it does however show that youth participation in agriculture is on the increase.

The response to TVET initiatives in the tourism sector has also been encouraging, especially in Tobago. This is as a result of the launch of a MUST apprenticeship programme in Tobago’s Hospitality sector.

In both international business and financial services, the demand for TVET systems has been very limited with little expected change in the near future.

Annex 1

LIST OF ACCREDITED NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Carpentry Level 1
Masonry Level 1
Plumbing Level 1
Using Information Technology Level 2
LIST OF TTNVQs

Administration Level 1
Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Level 1
Assessing Candidate Competence Level 3
Bartending Level 1
Basic Chaining Level 1
Beauty Therapy Level 1
Blue Print Reading Level 1
Cake Baking & Decorating Level 1
Carpentry Level 1
Carpentry Level 2
Construct Concrete Foundation Level 1
Construction Site Supervision Level 3
Control Room Senior Operator (CRO) Control Production Emergencies & Critical
Situations Level 3
Electrical Installation Level 1
Electrical Installation Level 2
Erecting & Dismantling Scaffolding Level 1
Fabric Design Level 1
Food Preparation Level 1
Front Office Level 2
Garment Construction Level 1
Gypsum Installation Level 1
Hairdressing Level 1
Hairdressing Level 2
Housekeeping Level 1
Industrial Insulation Level 1
Joinery Level 1
Joinery Level 2
Landscaping Level 1
Landscaping Level 2
Manufacturing Silencers Level 1
Masonry Level 1
Painting Level 1
Plumbing Level 1
Plumbing Level 2
Property Upkeep Level 1
Providing Nail Technology Services Level 1
Providing Nail Technology Services Level 2
Rebar Bending Level 1
Steel Bending Level 1
Storekeeping Level 1
Tailoring Level 1
Tile Laying Level 1
Unit Awards – Construction
Upholstery Level 1
Using Information Technology Level 2
Verifying Competence Based Assessments Level 3
Waitering Level 1
Welding Level 1
Welding Level 2 (SMAW)

Annex 2

LIST OF INSTITUTIONS OFFERING NVQ'S QUALIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF INSTITUTION</th>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
<th>NVQ'S</th>
<th>TYPE OF NVQ'S</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buena Vista School of Practical Nursing</td>
<td>Maingot Ville, Rig Road, Claxton Bay</td>
<td>Providing Health Care</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Level 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAME OF INSTITUTION</td>
<td>ADDRESS</td>
<td>NVQ'S</td>
<td>TYPE OF NVQ'S</td>
<td>LEVEL</td>
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<tr>
<td>HYPE Macoya</td>
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<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>Construction</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>HYPE Macoya</td>
<td>Century Drive, Trincity Industrial Estate, Macoya</td>
<td>Electrical Installation</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>Level 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>HYPE Macoya</td>
<td>Century Drive, Trincity Industrial Estate, Macoya</td>
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<tr>
<td>HYPE Macoya</td>
<td>Century Drive, Trincity Industrial Estate, Macoya</td>
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<tr>
<td>HYPE Macoya</td>
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<td>Level 2</td>
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<td>Welding</td>
<td>Energy</td>
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<td>Using IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>Metal Industries Company Ltd (MIC)</td>
<td>Trincity Industrial Estate, Macoya</td>
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<td>Energy</td>
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</tr>
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<td>NAME OF INSTITUTION</td>
<td>ADDRESS</td>
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<td>TYPE OF NVQ'S</td>
<td>LEVEL</td>
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<td>Tourism &amp; Hospitality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry of Science Technology &amp; Tertiary Education. MUST Programme</td>
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<td>Ministry of Science Technology &amp; Tertiary Education. MUST Programme</td>
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<td>Ministry of Science Technology &amp; Tertiary Education. MUST Programme</td>
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<td>Unit Awards - Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>NESC / BC Technology Centre</td>
<td>Brechin Castle, Couva</td>
<td>Welding (SMAW)</td>
<td>Energy</td>
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<td>NAME OF INSTITUTION</td>
<td>ADDRESS</td>
<td>NVQ'S</td>
<td>TYPE OF NVQ'S</td>
<td>LEVEL</td>
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<td>NESC Debe Automotive Technology Centre</td>
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<td>Engineering &amp; Maintenance</td>
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<td>NESC Mobile Training Centre</td>
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<td>NESC Point Fortin Metal Technology Centre</td>
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<td>Energy</td>
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<td>Welding (SMAW)</td>
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<td>NESC Tobago Technology Centre</td>
<td>Cow Farm Road, Tobago</td>
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<td>Energy</td>
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<td>New 'U' Hair Design &amp; Skin Clinic</td>
<td>318 Bonne Aventure Road, Gasparillo</td>
<td>Beauty Theraphy</td>
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<tr>
<td>New 'U' Hair Design &amp; Skin Clinic</td>
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<td>Hairdressing</td>
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<td>RGIT Montrose - MC</td>
<td>58 Alberto Street, Woodbrook</td>
<td>Offshore Installation Management (OIM) Control Room Senior Operator (CRO) Control Production Emergencies &amp; Critical Situations</td>
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<td>School of Continuing Studies (SCS)</td>
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<td>SERVOL HI - TECH</td>
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<td>Landscaping</td>
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