

State of

SKILLS



International
Labour
Organization



1919-2019

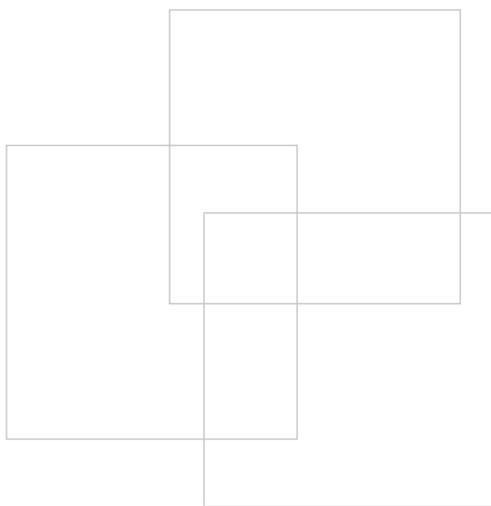


The Democratic Republic
of the Congo



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The socio-economic context

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a densely populated country with an estimated 81,994,000 inhabitants (INS, 2019), of whom less than 40 per cent live in urban areas.

With a surface area of 2,345,409 km², DRC is the second largest country in Africa after Algeria. The country has 80 million hectares of arable land and more than 1 100 minerals and precious metals documented, giving it the potential to become one of the wealthiest countries¹ on the African continent, and an important engine for growth. Nearly 70 per cent of the Congolese population is made up of young people, of whom more than 80 per cent are unemployed (EQUIBB-2016).

¹ Central Intelligence Agency: *The World Factbook*, Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html>

The birth rate is 43.69 per thousand (population), compared with a 13.27 per thousand mortality rate, including an 88.62 per thousand births child mortality rate.² The DRC's population growth is 3.30 per cent per year, its fertility rate is 6.45 children per woman, and its population density is 39.53 inhabitants/km².³ Life expectancy increased from 48.7 years in 2012 to 51.46 years in 2017, and the majority of the population lives in rural areas (more than 60 per cent), although the rural exodus has become an increasingly marked trend.

DRC's economy is predominantly agricultural, and is dependent on the mining sector.

The country's potential in terms of natural resources, minerals and energy contrasts with the extent of poverty suffered by the majority of the population (16 million people are classified as food insecure) and the low level of human development (IDH 2017 de 0,457).⁴ DRC's GDP was USD 37.241 billion in 2017, and the per capita income was USD 458. Real GDP growth was 3.7 per cent in 2017, driven by mining, construction, agriculture and wholesale and retail trade.⁵

² <https://www.populationdata.net/pays/republique-democratique-du-congo/>

³ Rapport Enquête E-QUIBB/RDCI-2016, Ministère de Plan, INS, Sept 2018.

⁴ UNDP Report 2018.

⁵ Rapport annuel BCC, 2016.

More than 70 per cent of the population lives below the multidimensional poverty threshold (low income, unmet food needs, poor access to healthcare and schooling, decent housing, etc.). The Multidimensional Poverty Index, which measures the intensity of household deprivation in the areas of education, healthcare and standard of living, published in the Africa Human Development Report (2016), shows that more than 50.8 per cent of DRC's population continued to live in multidimensional poverty, with nearly 36.7 per cent living in severe multidimensional poverty, and about 18.5 per cent living on the verge of multidimensional poverty. This result shows that in order to halve poverty by 2030, a policy of strong economic growth (at least 10 to 12 per cent per year for 10 years) needs to be achieved, coupled with satisfactory distributive policies.

Since 2000, the Government has committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the aim of combating poverty, improving livelihoods and rebuilding social cohesion in areas affected by large-scale movements of the population. It has therefore drawn up a range of programmes to take effective action and promote social welfare. Bold reforms undertaken during the 2000s have enabled the country to stabilize its macro-economic situation, restore and consolidate growth, reverse the pace of its Human Development Index (HDI) and improve peoples' living standards. This progress has helped to position DRC as one of the most dynamic economies in sub-Saharan Africa in the past 15 years. Although significant challenges remain to be addressed in terms of employment, especially for youth, considerable improvements have been observed in wage employment in non-agriculture sectors (36.1 per cent in 2005 compared with 43.5 per cent in 2012).⁶

⁶ République démocratique du Congo: *Évaluation sur la mise en œuvre du programme d'action en faveur des pays les moins avancés (PMA) pour la décennie 2011-2020* (2013).

However, stark inequalities remain between urban and rural areas, as well as between provinces, and between target groups of the population. To remedy this situation, the Government has focused its strategy on diversifying its economy, with the first phase concentrating on developing the agriculture sector.

The literacy rate is quite high.

In 2015, the literacy rate was 63.82 per cent, and the primary-to-secondary transition rate was 67.7 per cent. At secondary level (general and technical education), the gross enrolment rate was 39.5 per cent, compared with 40.9 per cent in 2014 – 48.3 per cent for boys compared with 30.7 per cent for girls, with significant disparities between the provinces. However, the completion rate at secondary level was 30 per cent, compared with 29 per cent in 2014 – 38.2 per cent in the case of boys compared with 21.8 in that of girls. The parity index was stable, at 0.6.



The DRC labour market remains too tight, with severe inequalities.

