



e-Learning and training – the art of hospitality

Innovation and Learning Practice

Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET (BILT) Project

Submitted by Kambaku Hospitality College (KHC), Namibia

In collaboration with Mainporter Vocational Online College of Hospitality, the Kambaku Hospitality College (KHC) developed an apprenticeship qualification for non-managerial staff. The qualification is based on e-Learning through customized software designed for apprenticeship programmes combined with in-person training.

Start date: January 2017

Type of implementing institution: Private sector

Target group: Potential employer establishments for apprenticeships in hospitality, TVET institutions, youth and adult learners (including those without required school certificates to enter the traditional TVET system)

Implementation partner: Mainporter Vocational Online School of Hospitality

Kambaku Hospitality College

The Kambaku Hospitality College (KHC) developed from a vocational institution offering apprenticeships, to an online hospitality college bringing dual vocational training across Namibia and beyond. The College is an accredited private training provider based in a Namibian wildlife reserve which inspires, nurtures and develops future generations of highly skilled hospitality professionals in Southern Africa.

Description of activities

In partnership with Mainporter Vocational Online College of Hospitality, KHC offers apprenticeships and theory-based programmes on hospitality and tourism through a combination of e-Learning and practical real-life training in hospitality establishments.

Through its unique online system, KHC provides accessible education and skills training for people and companies working and operating in areas remote from traditional vocational training centres, and without highly skilled practical trainers.

Relevance

What were the main challenges the initiative set out to address?

According to a 2020 report by the **Namibian Training Authority 2020**, 50% of graduates are unemployed. For hospitality graduates, one of the major reasons is the skills gap between existing and desired industry skills. Another key barrier to employment is the lack of access to training for those living in rural areas (nearly half of Namibia's population). This initiative therefore aims to:

- Address the mismatch between skills sought by employers and qualifications received by learners;
- Help small establishments find staff who are trained to work across multiple non-managerial roles;
- Provide support to employers to encourage participation in work-integrated learning programmes;
- Deliver training opportunities for young people (and others) in rural areas away from Vocational Training Centres and to those lacking ICT skills.

What strategies did KHC employ to address these issues?

The main objective of the initiative is to support companies and employees by addressing the skills-gap for highly trained, practical, non-managerial hospitality industry staff.

Working with companies: By giving industry professionals significant input into the course design and content, KHC will reduce the skills gap in the hospitality sector. KHC allows companies the flexibility to plan the entire training programme (practical and theory)

and integrate it easily into their operations. By providing employers with support and skills training to become mentors to trainees, the programme will also increase the number of employers willing and able to offer work-based apprenticeships.

Supporting learners' needs: The initiative prioritizes inclusivity by offering support to learners without previous experience of using online tools. This is coupled with flexible learning so trainees can progress through the course in their own time and from their own communities. The course is also open to learners who do not have the prerequisite qualifications to join other TVET courses. It centres around maximizing employability by providing comprehensive all-round training so graduates fit a wide range of non-managerial positions.

Is this programme part of a wider initiative across or beyond Namibia?

The Namibian government has a 'National Sustainable Tourism Growth and Investment Promotion Strategy 2016-2026' and, although not mandated by the government, KHC's initiative underpins this strategy. The organization's wider vision aims to make the initiative available across Southern Africa and potentially beyond, with support from Mainporter and other local partners.

Added value

What is new about the initiative and how does it differ from similar ones in Namibia?

This initiative was developed *by* industry *for* industry, erasing the previous disconnect between training received and skills required. Providing learners with mentors working within the hospitality sector allows them to be guided in line with first-hand, current knowledge of the industry. The flexible nature of the training is also innovative with companies being able to schedule online theoretical and practical training as well as assessments according to their business needs and the progress of the learner.

What stage of implementation is the initiative currently at?

The online training platform was rolled out in 2019 to replace KHC's previous face-to-face theory teaching and the on-the-job mentor-based training was implemented in 2020. As of 2023, KHC is in the process of registering and seeking accreditation from the **Namibian Qualification Authority** before the programme can be rolled out beyond its current set-up in a wildlife reserve.

