

MAPPING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING GOVERNANCE IN JORDAN



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This report was prepared by Tom Leney on the basis of data collected by Nader Mryyan, following the methodology of the ETF GEMM project on governance, financing, and quality assurance in vocational training. The process was coordinated by the ETF.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mapping and peer review of employment and technical and vocational education and training (ETVET) governance in Jordan was conducted by the local expert of the European Training Foundation (ETF) working with the national committee of Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean (GEMM), and this final report was prepared for the ETF by an international expert. The governance issues investigated are (i) management of the system, (ii) financing, and (iii) quality assurance.

In the past, Jordan's public education and training authorities engaged only very little with skills demands in the labour market or with social partners. However, over the past half-decade or so the government and ETVET authorities have taken tangible, if incomplete, steps to engage with the social partners, who have also begun to treat ETVET policies as a priority. Jordan has been moving towards a tripartite system of industrial relations as part of a national strategy to develop a knowledge-based economy and society with improved education, training and skills supply, and a National Employment Strategy has been adopted for 2011–20. Jordan's labour market shows growth with job creation, yet unemployment remains obstinately high, in part as a result of inward migration of labour.

The ETVET sector remains fragmented under different legislative and management systems. At the government level, various ministries and agencies have legally defined management roles and responsibilities in ETVET: the education, higher education, and labour ministries (MoE, MoHESR and MoL respectively), the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), Al Balqaa' University (BAU), the National Employment and Training Company, the National Centre for Human Resources Development, the Civil Service Bureau, and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC). The three main subsectors for TVET in the public sector – vocational streams in MoE schools, VTC institutes and the community colleges under BAU – have, as yet, no single, effective leading body. Coordination is done through ad-hoc mechanisms, where non-state providers and stakeholders have no legally defined roles and responsibilities.

The ETVET Council should have a strong impact on the implementation of a sector strategy. It has successfully brought together the various stakeholders, and is providing a clearer lead and direction for the sector. However, the legal situation, funding and human resources of the council have not yet been adequately resolved. This hampers the ETVET Council's work, and these are matters that should be resolved speedily. Similar considerations may apply to the VTC, and also to the Centre of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA) and other agencies. Also, the Higher Council for Human Resource Development (HCHRD), which is to be established as part of the National Agenda as the umbrella for the three councils (ETVET, Education and Higher Education), has not yet been established. Finally, Jordan lacks a coherent set of arrangements and incentives to encourage skills upgrading by employers in either the formal or the informal sector.

The recognised social partner organisations are the Chamber of Commerce (JCC), the Chamber of Industry (JCI) and the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU). The social partners are nowadays engaged in broad policy initiatives, such as the development of the National Employment Strategy, but employers' involvement in the management, evaluation and assessment of the ETVET system has not yet been achieved in matters such as planning, setting standards, designing content and testing competencies. This may partly be because of persistent attitudes in government in favour of maintaining a more peripheral role for social partners, and partly also because employers and their organisations lack some of the organisation, skills and capacity needed. Hence, the ETVET system is still not based on employer-determined standards and tends to be supply-oriented and focused on initial training.

Initiatives are being taken in particular governorates¹ and economic development zones of Jordan to generate economic development and create jobs. However, there appears to be little coherent experience of bringing together government agencies, social partners, local industry and training providers to ensure that the supply of well-educated and skilled people meets the skills demands of expanding industries. Government and its agencies tend to remain centralised at the national level and, while the social partners have some experience of engagement in projects at the very local level, they appear to have little experience of operating at the governorate level on strategies for ETVET development.

Weaknesses in ETVET governance at the governorate and more local levels are compounded by the fact that local providers, except in the private sector, have little delegated responsibility to take local management decisions that involve taking initiatives, forming local partnerships or responding to local labour market and social demands. This creates a particular challenge in a system that is both centralised and fragmented, and there is a strong rationale for government and stakeholders to work out ways in which devolved responsibilities can be established successfully and responsibly at the intermediate level and at the level of training providers.

Finance for TVET establishments comes from three main sources: the annual public budget, international donations and loans and, to a small extent, student fees. Although the budget approval process goes through several clear steps annually, development funding is scarce, procedures are rigidly centralised, and there is very little, if any, devolution of decision making to governorates and providers. On the other hand, the VTC is becoming a more autonomous authority, and BAU is responsible for public community college budgets and has had to generate a proportion of its income. The ETVET Fund, established in 2005, is intended to finance and expand on-the-job training and demand-driven technical and vocational training by both public and private providers, and to improve the efficiency and quality of programmes. Its initial financing came from a tax levy of 1% on private enterprise profits (which constituted 72% of its funding), revenues from foreign workers' permits, and government contributions. However, the Tax Law of 2009 eliminated the tax levy, leaving the ETVET Fund reliant on permits granted to foreign labour. Cost consciousness in the TVET system is not high: the incentives are to spend allocated budgets in full, and the budget allocations are linked to previous spending patterns without incentives to reduce inefficiency or improve outcomes.

Problems of persistently low quality are also partly due to a lack of clear occupational standards validated by employers, and to the absence of any system or framework of qualifications that opens up access to qualified work and meets the skills needs of the labour market. On the other hand, teachers and instructors are generally well qualified academically. There are some strict quality control measures in place, for example in the auditing of budgets, but the sector lacks key performance indicators and has no appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the system's performance. Three accreditation and quality assurance systems are operating within the ETVET sector: HEAC for technical education, and CAQA and the MoE for vocational education. The establishment of CAQA, aimed at regulating the quality of training and certification for vocational education, is proving to be a useful step. However, it falls within the MoL's oversight and the ETVET Council's technical competency. By-laws for the ETVET Council and CAQA are necessary, to enforce accreditation and competency standards across all VET providers and to provide greater coherence and independence. However, these bodies also lack the autonomy and resources they need to be effective. A lack of management and labour market information systems is another weakness identified.

This report contains 15 recommendations, several of which relate to the government's strategic approach to ETVET governance. Resolving the issues that inhibit the effective functioning of the

¹ Jordan is divided into 12 provinces known as governorates.

ETVET Council, clarifying the roles and functions of the various ministries and agencies engaged in ETVET governance, and establishing the planned HCHRD are priorities for action. It is also recommended that the recognised social partners be accorded a more systematic role in developing TVET policies and initiatives, and that the organisations involved should find ways to build their own capacities in respect of ETVET governance. The recommendations also cover the issue of increased decentralisation of responsibilities and accountability to the governorate at TVET provider level, through a clear and thoroughgoing approach to quality assurance, a renewed approach to finance and funding, and capacity building of the main actors.

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the situation concerning the governance of the employment and technical and vocational education and training (ETVET)² sector in Jordan, with particular reference to management, the organisation of finance and funding, and the extent to which quality assurance approaches are being harnessed. The purpose is to help to secure improvements in ETVET policy and implementation. The report begins with a synthesis of the more detailed mapping of the governance of ETVET in Jordan that was carried out by the national committee of ETF's Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean (GEMM) project. It goes on to consider what improvements to aspects of ETVET governance can be made and how these can be introduced. The report aims to inform and assist ministries, the ETVET Council and stakeholders as they address some key questions about the future governance of ETVET.

The traditional approach to vocational education and training in Jordan has been supply-led, and this is still mainly the case today. In the past, the public education and training authorities showed little appetite for engaging with skills demands in the labour market or for building stronger social partner involvement in ETVET policy development and implementation, while employers' organisations and the trade union federation lacked the drive and capacity to make ETVET and lifelong learning feature among their priorities. Over the past half-decade or so, the government and ETVET authorities have taken tangible, if incomplete, steps to engage with the social partners, who have also 'stepped up to the plate' as Jordan has been consolidating a move towards a tripartite system of industrial relations.