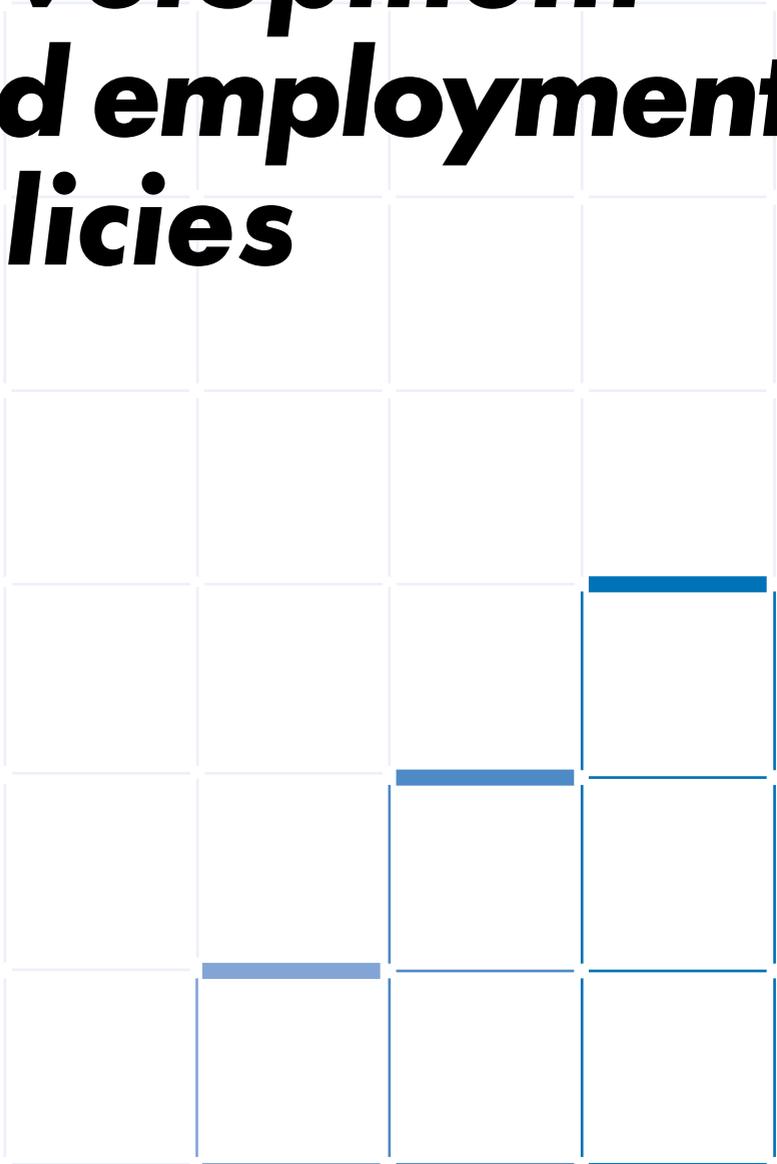
In particular, in the case of youth, vulnerable people and women. According to recent figures from the Ministry of Labour, the rate of underemployment is more than 50 per cent, and the youth unemployment rate (15-24 year-olds) is over 35 per cent. Employment is dominated by the informal sector, which accounts for nearly 88.6 per cent of the total, including 59.7 per cent in agricultural activities and 28.9 in the non-agriculture sector. The formal sector employs at most 11.4 per cent of the total, unevenly distributed between public administration (5.7 per cent), the parastatal sector (2.9 per cent), and the formal private sector (2.8 per cent). The working-age population is calculated at 65 per cent (52.7 per men and 47.7 per cent women), of which 58 per cent represents the 15 to 34 age group susceptible to migration. This trend is the same in both urban and rural settings. The unemployment rate (ILO model estimates) is 3.7 per cent, while under a broader definition, it is 11.38 per cent. While 52 per cent of men are unemployed compared with 48 per cent of women, the figure is 41.7 per cent for the 25-34 age group and 34.5 per cent for 15-24 year-olds, of whom 62 per cent completed secondary education, 29 per cent completed higher education and 9 per cent completed only primary education.

Table 1. Results of E-QUIBB/RDC1 Survey 2016⁷

Unemployment rate (ILO Model estimates)		Unemployment rate under a broad definition	Unemployed by gender		M&W together	
H	W		H	W	ILO	Unemployed
3.8	3.6	11.38	52	48	3.7	100

⁷ Report on E-QUIBB/RDC1 Survey 2016, Ministry of Planning, INS, Sept 2018.

Development and employment policies



Since 2001, despite the the onset of a period of economic recovery due to a revival of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and implementation of a macro-economic programme, the satisfactory economic results have not led to a reduction in poverty or unemployment. The growth rate of 8.9 per cent has proved insufficient to reduce poverty (71.3 per cent) and create jobs, with a level of job creation that is lower than the growth rate of the national economy. This poses an urgent challenge for the authorities, since the growth rate has not been reflected in improvements in people's daily lives.

According to the National Action Plan for Youth Employment, which cites figures from Survey 1-2-3, the incidence of poverty is estimated at 71.34 per cent for the country as a whole, which is extremely high compared with that of other countries in Central Africa. The National Human Development Report (NHDR) indicates a total unemployment rate in the working-age population of about 54.0 per cent, and 24.7 per cent in the case of youth aged 15 to 24 years in urban areas. The position of young people in DRC's labour market is extremely precarious, even though youth represents an asset for the workplace, and enormous potential for the country's development.

