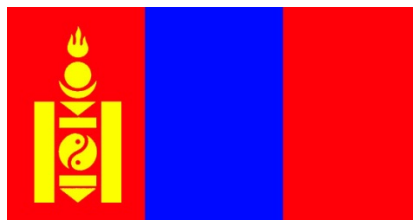


Country Paper

MONGOLIA



**REORIENTING TVET POLICY TOWARDS EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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Introduction

Mongolia situated in the centre of Asian continent and occupying 1564116 sq.kms territory and is characterised by a rich geographical pattern ranging from vast plains to high mountains, from valleys and meadows to steppes and semideserts. Mongolia is a landlocked, continental country and climate in this zone is dry – the annual precipitation is 100-125mm. Temperatures in summer reach +40 centigrade and in winter drop to -40 centigrade. In spring and autumn there are frequent dust storms.



Nationality: *Noun and adjective*--Mongolian(s).

Population: (2009est.): 2.8 million.

Annual growth rate: (2007): 1.5%.

Health: (2007): *Infant mortality rate*--41/1000(under one year). *Life expectancy*--67 yrs.

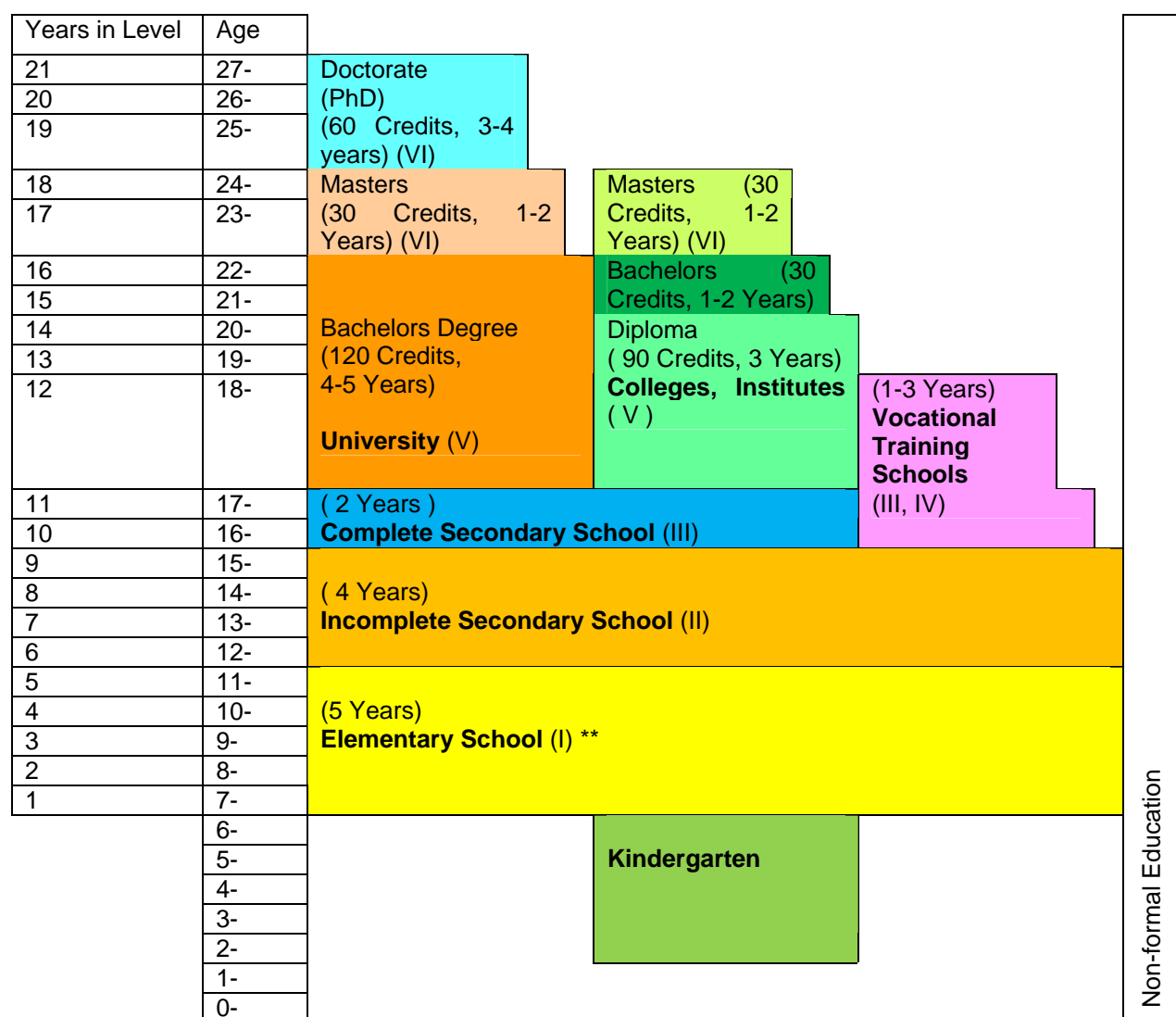
Language: Mongolian.