Jordan has a population of almost 6.2 million inhabitants, with an average life expectancy of 73.4 years and a population profile showing a high proportion of young people. The 0–14 age cohorts comprise 35.3% of the population, the 15–64 age cohorts 59.9% and the over-65s 4.8% (UNESCO, n.d.). Given the position of Jordan in a region that has continuously experienced conflict and instability across its borders, the population contains a high percentage of people born outside the present national borders, who have migrated in from different states in the region ever since 1948: first in large numbers from Palestine, more recently in large numbers from Iraq and Syria. The International Fund for Agricultural Development reported in 2011 that 62% of the population is made up of young people under the age of 24, among whom unemployment is an important and urgent issue (IFAD, 2011). In particular, unemployment rates stand at 18% in rural areas and 13% in urban areas, and 60% of job seekers are under the age of 25. Unemployment among young women is nearly three times that of their male counterparts, even though 76% of young female job seekers have an intermediate or higher-level qualification. About 56% of the unemployed, particularly young men, have not completed secondary education; but attaining a tertiary level of education is no guarantee of finding work, as 40% of graduates are unemployed. Finally, child labour remains a significant concern associated with the most vulnerable in rural areas.

In the United Nations Development Programme's international Human Development Index (HDI), which ranks 187 countries over time using four indicators – life expectancy, education, per capita gross national income (GNI) and an overall HDI indicator, Jordan currently ranks 77th (adapted from UNDP, 2014). Jordan's 2014 HDI rating is above the average for countries in the medium human development group and above the average for countries in the Arab States. All indicators for Jordan show an upward trend since measurement began in 1980, and this is particularly strong in the case of the education indicator, which is measured in terms of average years of participation in schooling. Nevertheless, strong gender differences persist, with women at a disadvantage both in education and in the labour market, where one out of four females participates compared to three out of four males.

² In Jordan the sector is referred to officially as the ETVET or sometimes E-TVET sector. For clarity, ETVET is the abbreviation used in this paper. It is also possible to talk about TVET providers, so this term is also used.

The GNI per capita income for Jordan is close to the global medium, but well below the average for the Arab States, and this relatively low per capita income both reflects a lack of natural resources and constrains development possibilities.

The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators capture six dimensions of governance between 1996 and 2010. Jordan ranks relatively low for voice and accountability, political stability and lack of violence, but more highly on the other indicators: government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption (Kaufmann et al., 2010).

In economic terms, Jordan is an emerging market that is robust and growing. Its GDP per capita grew by 351% in the 1970s and, after a decline of 30% in the 1980s, grew once again by 36% in the 1990s. Liberal economic policies were introduced from 2000, resulting in rapid growth lasting through 2009. Supported by a strong banking sector, the country's economy weathered the global financial crisis and has been growing at an average annual rate of 7% for a decade, although exhibiting a dip over the last period. While Jordan can point to strong leadership from its royal family, the country's economic growth has been mainly driven by a successful government strategy to invest in some key sectors and the skills needed for those sectors for export generation. The main obstacles to Jordan's economic development are the scarcity of its water supplies, its complete reliance on oil imports for energy, and regional instability. The National Strategy aims to intensify the shift towards a knowledge-based economy and society, and improving education, training and the supply of skills is an important component of this. Only just over 10% of the land is arable, and much of Jordan's scarce available groundwater is not renewable. Rapid privatisation of previously state-controlled industries and liberalisation of the economy are generating growth in Jordan's urban centres, particularly Amman and Aqaba, and six special economic development zones have been identified. Priority economic sectors have also been identified in the national development plans³.

Jordan's public expenditure on education shows a fairly consistent upward trend over the past quarter of a century, in spite of periodic fluctuations. Net enrolment in primary schooling is over 90% and Jordan has a mix of public and private secondary and tertiary education and training provision. Statistically, access is closely correlated to gender and social characteristics, particularly for the more prestigious pathways.

Jordan's labour market is often described as paradoxical: it is characterised generally by high growth with job creation and success in attracting investment, yet unemployment obstinately remains high. As described in a 2008 World Bank report, 'In recent years, Jordan has successfully attracted investment, achieved strong GDP growth, and created many new jobs. Private foreign investments have increased dramatically since 2001 and, consistent with the government's strategy for reducing unemployment, GDP growth has generated a substantial number of new jobs. However, unemployment (among nationals) did not fall as expected' (World Bank, 2008, p. 9).

Jordan has a clearly articulated national agenda setting out the development strategy for the period 2007–17. ETVET development has an important role to perform through the ETVET strategy. The ETF has summarised the position as follows:

Jordan's vision on [...] E-TVET is that it should facilitate the employment of the Jordanian workforce and contribute to the development of Jordan's human capital based on lifelong learning principles. [...] E-TVET reform is focused on rationalising the TVET system and its training and education programmes, on private sector involvement and on improving the image of TVET careers and education and training programmes.

³ Adapted from Wikipedia, 'Jordan', <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jordan>

Since the introduction of the National Agenda reform process, the TVET system is part of a wider E-TVET system which is managed by the E-TVET Council, under the patronage of the Ministry of Labour. However, different bodies and institutions are responsible for different components of the system. The Ministry of Education provides vocational education in grades 11 and 12 in its comprehensive secondary schools; the Ministry of Labour provides vocational training through the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC); the Ministry of Higher Education provides post-secondary, non-tertiary educational programmes and tertiary, professionally oriented programmes through the community colleges (ETF, 2011, pp. 4–5).

Some of these challenges are persistent, while others can be tackled or mitigated through the implementation of an effective national plan alongside many other initiatives and innovations. The National Development Strategy, which was published in the middle of the last decade, is now supported by a thorough and ambitious National Employment Strategy for the period 2011–20, published in January 2012. The strategy places the main emphasis on generating jobs of the quality and quantity that Jordan needs through (i) economic policies that generate economic growth and quality jobs for Jordanians; (ii) a well-trained and motivated labour force, especially in the school-to-work transition years; and (iii) social protection for all workers, including those in small, micro and home-based businesses. The strategy recognises that this takes time and a long-term approach (National Employment Strategy, 2012, preface).

Training is provided as follows.

Public sector:

- secondary vocational education (grades 11–12) as part of upper secondary education under the MoE;
- non-formal and formal vocational training as delivered by the VTC;
- technical education and training as offered by community colleges (grades 13–14) under Al-Balqaa' Applied University (BAU).

Non-public sector:

- private, or non-governmental, training provision consisting mainly of private community colleges, for-profit non-formal training and training sponsored by non-governmental organisations;
- enterprise-based training.

1. MAPPING EMPLOYMENT AND TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING GOVERNANCE – KEY POINTS

1.1 Mapping of the ETVET system management

There are three separate subsectors of the TVET sector in the government, but no single, effective leading body. Overall TVET enrolments are declining in number.

The MoE provides the bulk of vocational education in Jordan through its vocational stream in grades 11 and 12, currently enrolling around 29,000 students each year (approximately 13% of high-school students) (MoE, 2013). This provision is a part of the MoE's comprehensive secondary school education, accommodating both academic and vocational education in the same school. A total of 190 secondary schools offer vocational education (World Bank, 2013); it should be noted, however, that many secondary schools offer only academic streams. Students can specialise within four main educational fields. The vocational part comprises 30% of the taught curriculum, while the rest comprises general requirements and subjects to sit for the Tawjihi (upper secondary school final) exam. The applied or practical training hours in the vocational stream are limited, and work-based learning or internship outside school is not part of the educational programme.

The VTC (a semi-autonomous agency) owns and operates a network of 10 specialised institutes and 35 training institutes (VTIs), with about 10,000 enrolments per year, targeting young people aged 16 and above. Eleven of these VTIs are specialised centres of excellence (in the tourism sector) and 31 are multidisciplinary training institutes. The VTC offers vocational training and apprenticeship programmes at the semi-skilled, skilled and craftsman levels. Some upgrading programmes are also organised for in-service workers based on clearly defined needs from employers, and other training programmes are offered on an ad-hoc basis (World Bank, 2013). The VTC typically adopts a top-down management approach. It is historically considered a bureaucratic institution whose programmes are outdated and supply-driven. However, it is currently undergoing restructuring to become an autonomous service provider with a clear mandate and governance, management and organisational structures; it will adopt a new, employer-driven service delivery model embracing governance, business and training (World Bank, 2013). The VTC is the only TVET institution that has a 'dual system' of training. In addition, the introduction of Model Centres for Excellence has been a benchmark in the transformation of the VTC's service delivery model to one that can respond better to local market needs.