Badly affected by unemployment and underemployment, more than half of all young people in DRC are unable to realize their productive potential and are often forced to work in the informal sector, which is characterized by low or irregular incomes, poor working conditions, and lack of any social protection. This situation is the result of a jobs crisis, which has reached record levels in recent years, and whose causes are to be found on both the demand and supply sides of labour. Factors that have significantly reduced youth employment opportunities in DRC include the degeneration of the formal economy, poor agricultural productivity and a drying up of foreign investments, combined with a climate of insecurity and instability, as well as implementation of inappropriate policies that failed to give sufficient prominence to the 'employment' dimension. Other contributing factors have included inconsistencies in the education system and the technical and vocational training system, and the inefficiency of training or career guidance facilities for young people, which prevent them from gaining the professional skills that would earn them a place in the labour market.

The Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (GPRSP 2) represents the only overarching framework for all macro-economic and sectoral policies, and enshrines the Government's commitment to refocus the action of diplomatic missions towards seeking information and attracting foreign investors, while pursuing its policy of fostering greater involvement of the diaspora in the process of rebuilding the country.

In addition, the Government's migration policy makes the entry to, stay in and departure of foreigners from DRC subject to the provisions, amongst others, of decree n°93-106 of 20 August 1993. This amended decree n°87-281 of 13 August 1987, containing implementing measures for Legislative Order n°83-033 of 12 September 1983 pertaining to the policing of foreign nationals, subject to international conventions or bilateral or multilateral agreements relative to the movement of persons and goods between DRC and other states. The Government of DRC has also limited the number of agencies allowed to operate at the borders when it comes to the movement of people and/or goods. These include the DGDA, the OCC, the DGM and public health services providing medical controls. As regards education policy, this considers the provision of training in new technologies, the environment and the green economy.



The Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (GPRSP 2) sets out the strategy for improving the livelihoods of the Congolese people. Amongst other things, it identifies priority sectors for the Government, including mining, agriculture, construction, energy, the environment, tourism and transport.⁸ In line with this, a number of reforms are guiding government action in developing skills identified in the framework law on national education, the Education and Training Sector Strategy 2016-2025, the Specific Strategy for Technical Education and Vocational Training 2016-2025, the National Qualifications Framework, ministerial decree N°179/MINETAT/MTEPS/01/2018 establishing the guiding principles of vocational certification supported by ILO and AFD, the ministerial decree relating to the transformation of some general education schools into schools for technical education and vocational training, etc. Also worth noting is the inclusion of skills in the migration policy, as well as in the Constitution of DRC.

⁸ DSCR P 2

The National Policy for Employment and Vocational Training developed by ILO contains a number of measures related to migration. Several other legal and regulatory texts are correlated, including:

- Law n°016/010 of 15 July 2016, amending and supplementing law n°015/2002 of 16 October 2002 relating to Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA);
- Labour Code Code Tome II implementing provisions, texts on work reviewed and completed, November 2009;
- Ministerial decree n°121/CABMIN/TPS/112/2005 of 26 October 2005, establishing the maximum percentages authorized for foreign workers in businesses;
- Ministerial decree n°168/CAB/MINETPS/MBL/SGET/dag/2014 of October 2014, establishing the operating procedures for the National Commission for Employment of Foreigners.

However, these measures should be intensified to ensure their effective enforcement.

“All persons have the right to a school education. It is provided by national education. National education consists of public establishments and approved private establishments.”



– Constitution of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Article 43

The skills system in DRC

TVET Reform policies

A number of reforms are in force related to access to the labour market and skills development. An example is article 35 of the Constitution, which makes reference to consideration of national expertise,⁹ the Labour Code, Framework Law N°014/11 on National Education, Ordinance n°71/055 on the organization of vocational training, the National Policy for Employment and Vocational Training, the ministerial decree establishing the operating procedures for the National Commission for Employment of Foreigners in all sectors without restrictions, the ministerial decree establishing the threshold of migrant and expatriate workers, the Education and Training Sector Strategy 2016-2025, the Specific Strategy for Technical Education and Vocational Training 2016-2025, the migration policy, etc. However, the legal system appears to be a long way off resolving the issue of the practicability and the scrupulous observance of these texts.

⁹ Constitution of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Governance

Skills development in DRC is organized by official (state) technical education and vocational training establishments, religious organizations, civil society organizations, public and private companies and private actors, under the administrative supervision of the various ministries responsible for: Employment, Labour and Social Security (ETPS), Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education (EPSP), Vocational Training, Trades and Crafts (FPMA), Social Affairs (AS), Public Health (SP), Higher and Further Education (ESU), and Youth.



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Social Dialogue

Four main employers' organizations play the role of Government partners and interlocutors on issues of TVET governance, and these constitute employers' unions. They are the Federation of Enterprises of Congo (FEC), the National Association of State Portfolio Companies (ANEP), the National Federation of Small and Medium Enterprises of Congo (FENAPEC), and the Confederation of Small and Medium Enterprises of the Congo (COPEMECO). They make their request for training of their workforce (qualification, sector, profile) to the bodies responsible, including the National Vocational Preparedness Institute (INPP). The INPP is a technical structure of the Ministry of Labour, whose main mission is the professional development of public and private company workers, most of whom are members of the above-mentioned organizations. In addition, the INPP is committed to supporting vocational training centres, so as to improve the employability of their workers throughout the country. Furthermore, all the ministries tasked with organizing TVET have their respective trade unions and inter-trade union committees skilled in protecting workers' interests, but social dialogue on TVET governance remains weak, on issues of wages for unionized employees as well as on other social advantages.