Religions: Tibetan Buddhist Lamaism 90%, Muslim 6% (primarily in the southwest), Christian 4%, and Shamanism.

Education: *Years compulsory*--9 (provided free by the government). *Literacy*--more than 90%.

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF MONGOLIA

Figure 1.



Technical and Vocational Education System

Before 1990s, Mongolia had centrally planned economical system and was more politically and economically dependent from former Soviet Union. In 1930s to 1950s, as new economic sectors were created with support of the Soviet Union, there had started to prepare vocational workers through short courses and factory supported schools.

In Mongolia, as in any country, the core factor for the economic development and its citizens' well-being is highly educated, skilled labor force and productive employment.

Not very long ago technical skills were accorded with a low status and little recognition. Academic education was (and is still) seen as prestigious and a more advantageous in taking up lucrative jobs. However, in recent years, a desire has surfaced to actively recognize anew role of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector from the perspective of promoting poverty reduction and human security, as given in the Millennium Development Goals, as well as with an eye on to achieve national development through technical innovations spurred by the advance of globalization.

Today in Mongolia, there is a need to pay special attention in training, especially, the youth in the technical and vocational field consistent to the labor market demand. This necessitates a holistic and integrated approach to education and human Resource Development (HRD), the aim of which to quote Jacques Delors¹ is ‘the complete fulfillment of the individual in all the richness of the human personality, the complexity of the human powers of expression and commitments – as individual, as member of a family, community, as citizen, producer, inventor of techniques and creative dreamer’.

Key Features of the TVET System

The shift to an open market economy which occurred in our country in late 80s and early 90s almost dissolved the vocationally trained workforce in state enterprises and industry sectors. This has had a negative impact on a number of vocations and professions. The number of students in the TVET sector has significantly declined from 60 percent to 30 percent of the student population. After this long period of decline TVET in Mongolia is in the threshold of revitalization.

There is no doubt that the training of the professional workforce is the Government’s high priority. Although the number of students enrolled in TVET institutions gradually increase year by year, there is still a great demand in national professional workforce. As of 2007-2008 academic years there were 60 TVET institutions with total 37067² students which hardly make 5 per cent of Mongolia’s workforce.

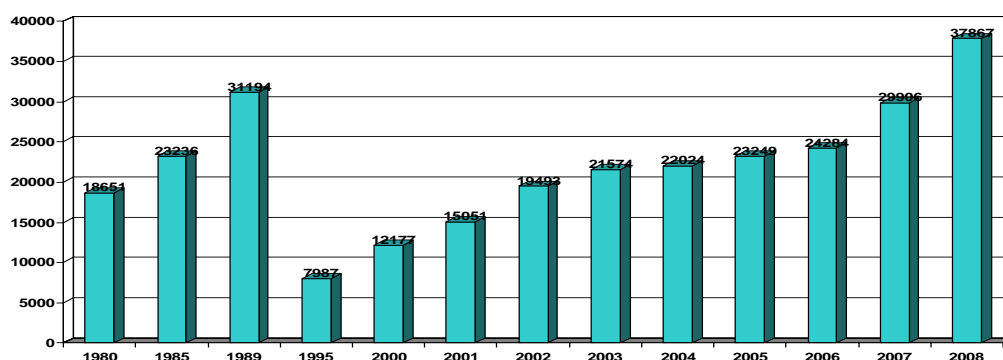
Figure 2.

¹ Jacques Delors. UNESCO 1996 Report, *Learning: the treasure within*.