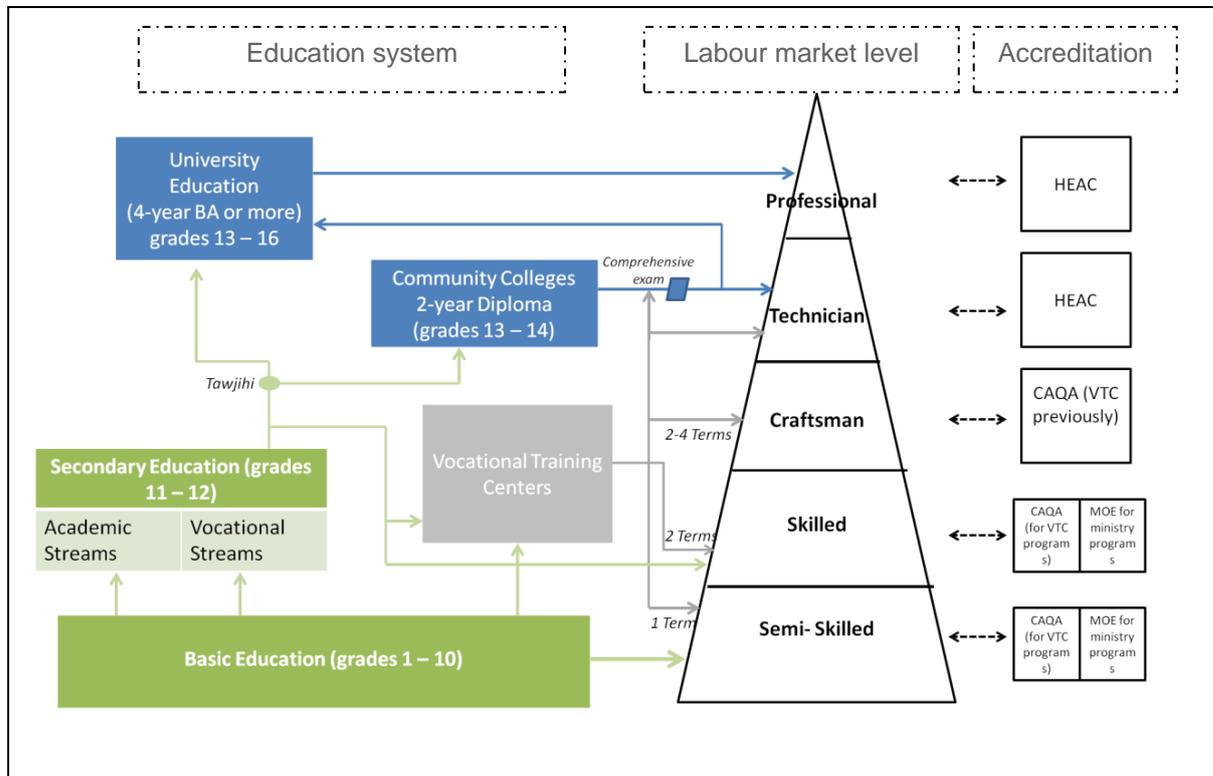
Technical education in Jordan is provided in 51 community colleges, of which 26 are public colleges offering two-year diplomas. These include 14 community colleges under Al Balqaa' University, 6 sponsored by the Armed Forces Department of Education, and 6 other governmental community colleges. Many of the colleges also offer Bachelor's degrees, where a number of students bridge the gap from community colleges to public universities. About 1,000 students have passed community college exams and have applied to make the transition into universities for the academic year 2013/14. The preference for university education is strong in Jordan, as reflected in the low rates of community college enrolment. While national policies have emphasised the importance of community colleges playing a more important role in technical and applied fields of education in order to increase the efficiency and productivity of the labour market, the response has been slow.

A few privately owned or managed TVET providers and private community colleges offer diploma programmes. Other forms of training include: industry attachments or apprenticeship schemes, in-service training and re-training of both employed and unemployed workers in the labour force.

However, information on this type of training is scarce. Lastly, there are a number of non-profit organisations providing training to promote youth employment.

The system is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

FIGURE 1.1 STRUCTURE OF THE TVET SYSTEM IN JORDAN



Source: World Bank, 2013, p. 20

With this diversity in mind, the ETVET Council should have a strong impact on the implementation of a sector strategy. However, the potential of the Council has not yet been realised, on account of legislative hurdles as well as overlapping mandates among public-sector stakeholders. Also, the Higher Council for Human Resource Development (HCHRD), which is to be established as part of the National Agenda as the umbrella agency for the three councils (ETVET, Education and Higher Education), has yet to materialise. This institution could champion the introduction and enforcement of measures for creating a coherent system, and could act as an inter- and intra-sectoral coordination body. Its key tasks can be identified as: (i) comprehensive assessments of national economic prospects and their implications for skills supply and demand, and (ii) the alignment of policies, systems and processes concerning education, higher education, labour, the economy and trade.

Although the ETVET Council has not yet realised its full potential, several initiatives taken since 2005 show promise in terms of improving the governance and management of the Jordanian ETVET system. Among these, the VTC has shown flexibility in developing the type and content of training programmes without getting tied up in administrative processes. It also administers its own budget following approval by the Council of Ministers. Also, the BAU is strategically placed to coordinate the activities of both public and private community colleges.

The creation of the ETVET Council was intended to address one of the main weaknesses in the governance and management of the TVET system – inadequate coordination of its various parts. The Council has a potentially vital role to play in countering fragmentation in the system, setting overall national priorities, and rooting out duplication and inefficiency.

The ETVET system is fragmented, and many of its players operate in isolation, although legislation and agreements among stakeholders now exist to promote coordination. At the government level, various ministries and agencies have legally defined management roles and responsibilities in ETVET: the ministries of Education (MoE), Higher Education (MoHESR) and Labour (MoL), the VTC, BAU, the National Employment and Training Company, the National Centre for Human Resources Development, the Civil Service Bureau, and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC). Each is governed by different laws, with a high degree of overlap in their mandates. Accordingly, each of these entities sets its own strategy. Currently, coordination is done through ad-hoc mechanisms, in which non-state providers and stakeholders have no legally defined roles or responsibilities. The model for a coherent system of ETVET governance was envisioned by the MoL in 2012 (see Figure 1.2).