Financing

It is difficult to pinpoint public funding of skills development in the State budget, since it is scattered between several ministries, and is neither disaggregated nor, very often, effectively translated into action. By contrast, financing of the private sector and other incentives by individuals or by public and private companies is more or less evident. In the absence of reliable data, it is difficult to assess the true input into skills development. Moreover, a number of bilateral and multilateral partners and NGOs have made a substantial contribution to skills development in the past twenty years or so.



Skills anticipation

DRC does not have an effective mechanism for anticipating skills needs and those of related trades. The various ministries responsible for: Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education (EPSP), Vocational Training, Trades and Crafts (FPMA), Higher and Further Education (ESU), Social Affairs (AS), Youth, Public Health (SP), Labour and Social Security (ETPS), and Sports and Recreation have administrative and/or technical responsibility, either directly or through their technical divisions (the INPP and ONEM for the METPS and the DGENF for the MAS). Provision of TVET is not uniform, and is shared between several regulatory authorities, with a number taking the leadership role, to the point where there is a lack of real coordination for making information available on the subsector, or for any efficient mechanism to offer guidance to students and business, areas of intervention, financial contributions, etc.¹⁰

¹⁰ Specific Strategy for Technical Education and Vocational Training.

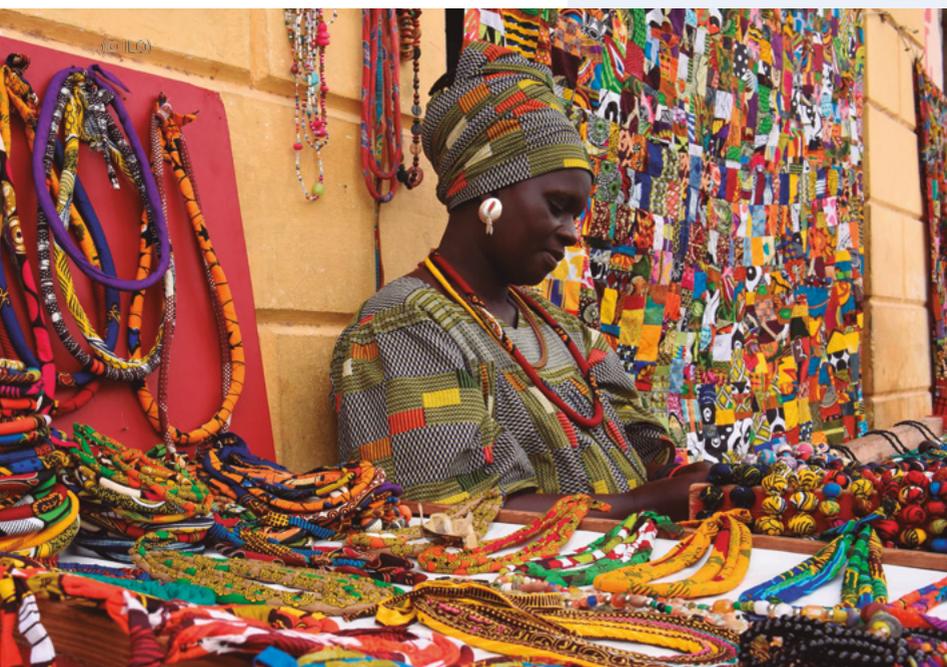
Gaps in the interpretation of texts governing the subsector create confusion when it comes to identifying the tasks assigned to them, and generate duplications and unintentional overlapping. There is no coordination at regional level either, despite willingness to ratify certain related international tools.



The National Employment Office (ONEM), the technical division of the Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Security, is responsible for the definition, nomenclature and classification of occupations, based on different employment areas and innovative jobs, as well as on an annual study of the employability of TVET graduates. For obvious reasons, and especially those linked to resources, these tasks are not carried out on a systematic basis, with the result that the directory of jobs is never up-to-date, but is lapsed or even obsolete. In addition, there is no specific facility for collecting statistical data on TVET, so these figures are obscured by data from other sectors. As a consequence, the quantitative and qualitative mechanisms for anticipating skills are inadequate, and the results unreliable. Nevertheless, all these institutions are supported in one way or another by the Ministry of Planning, through the National Institute of Statistics (INS), provided there are sufficient funds to meet their requests.



Skills development





In 2014-2015, TVET accounted for 19 per cent of secondary level students, compared with 60 per cent for general education and 20 per cent for formal education. Thirty-five per cent of these TVET students were girls. The gross enrolment rate (GER) at secondary level was 39.5 per cent (boys: 48.3 per cent, girls: 30.7 per cent), with significant disparities between the provinces. However, the completion rate at secondary level was 30 per cent (boys: 38.2 per cent, girls: 21.8 per cent).¹¹ Figures for both the drop-out rate and for higher education during the same period are unavailable. However, the State Report on the National Educational System (RESEN) 2014 puts the GER at tertiary level at 6.5 per cent, though this is lower than the regional average (8.2 per cent). In parallel, a collection of data for 2018-2019 focused on secondary level revealed that TVET accounted for 1,278,157 students, or 23.8 per cent of the secondary student population, compared with 14.8 per cent for general, 24.6 per cent for formal education and 36.8 per cent for the 1st cycle of secondary (basic education). The figures below are close to the (simulated) projections of the Sector Strategy for Education and Training (SSEF) 2016-2025.

