

4 Principles and concepts of vocational training

4.1 Principles

4.1.1 Target group orientation

A target group orientation means in essence that vocational training measures are geared to the specific needs and the sociocultural and economic context of those whom they aim to benefit. Factors that need to be taken into account are gender and age, level of education, and recognition or marginalisation of the target group in society. Specific contexts such as violence, displacement and migration must also be considered. In general it should be noted that there is a significant difference between vocational education for target groups that (will) earn their living in the informal sector and formal vocational training programmes for the formal labour market. For example, in the context of the informal sector preparation for self-employment is crucial.

Reaching particularly disadvantaged target groups: the Rescue Dada Centre in Nairobi, Kenya

The number of street children worldwide continues to rise. In Nairobi, Kenya, alone, there are thought to be around 60,000 girls and boys living on the streets. The factors that drive children onto the street include the death of parents, violence, abuse or simply the lack of prospects in the countryside. The Rescue Dada Centre was founded in the early 1990s to care for girls from extremely poor families in the Mathare Valley slums who are living on the street or at risk of abuse.

Its target group is girls and young women, who are reintegrated in a multi-stage process. The first stage involves the centre's social workers. Trained outreach workers and social workers care for neglected or at-risk girls referred to them by the police or organisations with which they have links. Often, too, they come across the girls on their regular patrols of the streets of Nairobi and the slums of Mathare Valley. If the girls are willing to cooperate, they are admitted if necessary to the Rescue Dada Centre's rehabilitation programme – with the approval of the juvenile court judge or a woman judge. The programme covers all aspects of the girls' physical and mental wellbeing, including a comprehensive medical examination and health care, attention to social and psychological needs, educational assessment tests and regular lessons. Accommodation for the girls and young women is also provided: they are welcomed warmly by experienced house mothers and introduced to the community's house rules. The house mothers are also responsible for teaching the girls domestic skills such as cooking, washing, cleaning and general hygiene. Young women between the ages of 15 and 25 are offered a formal programme of initial vocational training.

In contrast to state vocational training institutions, many of MISEREOR's partner organisations specialise in activities geared to particularly poor target groups. For example, they reach target groups in rural areas and urban poverty areas for whom there are often no other programmes available.¹ A number of partner organisations stress that they primarily 'support [the target

¹ SUM Consult GmbH (2016): op. cit., p. 59

groups'] decision-making pathways and do not simply listen submissively to the priorities of the economy.'²

A restricting factor that must be noted, however, is that some non-state and/or church-based vocational training institutions are expected to be self-funding and therefore charge school fees which exclude poorer target groups. Similarly, formal, multi-year vocational training programmes may not reach poorer population groups unless accompanying bursary schemes are in place. The contents of formal vocational training programmes and their access conditions are usually largely prescribed by state accreditation bodies or ministries of education. This restricts adaptation to the specific needs of target groups. One option is to offer courses that prepare students for formal programmes.

Non-formal vocational training measures can be more flexible than formal ones. For example, they can include elements of basic education if this is necessary and there is demand for them. Individual measures can also be organised flexibly: for example, teaching times can be adjusted to fit in with agricultural cycles or commercial activities.

The target group orientation should be reflected in the following conceptual aspects:

- The target group is clearly defined.
- The project application describes the measures that will be used to reach the target group and the extent to which the target group will be involved (e.g. in planning).
- Especially in the case of fee-charging initial vocational training courses, the steps that will be taken to include disadvantaged groups are described. In the case of bursary funds, the selection and support criteria are clearly described.
- The organisation and design of the education and training measures – for example, the choice of teaching times and venues – is appropriate to the target group.
- The curricula take account of the specific situation of the target groups and their socio-economic setting. Aspects such as low levels of education are taken into account, as is the situation in the context-specific labour market (e.g. the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by target groups in the informal sector).
- The teaching and learning methods used include elements that are geared to the personal development of the target groups (e.g. life skills training).
- The training provider demonstrates an affinity with the target group – i.e. the training institution and the teaching staff are able to identify with the concerns of the target group and are familiar with the particular context.

