

# Strengthening the responsiveness, agility and resilience of TVET institutions for the post-COVID-19 era

## Rationale and background

### 1. Summary Description

The COVID-19 pandemic is substantially challenging the world economy. 1.2 billion workers are projected to be affected by job losses, displacement, and reduced working hours. In addition to economic and health concerns, the pandemic has also significantly impacted the education sector.

The contribution that TVET institutions can make to the post-COVID 19 recovery is threefold. First, they can help manage skill gaps and shortages by providing short-term training to meet the urgent demand for skilled workers in essential job and other sectors highly impacted by the pandemic. Second, well-placed TVET institutions can assess the impact of the pandemic on labour market skills demands and make the necessary systemic adjustments to provide re-skilling and upskilling programmes. Third, they can take the opportunity to strengthen their own preparedness for future crises and disruptions.

This special project is conceived to help alleviate the immediate, mid- and long-term effects of the global crisis by providing TVET institutions and training providers, especially those in the developing world, with opportunities to address the aforementioned three functions in the post-COVID-19 era.

### 2. Sustainable Development Goals

The project contributes directly to two goals and four targets of the SDGs, namely:

**SDG-4: Quality education** - **Target 4.3**, by 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university; and **Target 4.4**, by 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship. The project contributes to quality education through the provision of training and skill development opportunities for employment, and entrepreneurial learning targeted to those affected by job displacements, job shifts or job insecurities. In addition, it creates a platform for sharing of effective practices in TVET among institutions in different settings and technological environments (low-, medium- and high-technology), and supports raising of capacities of institutional stakeholders on resilience and agility in the post-COVID-19 era.

**SDG-8: Decent work and economic growth** –**Target 8.3**, promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises; and **Target 8.6**, by 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training. The project pays attention to the demands of the formal and informal employment sectors and their potential to provide employment for the youth and contribute to social justice. The project facilitates the sharing of concrete experiences, peer learning network and practices to ensure that institutions are equipped with knowledge of what works and can be inspired in their future practice.

### 3. Overall purpose and relevance

The COVID-19 pandemic is substantially challenging the world economy. Over 2 billion workers are affected by job losses, displacement, and reduced working hours impacting wage. A surge of bankruptcies affect big and small industries and enterprises alike. Countries are in recession, threatening the overall productivity of the most healthy of economies around the world, while bringing the less competitive economies prior to COVID-19 to an even more precarious state.

The pandemic has directly impacted lives. It has threatened the health of over 52 million people around the world and many more who can be potentially infected in the coming months. It has magnified many issues in the health and related sectors which include the lack of adequately trained health and laboratory personnel, and over-dependence of countries on global supply chains for medical and similar products. These have resulted in massive disruption in the access of products and services and ineffective management of response. In addition to economic and health concerns, the pandemic has also caused disruptions to general activities of peoples and societies. There is widespread variability in the countries' capacity to mitigate the long-term impact of disruption in learning and access to services.

To mitigate the impact of COVID-19, governments, businesses, the health sector and other institutional set-ups are rallying their efforts, first, to mitigate the unprecedented impact of the pandemic on the economy, second, to sustain efforts in curbing the impact, and third, to prepare to adapt to the 'new normal' through built capacity and resilience. This 'new normal' is characterized by the changes in the post-pandemic era whereby alternative delivery of education and training, shift to remote or automated working arrangements have increased.

TVET institutions – comprised of schools, colleges, institutes, technical universities and centres delivering TVET programmes -- are well-placed to contribute in the post-COVID-19 era. First, they can curate or adapt existing training programmes to meet the urgent demands for short-term and additional training of skilled workers in job sectors impacted by the pandemic. The training and retraining of medical and non-medical support personnel is urgent in high-demand essential jobs and sectors that have been highly impacted. Regular upskilling or re-skilling are necessary to help countries. In the production sector, there is high demand for training in production of low-cost and local-based products to diversify the supply chains. In the food and retail sector, training to address skill gaps and shortages is needed due to a surge of demand in some areas. In sectors involving logistics, distribution and industry safety, new demands for skill profiles are emerging that need to be met.