¹¹ Statistical yearbook EPSP 2014-2015.

Table 2. Education indicators.

	2013-2014	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2025-2026
Enrolment rate 2 nd cycle secondary	36,6%	38,9%	41,4%	44,2%	47,3%	51,0%	66,7%
Enrolment rate higher education	6,5%	7,3%	7,5%	7,7%	7,9%	8,2%	9,5%
Completion rate 2 nd cycle secondary	23,7%	23,2%	25,4%	27,4%	29,5%	32,1%	37,7%
Adult literacy rate 15+	59,5%	62,9%	64,3%	65,9%	67,5%	69,1%	75,9%
Enrolment in non-formal education: 'remedial' learning and apprenticeship*	207	220	224	229	233	238	263
Enrolment in non-formal education: literacy*	158	239	266	295	329	367	642
Enrolment: 1 st cycle secondary*	2 000	2 446	2 716	2 997	3 322	3 653	4 600
Enrolment: Technical and vocational*	757	911	1 025	1 160	1 319	1 506	2 560
Enrolment: Higher education*	447	553	589	627	669	713	986

Source: SSEF 2016-2025 (*in thousands)

For the non-formal sector and literacy, SSEF records 476,277 enrolments, including 33.7 per cent in literacy centres (CA), 29 per cent in remedial education centres (CRS) and 35.3 per cent in apprenticeship centres (CAP). The illiteracy rate is still high at 27 per cent. Indeed, the EADE survey shows that the majority of 7 million out-of-school children live in rural areas and come from the poorest families,¹² particularly highlighting the importance of literacy and remedial education programmes. Data for enrolment in the informal sector are unavailable, and mainly pertain to related areas. It is worth noting that the informal sector accounts for more than 75 per cent of DRC's economy (E-QUIBB 2016), a factor that has an impact on apprenticeships.

¹² Survey on out-of-school children and adolescents (EADE), 2012.

Improving delivery and assessment of training

The provision of TVET in the formal and informal sector is institutionalized. It is organized by the public and private sectors under State regulations. This latter recommends the updating of training programmes, the provision of teaching materials, access to technical platforms and internships, as well as training-of-trainers at all levels in order to improve the service provided. Monitoring and local checks by inspectors form the backbone of reform. For this purpose, cross-cutting inspection is planned to support the National Qualifications and Certification Framework (CNQC) (which is not yet effective) and improve evaluations that are differently organized and approved, according to the type and level of education/training. Interlinkages between the two sectors are inexistent.

The non-formal and formal sectors organize short duration training, on-the-job or at the workplace. The informal sector has no training programmes. Private sector providers play an active role in organizing TVET. They manage nearly 25 per cent of formal facilities (at primary, secondary and higher education levels) and more than 50 per cent of non-formal facilities (SSETFP 2016-2025). Furthermore, coordination between facilities and the productive private sector is weak. The signing of a public-private partnership agreement will certainly strengthen the coordination of internships and training by professionals, with a view to addressing the current mismatch between training and employment.

Skills recognition and quality assurance

Qualifications acquired in a formal manner are generally recognized through a dual assessment: formative and summative. On the one hand, difficulties experienced by trainees are detected and support given to address these (formative), while on the other, their level of proficiency is verified and recognized through a test or by a jury (summative or certification). The formal and non-formal sectors have assessment standards that are determined by their respective supervisory authorities, as well as training programmes that have a student entry and exit profile (inferred skills). In the absence of a National Qualifications and Certification Framework, a National Vocational Certification Framework (CNCP) has been set up with support from AFD and ILO, but is not yet operational.

With these tools, the Government aims to evaluate skills that are covered by certification standards, including: the vocational training certificate (CQP), the certificate of skills (CC) and the certificate of participation (CP), and to validate Recognition of Prior Learning (VAE).

The system of recognition of skills acquired informally is precarious, less structured and is sometimes neither systematic, nor leads to certification. In effect, each employer recognizes in his or her own way the skills held by the supplier.

Recognition of credentials by employers' organizations is almost non-existent, and implementation remains problematic due to lack of initiatives. Without an exhaustive and well-targeted study, it will be difficult to identify the number of beneficiaries, given that this level of TVET is very mixed and poorly documented. The employers' organizations do not support affiliated companies in recognizing the skills of their employees.

The regulatory institutions have different systems for organizing and applying standards for quality assurance of their training, depending on whether it is formal, non-formal or informal. Since the number of trained trainers is insufficient, all the systems set in place have limitations in terms of the qualitative assessment of their apprenticeships.

A team of inspectors assures quality at the secondary and non-formal levels, but there is no pedagogical or technical monitoring of teaching staff at the higher level. Lastly, teaching remains theory-based, and the certification issued does not fill the gap between training and job profiles, despite some complacency on the part of assessors. For this reason, the setting in place of cross-cutting inspection is recommended, with the pooling of resources of the secondary and non-formal sectors and a National Quality Assurance Agency (ANAQ) for higher education.

At all levels, assessments vary to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the subjects taught, and on the admission fees charged. Certification at each level of education/syllabus is a constraint. Standardizing assessments and certification will make a significant contribution to the effective operation of training facilities. At the informal level, quality assurance is haphazard, and standards non-existent. Certification is issued differently by each facility, and depending on the length of training. There are no regulations in place.