4.1.2 Labour market orientation

A labour market orientation is a key factor in the success of vocational training. It means that the type and content of initial vocational training courses are regularly adjusted to match demand. The evaluation of the funding area mentions the following criteria:³

- range of initial vocational training courses geared to the labour market
- curriculum relevant to the labour market
- good ongoing contact with the labour market.

² SUM Consult GmbH (2016), op. cit., p. 31

³ SUM Consult GmbH (2016): op. cit., p. 52

Labour market conditions can vary widely depending on the partner country and the regional context. In many partner countries with low levels of industrialisation, the majority of income and employment opportunities are still in the small and micro business sector and the smallholder economy. In the newly industrialising countries, by contrast, there is also growing potential for work in modern sectors of the economy that require higher levels of training. The rapid spread of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) will continue to alter labour markets and vocational training requirements. Activities in the ICT sector will therefore become increasingly important in MISEREOR's partner countries.

As part of a labour market orientation, vocational training institutions must keep pace with the development of technology in their context. For example, it is becoming increasingly important for training in an area such as automotive mechanics to include the principles of automotive mechatronics and other modern technologies.

If vocational training institutions are to gear their programmes to labour market demand, they must collect market information regularly. However, labour market information is not normally readily available but must be gathered by the training institutions themselves. Important sources of such information are local businesses and the recently qualified trainees from vocational training programmes.

Pragmatic ways of obtaining labour market information: examples from the field

Regular dialogue with selected businesses in the catchment area of the vocational training institution provides a good opportunity for obtaining labour market information. Twice a year the **vocational training programme** run by the **Marists** in the southern **Philippines** holds meetings with representatives of local small businesses at which the demand for workers is discussed. The **Mobile Technical Training Programme** operated by **Caritas** in **Bangladesh** holds talks with representatives of municipal administrations, youth organisations and local businesses before an initial vocational training programme is planned.

Former participants in vocational training programmes are another key source of information on labour market needs. Tracer studies yield information on the employment status of recently qualified initial vocational trainees and thus provide a preliminary indication of the demand for trained workers in the economy. However, this information is only useful if it is both representative and sufficiently nuanced.

A second method involves focus group discussions with graduates of training courses. These are easy to conduct as part of course follow-up. They yield qualitative information on the target groups' experience of integration into the labour market. Systematic documentation of the findings is necessary to enable them to be used in the planning and management of vocational training measures.

4.1.3 Imbalances between social and economic demand

In practice many vocational training institutions, especially those that are self-funding, gear their initial vocational training programmes primarily to the social demand of the (paying) target groups. Not infrequently, though, there is a significant gap between the social demand for initial vocational training and actual employment opportunities in the occupation for which students have trained. In popular occupations social demand often exceeds actual employment opportunities, while in other areas the needs of the economy cannot be met.

Social demand is generally influenced largely by the social status of an occupation in the particular cultural context, while income and employment prospects are only secondary. For example, simple occupations in the skilled crafts and trades ('blue collar jobs') no longer appeal to a growing number of young people. This is due to the target groups' rising level of education, the associated expectations of socially valued employment and the orientation of education systems towards university entrance. The image of vocational training also suffers as a result of the precarious employment situation in the informal economy. In consequence, many young people see employment in micro businesses with poor working conditions as less and less 'desirable'. Key factors in this, in addition to the working conditions and limited income prospects, are the rigid social hierarchies (the relationship between the master tradesman and apprentices) that in their traditional form are becoming increasingly less acceptable to young people.

Solutions that can contribute to a balanced orientation of vocational training programmes towards social and economic demand include:

- career counselling, which should be provided at the secondary education stage
- career guidance that specifically targets the transition from training to employment (see Section 5.2)
- market analyses must be used to inform trainees of the employment opportunities and earnings potential that founders of businesses in the informal sector can expect, so that they can make sound career decisions.