Second, some TVET institutions in collaboration with local employer organizations or similar groups, are well-placed to assess the short-term and long-term demands for skills in sectors that need to be more resilient. In sectors where there is a high level of shortage in qualified workforce, TVET institutions are best placed to (i) provide re-skilling and upskilling programmes to help the millions of unemployed workers find job opportunity in high-demand sectors post-COVID-19, (ii) reinforce sustainable development concepts in their skilling interventions to transition into better practices, and (iii) offer new and digital services that can address the increasing automation of jobs and digitalization of services to society.

Third, TVET institutions can take the opportunity to strengthen their own preparedness for future crises and disruptions. These actions can be used to learn and share how to become more agile and resilient in time of crises, in anticipation that natural disasters, or other pandemics will become part of the 'new normal'.

The present project is conceived in this context to help alleviate the immediate, mid- and long-term effects of the global crisis, by providing TVET institutions around the world, especially those in the developing world, with opportunities to address the aforementioned three functions in the post-COVID-19 era.

Towards this end, the main objectives of the project are:

- i. To mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing short-term training for those affected by COVID-19 on highly-demanded skills
- ii. To sustain TVET institution's efforts to mitigate and respond by setting up new services for reskilling, upskilling, and vocational career guidance
- iii. To prepare TVET institutions for future crises through building institutional capacity for resilience and disseminate experiences
- iv. To ensure knowledge sharing of experiences and practices emanating from the project to relevant stakeholders