Social inclusion

Accessing skills development

In DRC, TVET is more or less accessible to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Within the framework of inclusive education, vulnerable children (orphans, children in care or street children, etc.) and children living with disabilities (motor, mental or physical, and hearing-impaired children, etc.) are a high priority. With this in mind, the Ministry of Social Affairs organizes apprenticeships through Centres for Social Promotion (CPS: 33.7 per cent), Vocational Training Centres (CFP: 35.3 per cent) or Remedial Education Centres (CRS: 29 per cent). A pre-school consultation provides appropriate guidance towards special education or formal education (SSEF 2016-2025). However, the vulnerability of such pupils makes assessments and certification far more complex, with repercussions in terms of irregular school attendance and/or dropping out altogether. Such children are supported by literacy teachers and social educators, who are also used for social protection activities targeting vulnerable groups.

Furthermore, school-age children accounted for more than one-third of registered refugees in DRC in 2015. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is supporting primary and secondary education through the construction/rehabilitation of classrooms in or near refugee camps, and is organizing literacy programmes for refugees over school age. In addition, at secondary level, some 35 per cent of girls are currently participating in TVET, with a figure of 55 per cent in the areas of trade and dressmaking, and at least 5 per cent in other sectors.



Supporting transitions to the labour market

Active programmes to facilitate labour market transition in DRC are not systematically implemented. One-off initiatives organized as part of socio-professional insertion projects targeting youth (especially girls or vulnerable youth), strengthen such programmes, by distributing labour market insertion kits. In addition, in partnership with the Government, the OIM, UNHCR and NGOs endeavour, when necessary, to implement a programme of repatriation and demobilization for refugees, by strengthening capacities in a number of non- formal sectors, in order to promote their re-insertion in the labour market.

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Lifelong learning

The SSEF has identified an insufficient number of qualified trainers at almost all education levels and in all training sectors. For this reason, it recommends the systematic training-of-trainers. Governance for this rests with the respective inspectorates, with the support of their partners. Moreover, continuous training appears to be a strategy for upgrading and for lifelong learning in the area of technological development. But the system of continuous training/lifelong learning has limitations, particularly in respect of resources (human: number and qualification of trainers; financial: (funds available), resulting in a failure to make continuous training systematically available, and in training (inspectors, directors, teaching staff and educators) not being equitable between the different provinces. For example, failure to organize training-of-trainers (retraining) planned during the holidays prevents earlier shortcomings from being addressed each time teaching resumes.

The skills development system in DRC is managed directly (in administrative and technical terms) by the respective supervisory authorities, or indirectly by the corresponding technical body(ies). Intermediaries play a minimal role in placing employees, in support of the National Employment Office (ONEM). A recurrent observation is that intermediaries try to position themselves to the detriment of employees, whose conditions and treatment are often unsatisfactory (especially for migrants).

Social partners (trade union and inter-trade union representatives) sit on the company management committee (board of directors), with the particular aim of ensuring social protection for their members and their jobs. However, their role in company development appears to be mixed.

They themselves talk of an active role where others see it as passive, to the point where the companies concerned are not developing at the desired pace. These partners take part in all discussions on the future of the company, but their role does not help to advance its fortunes, for reasons mainly linked to burdens on employers.



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Key challenges

1

TVET audience and gender in the community.

Once considered exclusively for low-achieving children, TVET is now seen as a major pathway for the country's emergence and the creation of a middle class for its development. However, building community awareness has not been sufficient to increase TVET's low enrolment rates (accounting for less than 25 per cent of secondary level) and improve gender equity (35 per cent of those enrolled are girls, compared with 65 per cent boys). The strong demand observed in the informal sector warrants close inspection so as to streamline TVET for the country's development.

2

Training supply and demand (matching training to employment).

The country has undertaken a number of reforms, including updating the list of jobs available (which guides the design of training programmes), criteria for defining learner (entry/exit) and employee profiles, as well as revisiting programmes that follow the Competency-Based Approach (APC). Due to the lack of regular updating, some programmes are outmoded, while others are not organized at all (innovative jobs). Moreover, teaching remains theory as opposed to practice-based, and despite the revision of some programmes and frameworks following the APC, professional practice and internships are not mainstreamed. Efforts must therefore be redoubled, in order to satisfy the real needs of employers.

3 **Infrastructure and equipment.**

Up until the early 1980s, the country had a substantial array of infrastructures, but these are now dilapidated, ill-suited to people living with disabilities, and girls. Water and electricity supplies are disrupted, and nearly 80 per cent of TVET facilities do not have the workshops, laboratories and materials required, while most of the existing ones are obsolete. There has been little support for adapting to technological development and creating a more appropriate learning environment.

4 **Teaching staff, continuous training and quality assurance.**

Growth in training provision has led to a corresponding growth in staff numbers, including teachers and inspectors. Qualified teachers can be retrained, and the majority of those currently serving are underqualified. For this reason, there is a need for regular capacity strengthening, although there is no plan for continuous training. The number of specialized inspectors is insufficient, some sectors do not have any at all, and standards are not uniform, creating difficulties for monitoring, teacher training and quality control of training. Unless concerted efforts are made, this situation risks compromising the system and the quality of training provided.

5 System of educational guidance and labour market insertion.

The cycle of educational guidance has, over time, enabled the specific strengths of target recipients to be tapped. A number of students have entered companies after their internships ended. Now that educational guidance has been abolished, trainees have to make subjective choices. Moreover, those leaving training have no formal access to labour market insertion, nor to any follow-up scheme. This makes it difficult to quantify the number of leavers who enter the labour market, as well as regulation of the system.