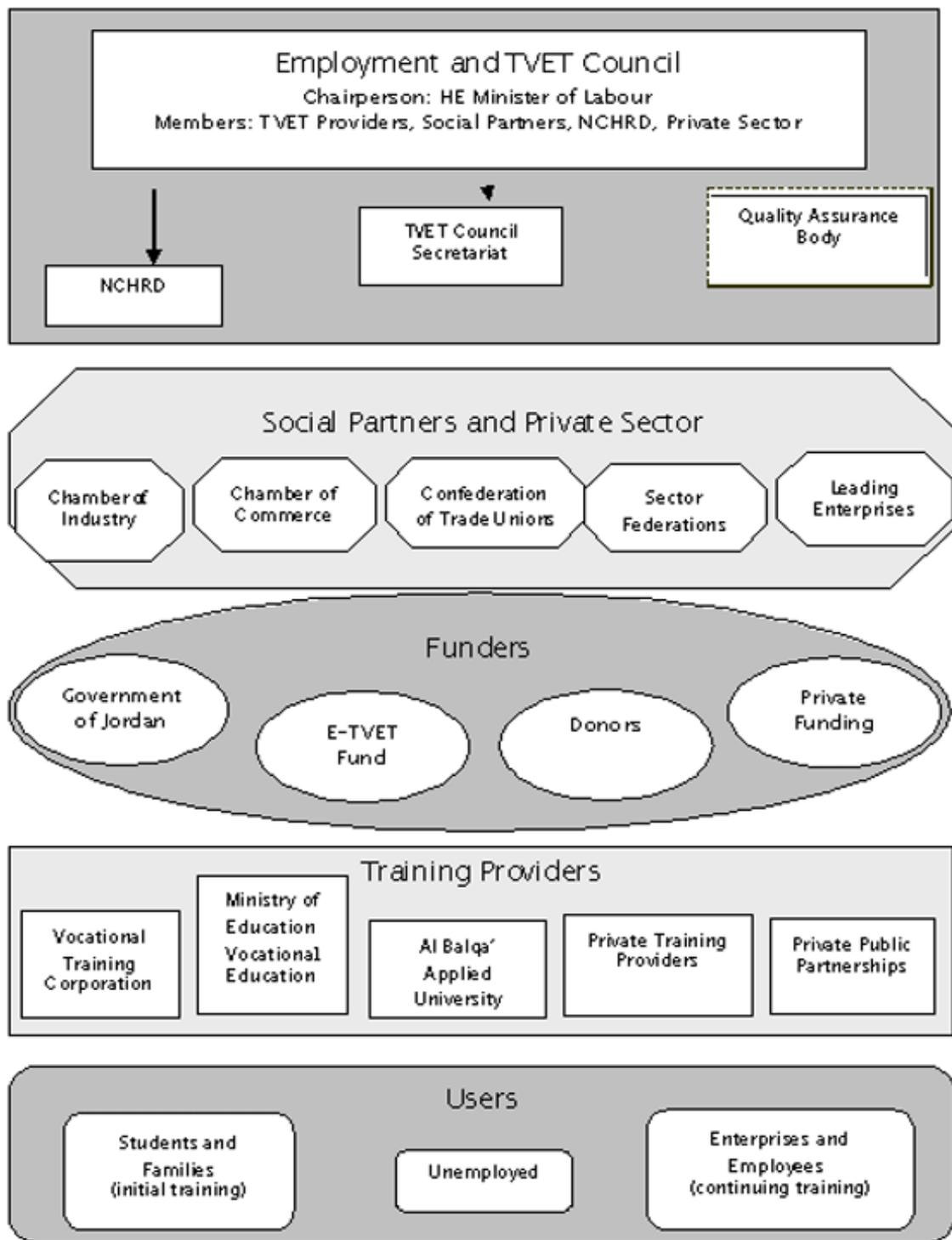
The regulations of the Chambers of commerce and the Federation of the Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU) stipulate their responsibility towards supporting the ETVET sector and representing employers and employees. Consultation and engagement at the planning stage have grown. However, the extent to which this is translated into actual strategic inputs is limited. Binding agreements between the government and employers concerning training exist rarely, if at all. There are links between training providers and industry at sectoral or local level, for example in the VTC's apprentice dual training provision. But even so, provision is not systematic, nor do the VTC and the social partners evaluate the results.

The social partners are nowadays strongly engaged in broad policy initiatives such as the development of the National Employment Strategy, but employers' involvement in the management, evaluation and assessment of the ETVET sector and provision has not yet been achieved in matters such as planning, setting standards, designing content and testing competencies. This is mainly because it is difficult to sustain employers' interest, and because employers and their organisations lack the skills and capacity to carry out these strategic activities. Additionally, employers are often viewed by government as guests rather than as stakeholders with identified roles and responsibilities. Hence, the ETVET system is not based on employer-determined standards, and it tends to be supply-oriented and mainly focused on initial training. Nevertheless, a number of initiatives are emerging that link providers with employers through joint training programmes, such as the public-private partnership developed by the VTC as a 'formal arrangement' for partnerships (for example the USAID-supported Siyaha tourism development project).

Jordan lacks a coherent set of arrangements and incentives to encourage skills upgrading by employers in either the formal or the informal sector. The focus has been placed on initial VET and training to reach disadvantaged and other specific target groups. Although these programmes do not target the upgrading of existing employees' skills, the VTC does organise some upgrading programmes for employed people based on special needs expressed by companies. A recent survey found that Jordan's companies were ranked among the lowest in Arab countries as providers of training for their employees: the percentages of companies training existing employees and new hires are 38% and 47% respectively (MoL, MoPIC, 2012).

FIGURE 1.2 THE ETVET REFORM GOVERNANCE MODEL

The E-TVET Reform Governance Model



Source: Ministry of Labour, 2012

1.2 Finance and funding

Finance for the MoE's vocational schools comes from three main sources⁴: the annual public budget, which provides the affordable funding for basic functioning of vocational schools; international donations and loans, which are allocated to the different establishments including the MoE through the Ministry of Planning; and contributions from trainees, which are more symbolic than substantial. The sale of products also provides some income.

The budget approval process takes into account the needs of the training centres; it goes through several steps annually. The regional offices of the Directorate of Vocational Education distribute forms, so that schools can indicate their estimated needs in terms of training, staffing, equipment and materials. On return to the regional head offices of vocational education, the estimates are transmitted to the Directorate of Vocational Education at the MoE. After discussion and revision, a final provisional estimate is sent to the MoE's Directorate of Planning and Budget, which amends and consolidates the ministry's total budget, including the budget for vocational education, and submits it to the Ministry of Finance. The MoE budget is included in the framework of the total state budget approved by the Ministry of Finance, for submission to parliament and the King.

Concerning the resources committed to the ETVET sector, the recent World Bank SABER report (2013, p. 28) notes the following:

Education spending as percentage of the GDP has gone down from 4.9% in 2001 to 3.8% in 2011 [...] the education budget is distributed across six entities of which MoE consumes the largest share (86%). Employees in education represent 40% of public sector employment, where 92% percent of the recurrent budget is spent on salaries. From the overall 2011 budget for public education, 2.81% was spent on secondary vocational education (MoE) (which represents 3.2% of the Ministry's budget and 20% of the combined secondary and vocational education budgets), and 1.4% was dedicated to vocational training (VTC). As is the case in countries with advanced WfD [workforce development] systems, in Jordan the costs per instructional hour per trainee in TVET are higher than those in academic programmes at comparable levels of instruction: JOD 365 per academic secondary student, JOD 813 for MoE students (average enrolment 25,000 per year) and JOD 1,300 for VTC students (average enrolment 10,000 per year).

It is important to note that the agents responsible for the different training centres of the Directorate of Vocational Education have very limited room for manoeuvre as regards their budgets. Salaries consume the largest share of the current expenditure, and expenditure on capital assets is very low. Development funding is lacking, and there are rigid, highly centralised procedures for the financial management of the allocated budget at the levels of both schools and regional administrations.

The VTC budget is also financed from three main sources: the government budget, foreign loans, and income generated by the establishment's own activities. The TVET system is highly dependent on government financing, although the VTC has increased self-generated income through the increase in trainee numbers, leading to a modest increase in income from fees. Centralised VTC resource management has resulted in surpluses in some years. In fact, any requests for funds submitted by the training centres during the final month of the fiscal year have no chance of being granted, given the time necessary to approve any financial operation. There is no actual strategy, but there is a provisional annual budget for the VTC. The approval process for the VTC budget is subject to the same arbitrary constraints at the level of the Ministry of Finance. The VET budget is set on an annual basis, which does not help in the financing of strategies that require a funding plan covering many

⁴ It will be helpful to add data such as the approximate percentages and other budget totals that are not to hand at the time of writing this report.

years. Furthermore, the government's contribution ignores the development needs of the sector and the necessity of ensuring the appropriate means for its development. Administrative and financial centralisation and lack of management authority at the training centres hinders both efficiency and development.

The situation as regards technical education is different. Here, the responsibility for the community college system was transferred from the MoHESR to BAU in 1996. BAU is therefore responsible for the governance and management of public community colleges, including their financing. All decisions on investments and budget allocations are made by BAU. Jordan's higher education (HE) institutions have seen declining government support in recent years, while the fees that students pay remain minimal compared to the actual expenditure/cost per student. BAU receives budget support from the MoHESR, but is mainly dependent on its own revenues and some foreign loans and donations. BAU allocates funds to public community colleges based on historical trends, student numbers and staffing levels. As well as technical education, most community colleges now offer both BA and diploma programmes. Diploma programmes tend to suffer from a large funding gap, particularly as regards up-to-date facilities.