² 2007-2008 Statistics Data. Ministry of Education, Culture and Science web-site: <http://mecs.pmis.gov.mn>

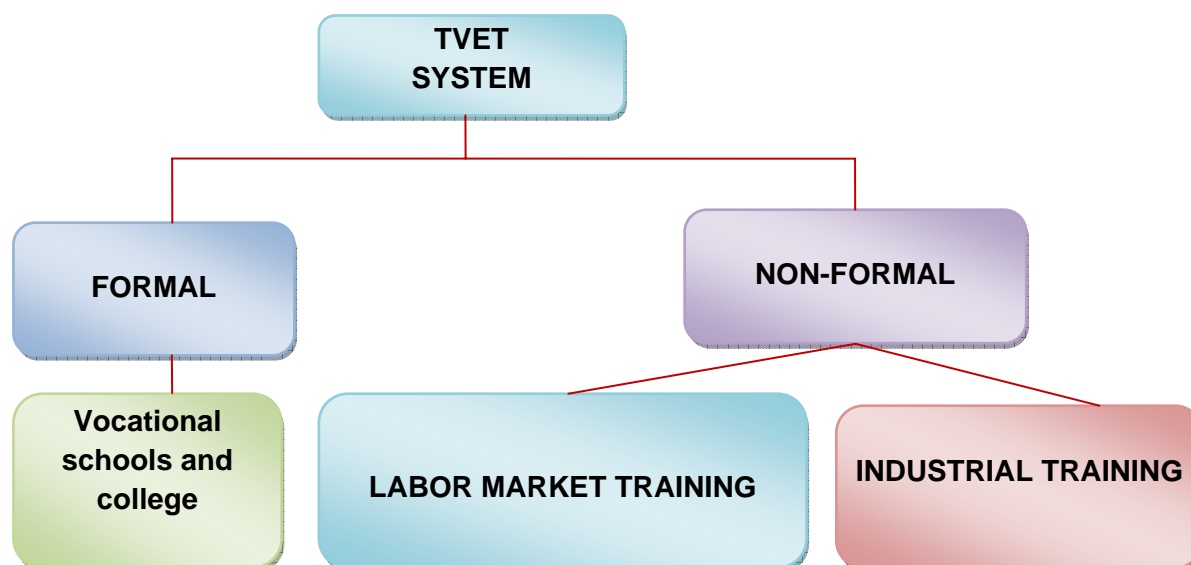


NUMBER OF STUDENTS



With the decentralized setup of TVET schools, the need to strengthen the role of School Management Boards is crucial to provide strategic direction and guidance to the school administration in the context of the national priorities and regional needs.

Figure 3 TVET System of Mongolia



About 358 Vocational Training Centers were registered with the MSWL which offer short-term courses to cater to the needs of the unemployed and poor. The Vocational Training Centers are managed by Directors or managers with varying professional back-grounds and levels of education. A total of 25-employment training centers (18

VTPCs and 7-employment offices) have been established in towns and provinces. They are responsible in conducting employment training. The Skills Training Voucher Program (STVP) has been introduced to the private sector in training provision.

TVET for Sustainable Development

The UN decade for Education for Sustainable Development was launched in 2005. That brought education to the top of the international agenda. It also meant that many countries have started national processes that will lead to improved education reaching out to all and focusing on key issues for the generations.

The United Nations declared the period 2005-2015 as 'Decade for Education for Sustainable development'. Regarding the concept of sustainable development in each country arising from the ideas and principles of the aforementioned issues disseminated over the world, the goals for education of sustainable development for all were raised.

The countries have realized the goals by means of reflecting an appropriate content towards equipping people with the education of sustainable development, environment and ecology into the formal and non-formal education curriculum.

Encouraging the TVET sector to take on a broader role would promote the recognition of sustainability as a vital issue – where economic, social and environmental objectives are negotiated as inextricably linked and equally important.

On international, national and local levels, there is a strong emphasis on the need to embrace sustainability as both a concept and a practical process to be implemented. Our future and well-being – environmentally, culturally, spiritually, politically and economically – are likely to depend on our ability to adapt traditional attitudes and behaviors to include a more wide-ranging vision. The TVET sector can play a significant role in promoting such a future, but may be hampered by the current almost exclusive focus on production and industry, at the expense of economic, environmental and social issue, which should be recognized as equally important.