6 Training facility-company partnership.

The Government has signed a new partnership agreement with the employers' organizations to involve the business world in training, especially by offering internships to trainees, and arranging the participation of business professionals in training, assessment and certification. Regular assessments of this alliance will help to rectify the limitations of previous subsectoral agreements, and address shortcomings in collaboration. However, this agreement makes no reference to the social partners of either parties, which would have stimulated the respective employers in this regard, leading to a win-win situation.

7 TVET financing.

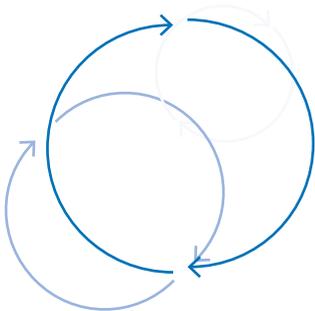
State funding for TVET is negligible, and is not clearly allocated in the breakdown with other sub-sectors. Contributions from bilateral or multilateral cooperations, together with certain development partners, help to make up the funding shortfall for TVET. But these efforts are not sufficient to fill the funding gap for effective implementation of the various reforms.

8 Management of the TVET system.

Management of the subsector is organized by several supervisory authorities, and, leaving the informal sector aside, each one coordinates its own activities. The interministerial committee set in place for this purpose did not survive the leadership crisis and lack of funding for its operations. The creation of a Ministry for Technical and Vocational Training (ETP), and one for Vocational Training, Trades and Crafts has been unable to address this challenge, due to a failure in interpreting their founding enactments. Their coordination has therefore proved a bottleneck, leading to lack of consultation in planning information systems, activities, areas of intervention and funding, and resulting in unintentional overlapping.

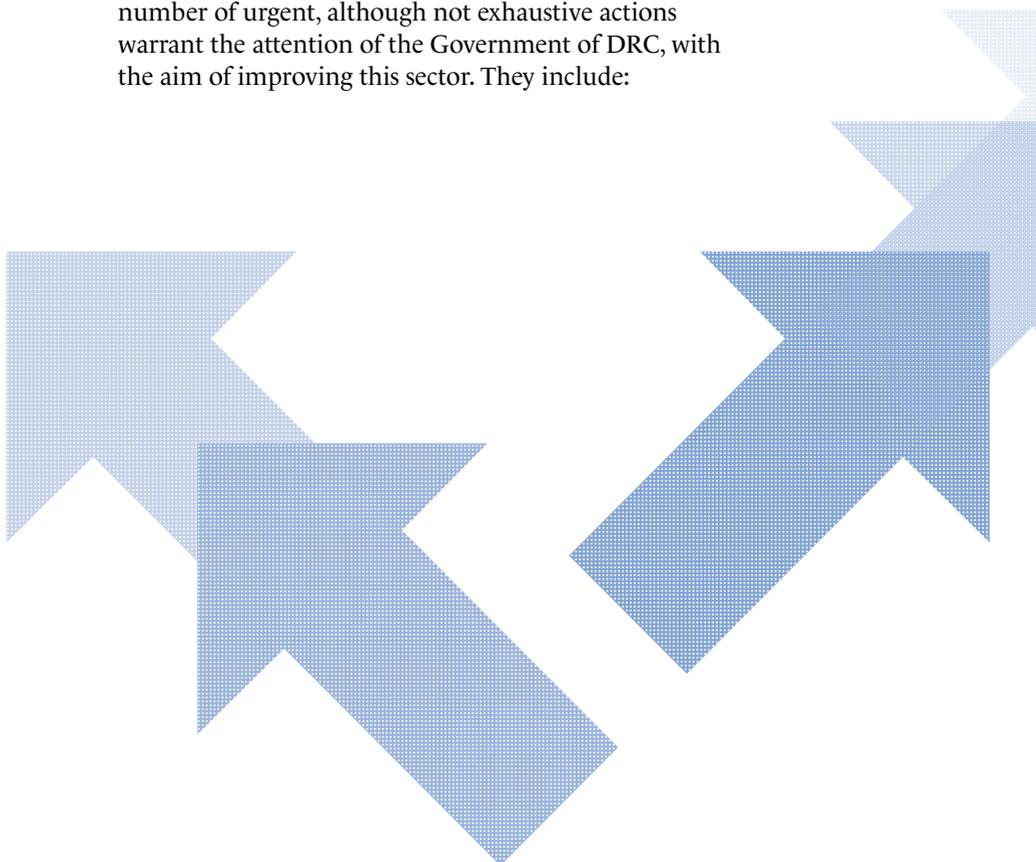
9 Porosity of borders.

DRC has nine neighbours, and has set up agencies authorized to operate on the borders. However, the lack of coordination between these, coupled with inadequate financial and human resources, and an incomplete or outdated legal framework, have contributed to the borders becoming porous. Direct impacts include insecurity and uncontrolled movements of people and goods, affecting the development of skills to some extent.



The way forward

In the light of the above-mentioned observations, a number of urgent, although not exhaustive actions warrant the attention of the Government of DRC, with the aim of improving this sector. They include:





1

Legal and policy framework.