The ETVET Fund was established in 2005 with the objectives of financing and expanding on-the-job training and demand-driven technical and vocational training by both public and private providers, as well as improving the efficiency and quality of programmes. Its financing came from a tax levy of 1% on private enterprise profits (which constituted 72% of its funding), revenues from foreign workers' permits, and government contributions. However, the Tax Law of 2009 eliminated the tax levy, leaving the Fund reliant on a deduction of JOD 70 from each worker's permit granted to foreign labour. This raises questions about the financial viability of this funding stream, and also contradicts the national objective of replacing foreign workers with Jordanians. The ETVET Fund is one of the main sources of funding for active labour market policies.

There is not much cost consciousness in the TVET system: the incentives are to spend allocated budgets in full the lack of available data on costs is one cause of this low cost consciousness. The costs per instructional hour per trainee in TVET are higher than those in academic programmes (JOD 365 per academic secondary student, JOD 813 for MoE students and JOD 1,300 for VTC students) (World Bank, 2013), and there is a clear funding gap in the TVET sector, leaving little space for innovations in TVET provision. The under-use of resources is inefficient: often, buildings and equipment could also be used for adult and continuing training. The existence of many smaller and specialised institutions leads to diseconomies of scale, and completion rates are often low. Moreover, overhead costs appear to be high for the VTC.

1.3 Quality assurance

Problems of persistently low quality are partly due to inadequate inputs. For example, there is a lack of clear occupational standards validated by employers, and no system or framework of qualifications that would open up access and meet the skills needs of the labour market. The poor quality of the students and trainees forming the VET intake, compared to that of students progressing through general education, is also frequently mentioned as a problem in vocational training centres, and also – to a lesser degree – in secondary vocational and community colleges. On the other hand, teachers and instructors are generally well qualified academically. Around half the teachers in MoE vocational institutions have a degree and 40% have a diploma, while 55% of teachers in community colleges have advanced degrees (ETF, 2006). The MoE and VTC have to recruit staff through the Civil Service, which does not recognise technical qualifications in its recruitment policies. Hence more flexibility is needed in appointing and incentivising TVET-qualified instructors, from either inside or outside the Civil Service structure, and in paying them according to market rates. As already indicated, funding is an obstacle to improving quality in programmes. Most enterprises are small, and only

perhaps a third of them have the facilities, equipment and trained staff to be able to provide effective apprenticeship or work experience, creating yet another constraint on quality.

Some strict quality control measures are in place, for example in the auditing of budgets, as mentioned above. Apart from this, three accreditation and quality systems are operating within TVET: HEAC for technical education and the Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA) and the MoE for vocational education. This number of subsystems further aggravates the system's fragmentation. The establishment of CAQA to regulate quality of training and certification system for Vocational Education is proving to be a useful step. However it falls within the MoL's oversight and the ETVET Council's technical competency. By-laws for the ETVET Council and CAQA are necessary, to enforce accreditation and competency standards across all TVET providers and to provide greater coherence and independence, and it would be preferable for the HCHRD, the national umbrella organisation for ETVET, to certify the training provided in both the private and public sectors. In turn, these bodies lack the autonomy and resources they need to be effective. The quality assurance role of HEAC (also known as HEIAC) is as follows (adapted from EACEA/Tempus, 2012):

The Higher Education Institutions Accreditation Commission (HEAC) was established in 2007 on the basis of the law issued in March 2007. The Commission is autonomous, and reports to the Prime Minister. The Commission aims at enhancing the quality of higher education using international norms and standards. According to the Accreditation Law, the HEAC develops accreditation and quality control criteria, ensures that higher education institutions abide by such criteria and other relevant laws and regulations, accredits institutes and their programmes and ensures that institutions conduct self-assessment. Both public and private universities fall within the mandate of the HEAC. Establishing private higher education institutions needs the approval of the Board of Higher Education. There is a well-defined procedure concerning the application form and documents that should be submitted for this purpose. In general, the application should be well justified to secure the approval of the Board, especially as there are now about 20 private universities in Jordan and all geographic areas and programmes of study are covered by private and/or public universities. Public universities are established, based upon a recommendation of the Board of Higher Education and endorsed by a Royal Decree.

Concerning TVET programmes, Al Balqaa' Applied University has no plans to adopt a more specifically demand-led system for developing qualifications and curricula.

CAQA's mandate is to work under the umbrella of the ETVET Council, to which it reports. It has a steering committee of eight members, six of whom are from public-sector provision and two of whom are nominated industrialists. The chambers of commerce and industry and the GFJTU do not have direct representation. CAQA's role is:

- to prepare and develop TVET standards so as to assure the quality of a sector's outputs, which will be accredited later by the ETVET Council;
- to license and accredit TVET institutions;
- to conduct vocational tests and issue licenses to practice.

CAQA supervises the development of a series of sector-based occupational standards. This is done by sectoral national teams, which have been established to identify the matrix of occupations in a particular sector and then to design occupational standards as a basis for clearly articulated demand-led standards for VET qualifications and curricula (MoL et al., n.d.). The occupational standards and associated manuals are produced by expert groups supervised and facilitated by the Centre. By 2013, occupational standards and their associated manuals had been produced for six sectors. The sectoral working groups, which operate with an extended DACUM (developing a curriculum) methodology,

contain more representatives from industry than from the training providers, and the industrial representatives tend to have a more dominant role than the providers' representatives in identifying occupational standards. All the members of the working groups are appointed by the Minister of Labour on the recommendation of CAQA and approved by the ETVET Council. Each working group can be expected to take at least a year to complete its deliberations. The process of developing the occupational standards and formalising the elaboration of the manual follows a standard procedure and methodology. An agreement has now been reached with the MoL that renewed curricula will be developed using the published occupational standards, but it is not certain that there is a clear method for undertaking this task.

The MoE recognises that it does not yet use a needs-led approach to developing TVET qualifications and curricula, although it is developing curriculum review arrangements that are primarily education-led, but with some representation from the world of work (Leney, 2013).

As regards accountability for results, the TVET sector lacks both key performance indicators and appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating system performance. It is worth noting that the ETVET Council is now using the Torino process of annual reporting as a kind of self-evaluation and this could lead to the identification of key performance indicators, supported eventually by a monitoring and evaluation system that could draw on up-to-date management and labour market information systems. However, only public training providers are required to collect and report basic administrative data, and these data are only occasionally used to assess individual institutional performance. Available data on labour market outcomes are limited to a few skills-related sectoral surveys or evaluations of specific, targeted programmes, and there is limited public access to this information. This means that:

- Funds are transferred to public institutions based on previous budgets, regardless of performance.
- Budgets are not adjusted upwards for good results or downwards for poor ones.
- Teachers and instructors are paid the same regardless of how many students or trainees they teach or the competencies they acquire.
- Criteria for allocating recurrent and development budgets are not based on realistic programme costs.
- As there is no effective system of annual staff performance reviews, teachers have little incentive to innovate or support in such initiatives.
- The ETVET system does not hold training providers (whether institutions or instructors) accountable.

2. ANALYSIS

This chapter provides further analysis of key governance issues, and makes some recommendations about what government and stakeholders can achieve.

2.1 Self-evaluation of ETVET governance in Jordan

As well as mapping the governance of ETVET, the GEMM Project National committee made an assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats inherent in the current situation. The results are given in Table.2.1.