What positive outcomes have occurred as a result of this initiative?

At current implementation status, the benefit for the full target group can only be partially evaluated, however, course feedback from learners using the new system is highly satisfactory. To date, there are seven learners in training and five graduates have completed the e-Learning programme and attained the National Qualification Certificate. All are employed or have continued with further education.

Transferability

To what extent is this learning and training model adaptable to other contexts?

The initiative can be adapted by other TVET stakeholders through the use of the KHC's system and services model. The model is not restricted to the hospitality industry and could be applied to other trades and entry-level managerial occupations.

KHC also offers excerpts of the apprenticeship qualification as dual short programmes and theory-only programmes for internal company reskilling/upskilling or as preparation for those undertaking the National Recognition of Prior Learning programme.

What advice can you give to those wishing to replicate this initiative?

Include industry professionals and learners in planning and implementation. New courses/qualifications are more likely to be accepted by employers if a diverse range of professionals within the sector have been consulted during programme design, and the programme can be integrated into business operations without disruption and with limited time and effort. Similarly, content should be developed in collaboration with learners to ensure their needs are central. For example, KHC developed theoretical course content by observing classroom-based sessions and conducting rigorous user testing and interviews.

Collaborate with partners and sponsors to cover fees. Setup and running costs, such as developing bespoke software, can be high, so finding funding is essential to offer courses free of charge.

Establish good relationships with national bodies who can provide regulatory advice. The process of officially registering new training qualifications, which do not follow traditional approaches, can be slow, challenging and resource heavy, so getting additional support early is recommended.

Are there any resources you could make available to other TVET institutions?

The initiative is privately funded and does not utilize open-source software, therefore KHC's resources are not freely available. However, TVET institutions within Namibia can utilize the current system by becoming a customer/sponsor. KHC also welcomes partnerships and knowledge exchange with other institutions wishing to develop their own system and/or qualification. Furthermore, Mainporter - KHC's partner in this initiative - develops courses/qualifications for institutions and companies who do not have the expertise to do so on their own.

KHC's initiative on 'E-Learning and training – the art of hospitality' is one of the BILT project's Innovation and Learning Practices that address systemic challenges within the five work streams of the project. Specifically, the KHC initiative addresses digitalization in TVET.



Digitalization in TVET

Providing response to new skills demands, as technology has permeated the world of work and is changing the profile of jobs.

Additional Innovation and Learning Practices cover the following areas:



New Qualifications and Competencies



Entrepreneurship in TVET



Greening TVET



Migration and TVET

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For more information about this practice:

Kambaku Hospitality College website
Mainporter Vocational Online College of Hospitality

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About the BILT Project

UNESCO-UNEVOC's Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET (BILT) project is a reference point for innovation and learning in TVET. It utilizes the international UNEVOC Network to create opportunities for collaboration and a platform for bridging innovation and learning between Europe, Africa and the Asia-Pacific region. BILT complements developments at the national level in supporting innovative, market-oriented and attractive modes of learning and cooperation in TVET.

The BILT project explores the process of identifying, integrating and implementing new qualifications and competencies in TVET. This is known as the 'three I's process'. In addition to the broad focus on new qualifications and competencies, BILT addresses four complementary themes: Digitalization in TVET, Greening TVET, Entrepreneurship in TVET, and Migration and TVET.

For more information, please visit
www.unevoc.unesco.org/bilt

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New Qualifications and Competencies in TVET

- **Identifying** new qualifications and competencies in a timely manner;
- **Integrating** them into appealing and flexible curricula and training regulations; and
- **Implementing** them in innovative training approaches.

Entrepreneurship in TVET

Unlocking the potential of innovative entrepreneurial activities and fostering entrepreneurial culture

Greening TVET

Responding to new development paradigms for sustainability and reduced environmental impact

Digitalization in TVET

Providing response to new skills demands, as technology has permeated the world of work and is changing the profile of jobs

Migration and TVET

Accelerating the integration of migrants into their host communities, and allowing them to become productive members of the workforce

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