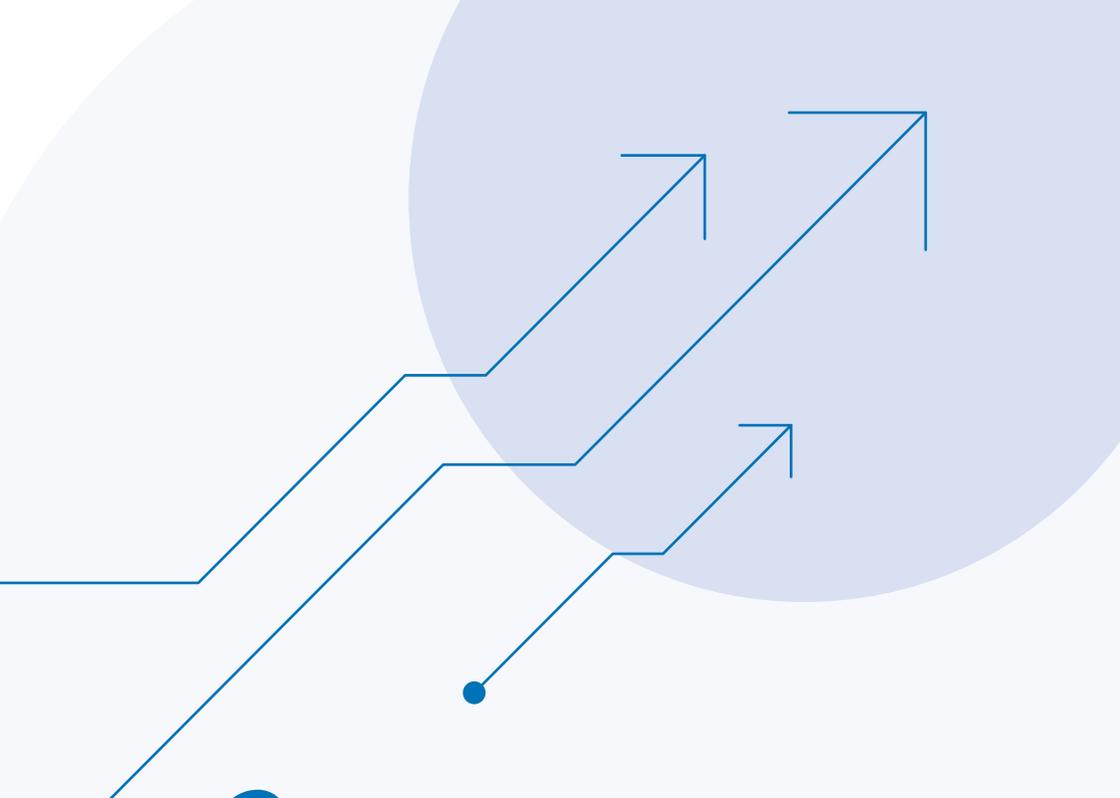
Boost legal and regulatory frameworks, as well as coordinated reform policies and strategies. These should be explicit and unambiguous, and supplied with all the resources needed for implementation, both for skills development and for managing migratory flows. Insofar as possible, fine tune objectives linked to TVET and confer supervisory responsibilities according to the sub-sector (formal, non-formal and informal), to ensure better management. These reform strategies will have the advantage of taking account of inclusive education (equal access to training: migrants, rural workers, women, youth, actors from the informal economy and minorities).

2

Harmonization of training tools.

Establish the use of common instruments to ensure conformity among all those working in the employment and training sectors: list of job and occupations, quality, control and monitoring standards, national qualification and certification framework (Recognition of Prior Learning), labour market insertion and follow-up mechanism for leavers.





3 Apprenticeship system.

Pool the resources of all TVET administrations for the creation of resource centres and training centres (to remedy the under-equipping of existing training facilities) in support of common instruments, so as to promote a basic apprenticeship system, in the workplace or as part of lifelong learning. To do this, the Government will develop an integrated plan for continuous training and retraining of trainers, the pooling and sharing of experience, and study and immersion tours for priority areas of the national economy.

4 Strengthening social partnerships.

Further increase, and conduct regular assessments of, the involvement of labour market representatives, particularly from the productive private sector and social partners, in the provision, evaluation, certification and funding of training, from central to local level, and in the formal, non-formal and informal sectors. To do this: (i) the management committees/board of directors of vocational training centres must be tripartite and operational; (ii) the Government is called on to improve the business climate in order to encourage companies to increase investments that take account of skills anticipation, so as to meet their real skills needs and instigate a win-win partnership.

5 Financing.

Develop innovative systems to fund training, for example participatory financing, which could fill the gap left by funding from the State and official development assistance.

6

Operational research for the diversification of skills sectors.

Update list of job and occupations by sector, so as to have a reliable skills profile.

Support the plan of action of the National Commission for Vocational Certification, so as to improve the provision of training and the supply of a skilled and qualified national workforce.

Conduct an exhaustive study that could secure a response to the future needs of the labour and skills market, as well as to the need for diversifying skills in priority areas of the national economy sectors to foster its development, in innovative areas as in international trade, with a view to voluntary out-migration (country of origin and destination).

This process must be fair and equitable, on the one hand encouraging the legal entry of migrants, who pay their taxes and contribute to skills transfer, and on the other highlighting areas in which Congolese workers are highly skilled, with a view to exporting labour.

7

Vocational guidance mechanism.

Develop innovative mechanisms for offering effective training guidance to youth and businesses.

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