TABLE 2.1 SWOT ANALYSIS OF ETVET GOVERNANCE IN JORDAN

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Availability of legislation, policies and strategies to support the ETVET sector ■ Presence of the ETVET Council ■ Presence of CAQA ■ Presence of strong management and specialised leadership for CAQA's development and follow-up processes ■ Stakeholder participation in some decision and policy making ■ Cumulative experience in the development of policy making and legislation ■ Some needs of labour market in different areas met by TVET ■ Narrowness of the gap between outputs of vocational training and continuing education ■ Some needs of local market met in terms of specialists and technicians ■ Provision of skilled labour develops the industry, which leads to economic recovery ■ Availability of design, monitoring and evaluation programmes in different sectors of human resources development ■ Cumulative experience of ETVET providers in the public sector ■ Growing flexibility of education and training programmes among ETVET providers ■ Development of programmes to increase the involvement of young people in the labour market ■ Existence of training centres in all regions of the country ■ Existence of a range of supporters to help vocational training advance to the required level ■ Increasing demands for ETVET programmes ■ Youth and women encouraged to join this sector to improve their living standards ■ Support measures for improving governance ■ Excellence in the areas of information, communication and database development ■ Creation of electronic systems to link the vocational training centres to the private sector ■ Budget savings from remittances improve local employment, favouring replacement of expatriates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fragmentation of the sector ■ Lack of a national framework for professional qualifications ■ Multiple entities related to human resources development ■ Absence of a unified entity responsible for coordinating the efforts of human resources development ■ Multiple ETVET providers ■ Gap between vocational training and labour market needs ■ Imbalance between supply and demand (in both quality and quantity) in the ETVET sector ■ Lack of skilled local labour for some technical jobs ■ Lack of appropriate training and education in ETVET ■ Unsuccessful reliance by ETVET on traditional but outdated pedagogy and facilities ■ Lack of vision and means in ETVET centres ■ Weakness of labour market information system ■ Training focused on theoretical side to detriment of practical implementation ■ Few tripartite partnerships between the private sector and service providers and vocational training centres ■ Difficulties to develop and implement policies ■ Weakness and limited sources of funding ■ Lack of support to SMEs ■ Very slow problem solving due to slow reform/modernisation ■ Lack of scientific research in this area ■ Inflexibility of civil service systems ■ Weakness of private sector participation in TVET policies ■ Over-centralised administrative and financial management ■ Gaps in legislation, in particular in employment and rights legislation ■ Teaching and learning: weakness in practical application of theories and systems of vocational and technical training

- Slowdown in economic growth and job creation, making jobs more difficult to find for youth and women graduates – yet ETVET is unattractive to many Jordanians
- Low wages that do not attract Jordanian job seekers
- Low participation of women and youth in the development of legislation and policies governing entrance to the labour market
- Stereotyped perception of ETVET sector among youth and women
- Lack of progression routes in TVET, making parents and students reluctant to join this sector
- Weak career guidance

Opportunities

Threats

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New ETVET strategy is under development, which is identified as a priority in the National Agenda ■ Existence of political will and awareness among all concerned parties regarding importance of and need to increase employment and participation in the labour market, especially among youth and women ■ Demographic opportunities ■ Availability of jobs for graduates in ETVET sector, and growth in jobs requiring high levels of skill and craft, with higher wages ■ Government and donor support for TVET sector strategies ■ Availability of technical assistance provided by international donors for the TVET sector ■ Opportunity to reduce foreign labour and increase local labour ■ Opportunity to create an environment of social security and political and economic stability, which will attract investments and create more jobs ■ Opportunity to exchange experiences between the different actors involved in these efforts and create genuine commitment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ External factors, which may be regional or global (e.g. Syrian immigrants, recurring financial crises) ■ Frequent changes in high-level decision makers, together with a lack of knowledge-based decision making ■ Lack of successful reform, creating risk of continuing decline in the level and quality of ETVET graduates ■ Lack of employment opportunities because of economic slowdown ■ Competition for TVET jobs between foreign labour and Jordanians; brain drain, but many Jordanians not attracted to economic migration ■ Direct linkage of ETVET projects to external funding and donors, limiting sustainability of reform ■ SMEs constitute a high percentage of the Jordanian economy, but are difficult to engage with TVET ■ Continuing allocation of ETVET students to academic and vocational tracks, contributing to distortion of the distribution of qualified graduates and inhibiting the quality of education ■ Failure to engage sufficiently with stakeholders, for example with skills needs identification and forecasting conducted collaboratively with the chambers of commerce |
|---|--|

Source: GEMM National Committee (adapted)

With the mapping of the current situation complete, the GEMM National Committee surveyed its members and a small number of other national stakeholders in order to gain a clearer impression of how successful and effective key players perceive current ETVET governance to be. Using a grid of 25 indicators organised around six principles, 28 expert respondents indicated how frequently they consider the current governance system to enable good performance and positive outcomes in the ETVET system.

The six principles of good governance can be summarised as follows:

- relevance,
- effectiveness,
- subsidiarity and proportionality of decision making,

- transparency,
- accountability,
- participation.

The diagnosis achieved through this expert survey leads to the conclusion that in the view of the experts TVET governance is rated most highly for its relevance, and to a somewhat lesser extent for its effectiveness and the extent to which governance is participatory. The lowest rating is given to subsidiarity and proportionality, a principle which refers to stakeholders having clear roles and responsibilities at the point at which decisions are taken, from the national through to the very local level. Respondents in Jordan gave a wide and even range of responses to each of the indicators, from the lowest score (showing that that indicator is never met) to the second highest (showing that the indicator is frequently met). This is an unusual distribution curve for this kind of survey. The highest level of response expresses the view that an indicator is very frequently met, and this response was given much less often than the other responses.

As regards the relevance of governance, the most positively rated indicator was that governance systems are supporting the economic role of VET, while the least positive response was given to the indicator measuring the extent to which governance systems encourage VET to find innovative solutions. As regards effectiveness, the most highly rated indicator was that governance procedures are recognised to be efficient in that they provide good value for money, while the least positive response was given to the indicator measuring the extent to which goals are formulated in response to shared concerns and identified policy gaps, while taking into account feasibility of resources for implementation. For subsidiarity and proportionality, the least positive response was given to the indicator concerning conflict in the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and gaps left in the policy-making process. Of all the 25 indicators, this one was the most negatively rated.

As regards transparency, the most highly rated indicator was that the VET policy cycle is an open process that engages the relevant stakeholders who have been identified, and the most negatively rated indicator concerns management information systems and other data needed to meet the governance requirements of the stakeholders. As regards accountability, the indicator measuring the extent to which decision makers assess and respect the contributions and recommendations of the different stakeholders was the most highly rated. However, the other indicators in this group were given a much lower rating: these concerned governmental compliance with standards, regulations and procedures agreed by the different stakeholders, and the extent to which government responsibilities, roles and functions are defined clearly and take into account the outcomes expected by users and stakeholders.

The final principle is participation. In this respect, the indicator measuring the extent to which coordinated participation mechanisms such as social dialogue, consultation and advisory bodies enable stakeholders to participate at key points was the most highly rated. On the other hand, the indicator measuring the collaborative engagement of an appropriate range of stakeholders throughout the TVET policy cycle was the least positively rated.

These results, obtained from a small expert survey, can provide food for thought and ideas as colleagues take their discussions and decisions about TVET governance a stage further. With the results of the mapping and self-assessment in mind, further implications for the various decision makers and stakeholders in the field of ETVET can now be considered.

2.2 ETVET leadership at national level

Tangible progress has been made as Jordan has intentionally steered a path towards a more collaborative approach to governance in the field of employment, technical and vocational education and training. Thus, the representative organisations of both employers and employees work quite frequently with government officials on questions of major policy formation. This was most notably the case in the preparation of the National Employment Strategy, in which the social partners joined the task groups alongside government officials and other representatives. However, consultation and engagement in broad strategy development or the early stages of policy formation are not being followed through with the appropriate involvement of key stakeholders in a range of policy implementation issues, including how best to develop the Jordanian approach to quality assurance in TVET, nor at the different levels of decision making, from the national to the most local. Although senior government officials are perhaps moving gradually towards a social partnership approach, they still tend to see the social partners as consultees, a role sometimes described as that of 'visitors at the table'. It would be an appropriate follow-up to the GEMM mapping and analysis if senior government officials in the two key ministries were to consider more thoroughly what kind of relationship they should establish in order to engage the social partners and other key stakeholders at all levels throughout the policy cycle, and how this relationship can best be developed.

With three different systems of provision, each with its own system of management, the TVET sector is still fragmented and uncoordinated. Some attempts are undoubtedly being made to develop TVET qualifications and programmes so that they become more responsive to the skills demands of the labour market, more flexible, and more valuable in terms of the progression of graduates and their transition into the labour market. However, even though there is evidence that these efforts have begun, they are rather sparse, and the three TVET systems described in this report do not seem to be achieving much coherence or synergy in their governance. If the HCHRD, which is flagged up in the National Agenda as the proposed umbrella for the ETVET, Education and Higher Education Councils, can now be established, an umbrella or apex organisation will be in place. This would open up the possibility of better coordination between the different branches of TVET and between them and the rest of the education system. It would strengthen the linkage between training policies and strategies and the country's wider programmes of employment and human resource development. It also opens up, at a high level, the opportunity for a more comprehensive approach to social partnership between the main stakeholders. It is worth emphasising that TVET is still mostly supply-driven and training providers do not meet the requirements of the labour market, nor is there a lifelong learning approach: these are key issues that HCHRD or a similar body can be tasked to address and manage through effective and multilateral governance.