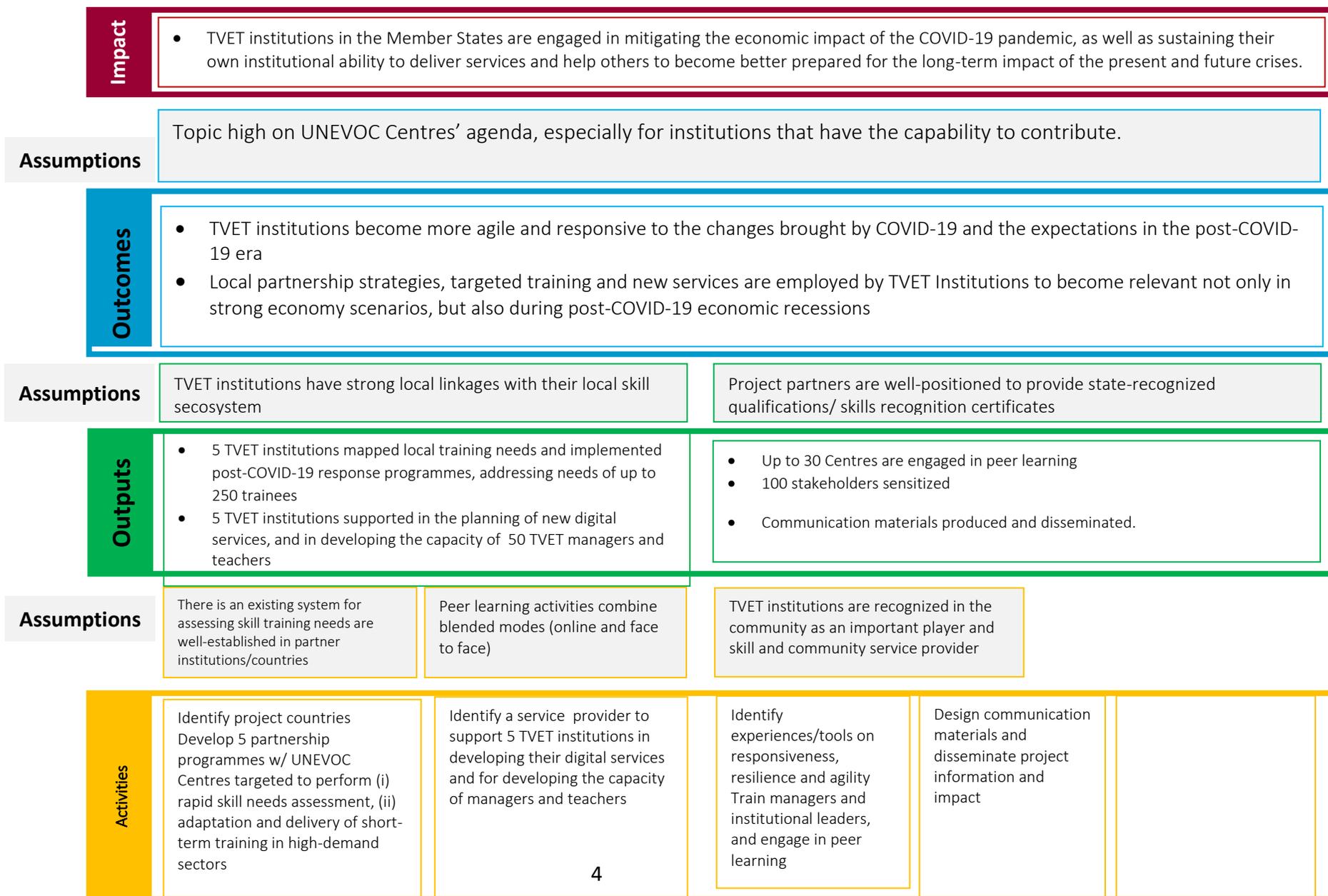
### 4. Impact

The project ensures that TVET institutions in the UNEVOC Network and beyond are actively engaged in mitigating the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as strengthening their own institutional ability to deliver services and help others to become better prepared for the long-term impact of present and future crises.

To achieve this, the project will reinforce opportunities for TVET institutions (e.g., colleges, institutes, universities and centres delivering TVET programmes) to

- Contribute in mitigating the impact of the pandemic on economy
- Sustain institutional efforts in curbing the impact of pandemic by establishing new services for upskilling, reskilling and vocational guidance
- Prepare for future scenarios through capacity building and resilience to post-COVID-19 changes, and disseminate information about the project

## 5. Theory of change



## Annex 1: Expected Results Framework

<b>Impact:</b> TVET institutions are actively engaged in mitigating the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as sustaining their institutional efforts in curbing the impact of pandemic by establishing new digital services and supporting others to become better prepared for the long-term impact of present and future crises.				
Quantitative and/or qualitative performance indicator (PI) (disaggregated by sex):	Baseline (B):	Source and means of verification (M):	Target (T):	Assumptions and risks
PI 1. No. of TVET institutions engaged in COVID-response and resilience programmes to contribute to achieving the overall objectives of the project.	0	Project inception meeting Final Project report	40	Training providers in the Member States have relevant programmes that are directly addressing COVID-related skill demands.
PI 2. No. of stakeholders reached by project activities (capacity building/training & peer learning)	0	Project inception meeting Final project report	Up to 400	Training providers are able to conduct training and learning activities in blended or full online mode of delivery, and are not further restricted by COVID threats to public health.
<b>Outcome N° 1:</b> Local partnership strategies, targeted training and new digital services are employed by TVET Institutions to become relevant not only in strong economy scenarios, but also during post-COVID economic recessions				
Quantitative and/or qualitative performance indicator (PI) (disaggregated by sex):	Baseline (B):	Source and means of verification (M):	Target (T):	Assumptions and risks
PI 1 No. of UNEVOC Centres supported to implement COVID-19 short-term training programmes, and reporting outcomes of their interventions	5* (*figures based on selected call for proposals from TLP on COVID response)	Implementation report Work plan of partner institutions	5	Targetted Centres are available and willing to engage inspite of local conditions.
PI 2. No. of UNEVOC Centres supported to develop or enhance their services.	0	Implementation reports Work plan of partner institutions	5	Targetted stakeholders in the Centres are available and willing