ESD in Mongolia

Mongolia is well ahead on the way to create education processes supporting sustainable development. To date, one of the key issues in exploring the relevance of sustainability education for vocational education and training is that much of the literature and policy-making is based upon the view of this sector as a supplier of skilled labor to industry. This purely economic perspective makes it difficult for the sector to respond effectively to emerging social and environmental priorities.

Having reflected an appropriate content towards equipping learners with the education of sustainable development, environment and ecology into TVET standards, syllables

and national curricula in line with 'Concept of sustainable development of Mongolia', we set forth objections to improve the human capacity in this area. In carrying out these goals, governmental, non-governmental as well as public organizations have had contribution with different features.

In 2002, WWF Mongolia formulated a project that focuses on environmental education. The ultimate goal of the project is to support sustainable use of natural resources in Mongolia.

The focus of the project has been on the wider concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) where environment is included along with social and economic perspectives.

The foundation for the project is the national network of teams created in all aimags (provinces) in Mongolia. Those teams function as clusters of expertise and experience in how to apply educational approaches that favor sustainable development and increase environmental awareness.

The teams consist of people working with different school subjects and representatives from the formal as well as from the non-formal school system. Around 132 teachers, covering all aimags, have been engaged in developing national standards.

The overall result of the programme has been very good and the Mongolian Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and other stakeholders have expressed a lot of interest. The wide national acceptance of the approaches developed indicate that the impact of this short term project can have a sustainable impact.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) provide financial assistance and Swedish company Ramboll Nature AB was given the contract to contribute international expertise to facilitate the process of developing human and institutional capacities and education methods and material in Mongolia.

The TVET sector needs to look at its modes of teaching and learning and discover which have the potential to incorporate practices which will develop sustainability knowledge, skills and values. The good news is that TVET practitioners are already engaged in pedagogical practice of this type – through action learning, problem solving and work-based group learning.

Barriers to Sustainability In TVET

Educators work with restrictive, traditional modes of delivery and training package development and thus can find it difficult to incorporate change and development in areas such as industry and new green technologies, as well as promote a recognition of the need for this change in order to sustain the environment. Taking these restrictions

into account, major barriers to the establishment of a culture of sustainability in vocational education and training appear to be;

- the lack of a shared national vision;
- the lack of adequate resources and trained personnel at all level in the VET sector;
- the existing traditional VET culture, pedagogy and training packages.

Given the rise in environmental consciousness and the push for TVET to embrace sustainability, providers face a significant challenge in shifting their focus from technical competency to incorporating the more generic cognitive and behavioural skills required by the workplace of the future.

Conclusions and Proposed Actions

Sustainability ethos and practice is now embodied in global and national and represents a paradigm shift in human thinking and behaviour. However, the ramifications of this change are yet to be recognised within the TVET sector.

A list of actions which will encourage the adoption of education for sustainability in TVET.

Develop a national approach and vision to implementing education for sustainability in TVET.

The development of a coherent and integrated national vision, supported by appropriate legislation, should therefore be of the utmost priority.

Encourage a culture of sustainability in TVET

Analyze TVET policy and culture to assess how to facilitate the transition towards a sustainability culture and how to identify any barriers. Training programs that may be necessary to promote this change of culture should be identified and implemented.

Determine an appropriate TVET pedagogy which will promote sustainable development

The true role of TVET as a creator of, or reactor to, change can be determined. The necessary change in pedagogy can then be implemented.

Embed sustainability principles in TVET policy, practice and training packages

The sector needs to redirect its current primary focus on the economic and social aspects of TVET-with its very narrow view of sustainability-to one which demonstrates a vision which is both long term and aware of the needs of future generations. TVET sector should develop core cross-industry training packages cooperatively with industry in various key sectors, such as the environment, sustainable landscapes, agriculture, energy, building and economics.

Identify areas in particular need of sustainability training

TVET sector needs to identify and industries and areas of need professional sustainability training such as mining.

Encourage and facilitate the adoption of sustainability across the entire education sector.

TVET providers and industry work together to establish sustainability standards and codes of practice. Furthermore the broad range of skills required for industry and generic skill training, pathways for articulation of sustainability course between universities and the TVET sector should be clearly defined.

Establish education for sustainability implementation and delivery group within TVET

There is a need to establish implementation and delivery groups at national and state and territory levels to oversee and facilitate the transition of the VET sector to sustainability ethos and practice.