The ETVET Council has been effective in bringing together the different stakeholders and in providing a clearer lead and direction for the sector. However, the legal situation, funding and human resources of the Council have not yet been adequately resolved. This deficiency hampers the Council's work, and these are matters that should be resolved speedily. There is still much work to be done. Similar considerations may apply to the VTC, and also to the Centre of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA) and other agencies.

If TVET is also to respond to more local challenges and situations, consideration will also have to be given to ways of devolving a sensible measure of decision making to local management, while putting in place suitable safeguards and accountabilities. This is in itself a major change in organisational culture and procedures for the ministries and the VTC.

Financing at the national level confronts two main governance challenges. The first of these is how to engage with industry and the private sector so as to increase the investment coming into the TVET sector. The second is how to empower providers by devolving some measure of budget responsibility, and how to incentivise reforms through funding formulas and mechanisms.

2.3 Social dialogue and partnership⁵

The main organisations recognised as social partners in ETVET in Jordan are the Chamber of Commerce (JCC), the Chamber of Industry (JCI) and the GFJTU. Each of these three main social partners is now preparing to work on ETVET issues in a more effective and coherent way. Informal relationships exist alongside formal ones. In many respects these informal relationships are personalised, so there is a danger of self-contained representation and dialogue on a more personal basis. While informality can help to build relationships, it can also hinder them if transparency, feedback and dialogue are lacking. The method of selecting representatives should be dealt with more carefully both by the government and by the social partners. Each organisation has its own overview, and the paragraphs that follow reflect the views of each of the main recognised social partners in the ETVET sector.

Chamber of Commerce

A good relationship is developing over time between the social partners and the public sector. Representation at the national level is good in most cases. Public–private partnership remains something of a slogan, however, because the social partners do not yet enjoy the role they should have as concerns policy and implementation. To achieve the desired results, much more needs to be done, especially by the social partners themselves. Satellite projects have been successful, bringing to fruition a number of practical projects being implemented in different aspects of employment and training. This happens when ‘heads and hands are put together’. Results are sometimes achieved when the private sector tries to have an effect by contributing knowledge and interest, but there is still a lack of real representation. For example, the government chooses representatives for most bodies. The restructuring of the VTC provides an example where representatives were selected by the public sector. The balance of roles and responsibilities among the different actors is not yet right, though it has improved. Also, the social partners have to be self-critical, for example where they do not send the right people to working groups and councils. Nevertheless, the situation shows much overall improvement now, compared with 2010.

Chamber of Industry

Social partnership is still at quite an early stage, and the partnership that has developed has built up a good foundation. However, the organisations have to learn to respond to requests for participation at different levels, and should certainly not provide only one expert to cover all levels. Each of the participating social partners has made some kind of arrangement through appointment or secondment of a member of staff to deal specifically with the ETVET sector; but to be effective these appointments must meet criteria such as: Is there a unit responsible for this area of work? Is there a budget? Do the representatives have the capacity to do the job required of them? Do they receive training and capacity building? Are these arrangements leading to a strategy for engagement? To this list can be added a broader question: are the social partners cooperating effectively with one another?

GFJTU

The trade union specialist is on secondment from the VTC for two years and is establishing a training and employment unit to support the training and capacity building of workers. The aim is to consolidate partnership. A vision statement is in place, a strategic plan is in preparation and there is good cooperation with the Chambers of Commerce and industry and, broadly speaking, with government.

Each of the institutions is looking at its own organisation in order to develop an effective contribution to the ETVET sector and policies, and they all recognise that their internal processes need improvement. In the JCC there are many focal points and the policy is now to give different people particular

⁵ This section is based on evidence gathered for the ETF by Tom Leney (ETF, 2012).

portfolios. On the other hand, the JCI tends to be very focused on a structure consisting of one person and one unit. The trade unions are somewhere between these two positions, sometimes concentrated and sometimes diffused. Each of the social partners, however, now has a unit that is intended to coordinate and take things forward.

Each of the social partners operates and builds its capability differently. The JCC has reported that it has an officer responsible for coordination, while a board member is responsible for a broader activity, reporting to the board and representation. Although there is more than one representative on committees and working groups, the coordination officer is the key technical expert and coordinates the activity of others. All related aspects are communicated to the board, and it is then the responsibility of board members to filter information down to the chambers of commerce in different parts of Jordan. This could be done better, for example through the use of the website, Facebook and other forms of electronic communication. The JCC considers that it does not yet have enough staff capacity, but it provides a budget for this work and will add to it as the case demands.

The JCI has been building up this area of work in terms of organisation and influence, but is dependent in large measure on the work of one person. The JCI budgets for this activity, but the costs are not covered completely.

Strengthening the dedicated unit is helping to build capacity in the GFJTU, and representation is at least becoming more even in quality. The unit is established and has a basic budget, but in other respects the trade unions work on a case-by-case basis. The unit, the mission statement and the current development of a strategy are all helping to build coherence, and representation on outside bodies is handled more carefully than used to be the case. Nevertheless, if the person in post at the time of writing returns to his principal job there is a risk that all of this might not be sustained.

None of the social partner organisations considers that its role in strategy is sufficiently one of leadership. In terms of relating to one another, the JCC coordinates well with the JCI, but not so much with the trade unions, although they do not conflict in this field. The JCI considers that there is a need to strengthen coordination between the social partners. The GFJTU considers that it has good relationships with the other organisations, but these are conducted mainly through good informal contact that is not structurally coordinated.

It may be help towards identifying the need for capacity building in the social partner organisations to present the information given above in tabular form, as in Table 2.2.

TABLE 2.2 SOCIAL PARTNERS' CAPACITY FOR HANDLING ETJET POLICY

	JCC	JCI	GFJTU
Dedicated unit	Yes	Yes	Yes
Staff capacity building	To some extent	Relies on events, seminars, skills of one person	Expertise brought in, no training of representatives
Budget	Yes, to be expanded as need arises	Yes, but insufficient	Unit at no cost; then case by case
In a position to run a strategy	Yes	Yes, but personalised round an expert	Yes, while post holder remains
Communication with the other social partners	With JCI, not with trade unions, but no conflicts	Yes, personalised, not institutionalised	Yes, with JCI

In addition to the recognised social partners, a number of civil society organisations, in particular the royal courts are active in the broader field of education and training.

Levels of capacity substantially similar to those of the social partners are also found among other agencies, so it may be worthwhile to identify a university or some other training/capacity-building agency, such as Al Balqaa' University, that can set up an effective unit to give practical support to capacity building among all the key stakeholders in the development of the TVET sector, including the social partners, the government and its agencies, and civil society organisations.

2.4 Territorial dimension

There is now in Jordan a considerable concentration of efforts towards developing and improving TVET provision in specific governorates and economic development zones. However, until now there has been little evidence of experience in coherently bringing together government agencies, social partners, local industry and training providers to ensure that the supply of skilled, well-educated and well-trained people meets the skills demands of expanding industries. In part, this deficiency reflects the lack of a coherent governance structure for the development and supply of skilled people, but it is also partly a result of the traditional over-reliance on inward labour market migration.

On the one hand, government and its agencies tend to remain centralised at the national level. On the other, while the social partners have some experience of engagement in projects at local level, they appear to have little experience of operating as promoters of skills development at local level. Furthermore, none of the training providers has much autonomy when it comes to forming local partnerships and developing activities, with the exception of Al Balqaa' University and the private training providers. In any case, all these agencies tend to ignore the importance of continuing training, and the wide reach of informal apprenticeship in informal sectors of the economy currently lies outside the field of interest of mainstream government activity in the TVET sector.