## Attachment A1 – Project background

				to participate in training inspite of local conditions.
<b>Output N°1: Up to 5 TVET institutions gained familiarity on the skill needs and implemented post-COVID-19 response programmes, addressing needs of trainees</b>				
PI	Baseline (B):	Source and means of verification (M):	Target (T):	Assumptions and risks
PI 1. No. of UNEVOC Centres engaged in mapping the urgent skill training needs in high-demand sectors.	0	Implementation agreements Implementation report Needs assessment concept note	5	Targetted stakeholders in the Centres are available and willing to participate in training inspite of local conditions.
PI 2. No. of learners that benefit from training of TVET institutions through short-term skill training in high-demand sectors.	100	Implementation report Feedback from participants	Up to 250 trainees	Targetted stakeholders in the Centres are available and willing to participate in training inspite of local conditions.
PI 3. No. of reports shared with public training authority	0	Assessment report Implementation report	1 consolidated report	
<b>Activities:</b>				<b>Assumptions and risks</b>
1.1 Identification of UNEVOC Centres to co-implement programmes; and field office and local partners to support. 1.2 Developing up to 5 support programmes with UNEVOC Centres, targeted for (a) Identifying basic needs assessment , (b) Adaptation of existing programmes and delivery of short-term training				
<b>Output N°2: TVET institutions supported in their planning of new digital services, with capacity of up to 50 TVET managers and teachers raised</b>				
PI	Baseline (B):	Source and means of verification (M):	Target (T):	Assumptions and risks
PI 1. No. of TVET institutions supported	0	Project interim progress report Planning document from partner institutions	5	Targetted stakeholders in the Centres are available and willing to participate in training inspite of local conditions.
PI 2. No. of managers and teachers supported through targeted capacity building programmes in up to 5 Centres.	0	Concept note of project implementation Feedback from trained personnel	50	Targetted stakeholders in the Centres are available and willing to participate in training inspite of local conditions.
<b>Activities:</b>				<b>Assumptions and risks</b>

1.1 Identify a service provider to support the development processes for setting up new digital services of institutions	
1.2 Identify institutions and build the capacity of managers and teachers in implementing new digital services	

**Outcome N° 2:** TVET institutions supported to become more agile and responsive to the changes brought by COVID and the expectations in post-COVID era

Quantitative and/or qualitative performance indicator (PI) (disaggregated by sex):	Baseline (B):	Source and means of verification (M):	Target (T):	Assumptions and risks
PI 1. No. of TVET institutions that adopted measures in education and training programmes and services to deal with future-oriented crises	0	Implementation reports	20	The motivation of institutions are increased through peer learning approach.

**Output N°3:** Up to 30 UNEVOC Centres and other institutions with 100 stakeholders are engaged in peer learning, including but not limited to project stakeholders involved in other project activities.

PI	Baseline (B):	Source and means of verification (M):	Target (T):	Assumptions and risks
PI 1. No. of UNEVOC Centres engaged in peer learning activities	0	Participation list Peer learning activity agenda	20-30	Targetted stakeholders in the Centres are available and willing to participate in peer learning inspite of local conditions.
PI 2. No. of stakeholders participating in training and peer learning opportunities	0	Network peer learning report	80- 100	Targetted stakeholders in the Centres are available and willing to participate in training inspite of local conditions.

**Activities:**

1. Identifying experiences and developing tools on responsiveness, resilience and agility
2. Organizing online training of managers and institutional leaders to sensitize them on the tools
3. Organizing peer learning activities and follow up support

**Assumptions and risks**

**Output N°4:** Stakeholders informed about project activities and experiences emanating from the project

PI 1. No. of stakeholders reached by project communication	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Communication materials</li> </ul>	Various stakeholders and the general public	
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materials disseminated through platforms/media channel				
<b>Activities:</b>				<b>Assumptions and risks</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Designing communication materials/platform for the project</li> <li>2. Disseminating collected information and project experiences</li> </ol>				

## Annex 2: Risk Analysis and Preventive Mitigation

Description of the risk	Likelihood: Critical, Occasional, Seldom	Impact: Critical, Marginal, Negligible	Preventive Mitigation Measure				
			Task	Deliverable	When / Frequency	Risk Owner	Status of the task: not yet implemented, ongoing, implemented
1. Local pandemic situation could affect some Centres in fulfilling the conditions of partnership, in terms of their commitment and prioritization in case pandemic situation persists in some countries	Critical	Critical	Closely monitor the development of partner work-plans to ensure that partners are fully aware of the activities and corresponding risks, and are able to provide an alternative.	Work-plan Project implementation progress report	As needed	UNEVOC project coordinator/s	Not yet implemented
2. Options for digital delivery and implementation of training programmes need to be considered in different technological scenarios.	Critical	Critical	Evaluate partners' capacity and digital readiness to employ an alternative mode of implementation in case pandemic situation persists at the time of project implementation	Work-plan and report of training, meeting reports	As per work plan	Project managers	Not yet implemented
3. The complexity of UNESCO's administrative requirements for IPAs could sometimes overwhelm partners and affect their willingness to engage which can	Occasional	Marginal	Support UNEVOC Centres proactively to complete administrative processes ahead of time			UNEVOC project coordinator/s	Not yet implemented

delay starting dates of activities							
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