This is a level of governance that calls for more careful consideration and treatment. Partly it is a question of forming effective relationships between stakeholders at the intermediate level between national governance and local provision, and partly one of developing more meaningful partnerships between the public and private sectors at this level.

2.5 Increasing responsiveness, autonomy and accountability of ETVET providers

A key finding of this mapping and analysis is that local TVET providers, except in the private sector, have little delegated responsibility to take local management decisions that involve undertaking initiatives, forming local partnerships or responding to local demands from the labour market and society at large. The national framework for financial and human resource development and for establishing and equipping training providers currently leaves little room for local initiative. Nevertheless, building relationships with local communities and labour markets is widely seen as an important element of successful TVET provision, and it is very difficult to see how this can be achieved in a highly centralised scenario.

Therefore, there is a strong argument for government and stakeholders in Jordan to work out ways in which devolved responsibilities can be established successfully and responsibly at the level of training providers.

This is a new and important line of activity. It calls for renewal in several aspects of governance, not least adjustments to the regulatory framework; expansion of the local mechanisms for managing schools, colleges and other centres; improving the relationship between the school, the community and the labour market; training school principals and other managers in a different way of working;

and developing the culture, programmes and skills of teachers and other professionals involved. This has implications for governance in numerous respects, including approaches to management in partnership, funding, and a clear new emphasis on quality assurance as a tool for improving the performance of training providers.

Because the system is traditionally highly centralised, any steps taken to establish and consolidate pilots or initiatives that devolve a sensible measure of decision making to the local level should be initiated in the early stages only through close collaboration between the ministers or their agencies, local management and other stakeholders. In fact, partly through third sector activity with some engagement from the social partners, there is already experience of such local initiatives in Jordan; some of these are in the field of general education rather than TVET.

2.6 Improving the evidence-based policy approach to steering ETVET policy making in multi-participatory environments

The self-evaluation conducted as part of this GEMM mapping of governance indicates weaknesses in the area of labour market information and other forms of information and research that can improve the management of the ETVET system. Numerous partial attempts to remedy the situation are being made in different subsectors. A useful next step would be to assess and report on the information and data that is already available, to identify gaps and to set out to meet the evidence requirements through sustainable methodologies and activities, as far as resources allow.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The GEMM National Committee has summarised the challenges facing the ministries, government agencies and wider stakeholders with an interest in ETVET governance, as follows (GEMM, 2013).

- The TVET sector is fragmented and uncoordinated, with TVET being delivered by three different government agencies using different models and methodologies for delivery.
- The private sector's involvement in the governance and practical management of TVET needs to be stepped up and supported.
- Linkages between the TVET providers and the labour market are limited.
- TVET training providers do not meet the requirements of the labour market: training is mostly supply-driven and limited to initial training without any attention to lifelong learning.
- Financial mechanisms do not contribute towards improving system performance.
- Civil service rules and regulations need to be amended to facilitate hiring a more highly qualified workforce in the public TVET system.
- The image of TVET is not sufficiently good among Jordanian employers and society.
- The guidance and counselling system is weak and fragmented and has little impact on individual choices.
- The equipment of most of the training institutions needs to be replaced or upgraded.
- Continuing training is ignored by the TVET system, both providers and enterprises.
- Little autonomy is devolved to TVET institutes, particularly with regard to the development of continuing training activities.
- The development of a comprehensive Labour Market Information System is at a very early stage and does not serve the decision-making process.
- The absence of a national qualifications framework reduces the attraction of Jordanians into low skilled positions in the labour market because of the risk of being 'stuck' in a career without possible progression.
- Jordanian society has traditionally undervalued vocational skills, but the vocational streams provided in formal secondary education have helped to make vocational studies more acceptable to youth and parents.

The reform of training and of ETVET governance specifically engages with modernisation in line with the National Agenda and the National Employment Strategy, thereby opening up higher standards of ETVET provision to young people in transition to the labour market. However, remarkably little strategic attention is devoted to changing the role and status of young women in transition to the labour market.

The mapping and further analysis of ETVET governance in Jordan has led to a number of recommendations, which are put forward here so that the public agencies and stakeholders involved can design, plan and implement further action and reform and keep it under review. These recommendations are presented below.

Consolidating the government's strategic approach to ETVET governance

Recommendation 1. Government should now resolve the issues that hamper the effective operation of the ETVET Council, such as legal, staffing and finance issues. It should be noted that in countries where these issues are resolved, similar partnership agencies have a good chance to be effective.

Recommendation 2. Similarly, the roles and functions of the various ministries and agencies involved in managing ETVET systems should be clarified, so that coordination can progress from being ad hoc to becoming more systematic.

Recommendation 3. Coordination should prioritise the areas of governance activity that can lead to improvements in TVET provision, including the strategic use of funding mechanisms, the possible development of a national qualifications framework and a comprehensive approach to quality assurance.

Recommendation 4. The HCHRD should be activated now as a coordinating organisation facilitating collaboration between ETVET, education and higher education and engaging the social partners, so as to optimise the contribution of the education, training and employment sectors to achieving the goals of the national plan. Specifically, the emerging approaches to quality assurance under the responsibility of the MoHESR, the ETVET Council and the MoE should be developed with a more holistic vision and coordination of initiatives.

Recommendation 5. Governance arrangements for an effective advice and guidance service should be put in place, so as to optimise the information and advice made available to young people and other groups seeking entry to employment when planning for their transition between education, training and the labour market. The management of an advice and guidance system should keep in its priorities the need to help labour market entrants to match their skills better against labour market demands and to diminish bottlenecks in the labour market.

Recommendation 6. Alongside initial training, the management of continuing training should now be identified as a national priority of vital importance to skills upgrading. The links with training and informal apprenticeship in the informal sectors of the labour market should be the subject of further research.

Social dialogue and partnership

Recommendation 7. The social partners should be accorded a more strategic and practical input into TVET initiatives through more binding and more systematic links throughout the policy cycle.

Recommendation 8. The JCC, JCI and GFJTU should find ways to increase and institutionalise their capacity to deal with national and local ETVET initiatives.

Recommendation 9. The employers' organisations and the GFJTU should take steps to consolidate their own capacity in respect of social partnership in ETVET governance.

Territorial dimensions

Recommendation 10. Governorate and local authorities should be empowered to form active partnerships between the private and public sectors, including in such partnerships training providers in Jordan's urban areas and in the identified economic development zones, so as to ensure that effective governance forms an active part of the development strategy.

Recommendation 11. Civil society and third-sector agencies should be drawn into the partnerships wherever possible.

Increasing responsiveness, autonomy and accountability of ETVET providers

Recommendation 12. Some carefully planned local pilot programmes should be established, through which the various agencies involved in the management of ETVET provision can gain experience of devolving some of the key management decisions to the level of training providers, with a view to establishing good practice in which local management takes more initiative to meet local community and labour market needs, builds appropriate partnerships, and learns to operate using quality assurance mechanisms for development and accountability.

Recommendation 13. The capacities needed for more localised decision making should be identified, and training provided to principals, teachers, and other relevant actors.

Improving the data and evidence base

Recommendation 14. A report should be prepared urgently, including a feasibility study, on how to improve on current approaches to management information systems and, in particular, on labour market information systems. Current experience and initiatives should be taken into account.

Capacity building

Recommendation 15. The capacity-building implications of these conclusions and recommendations for all the stakeholders should be identified, and acted on as strategically as is feasible.

ACRONYMS

BAU	Al Balqaa' Applied University
CAQA	Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance
ETF	European Training Foundation
ETVET	Employment and technical and vocational education and training
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEMM	Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean
GFJTU	General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions
GNI	Gross national income
HCHRD	Higher Council for Human Resource Development
HDI	Human Development Index
HEAC	Higher Education Accreditation Commission
HEIAC	Higher Education Institutions Accreditation Commission
JCC	Jordan Chamber of Commerce
JCI	Jordan Chamber of Industry
JOD	Jordanian dinar
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHESR	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
MoL	Ministry of Labour
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Education Results
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Vocational education and training
VTC	Vocational Training Corporation

FURTHER INFORMATION

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