4.1.4 Promoting girls and women

While a number of vocational training programmes are explicitly directed at female target groups, project experience shows that girls and women are frequently underrepresented and that the majority of partners promote gender-stereotyped initial vocational training courses and employment.⁴ A fundamental challenge in this context is the gender segregation of labour markets, often for cultural and religious reasons. For example, it is virtually impossible (or considered undesirable) for women in many communities to work in occupations that are regarded as a male preserve. Another factor is which gender predominates in the work setting. In addition, many women are interested in jobs that enable them to combine child rearing and housekeeping with earning an income. As a result, gender roles and stereotypes are reflected both in social demand and in the initial vocational training courses on offer. Furthermore, experience from the projects shows that girls and young women have significantly less choice when it comes to courses: the focus on the limited range of courses available (such as sewing and tailoring, home economics, computer use, bookkeeping) not infrequently results in oversupply on the labour market and thus restricts women's employment and earning opportunities.

Possible ways of promoting girls and women in vocational training include:

- thorough analysis of labour market potentials and labour market niches from a gender perspective
- promoting women's vocational training in modern occupations that are (not yet) traditionally dominated by men (e.g. information and communication technologies)
- encouraging the appointment and training of female trainers, including in male-dominated occupations (where this is socially acceptable)

⁴ SUM Consult GmbH (2016): op. cit., p. 25

- enhancing the social skills and in particular the entrepreneurial skills of young women as a component of vocational training
- supporting integrated approaches to vocational training and the promotion of employment, specifically for young women
- possibly providing child care
- promoting networking, e.g. with female entrepreneurs (role models, networks, mentoring/sponsorship).

4.1.5 Recognition of qualifications, accreditation of vocational training institutions

Given the growing level of education of young people in the partner countries and new employment opportunities in the formal economy, especially in newly industrialising countries, the recognition of qualifications is becoming increasingly important. Social demand also depends in part on the qualifications available. However, a growing focus on formal vocational training can result in the exclusion of groups with low-level educational qualifications or none at all. Moreover, formal vocational training is more expensive, especially if requirements relating to the accreditation of vocational training institutions by the state are involved. In the case of higher-level accreditations (for example at technician level), aspects such as technical facilities and the trainers' formal qualifications are often governed by strict requirements that many state and church-based partners are unable to meet. In addition, the curricula for higher-level qualifications are often overly theory-based, with insufficient practical relevance. An alternative is to enable students who have completed non-accredited, non-formal courses to access external, state-run, competence-based assessment procedures, where these exist and official certification of skills is relevant.

4.2 Approaches

4.2.1 Career guidance

Career guidance aims to provide young people with guidance and decision-making assistance in connection with the all-important transition from school to a career and the world of work. It is 'a two-sided process: on one side there are young people who are finding their own direction and working out their own interests, skills and goals. On the other side there are the requirements of the world of work towards which young people are guided. Both sides repeatedly need to be checked and realigned. Career guidance schemes help young people master this process.'⁵ A lack of (vocational) guidance not only results in the above-mentioned discrepancy between demand and supply on the labour market – which affects both developing and industrialised nations – but also leads to 'reluctant career choices' by young people, who may drop out of training or look for work in areas outside those in which they have trained.

The appropriate time for career guidance is before an initial vocational training course or career is chosen; it is thus not necessarily a component of vocational training but can also form part of education and youth work. Only a few projects in the vocational training sector include career guidance measures. Most of those that do are projects that are aimed at vulnerable target groups and offer a range of measures that prepare participants for work, including career guidance. This

⁵ Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB); <https://www.bibb.de/de/680.php> (accessed on 12 September 2016).

means that they do not focus on the acquisition of vocational skills. Some church-based training providers, such as the Salesians of Don Bosco in southern India, run career guidance days in secondary schools, partly to provide guidance and partly to advertise their initial vocational training programmes. In general, insufficient attention is paid to this area of activity at the interface between education and vocational training. The biggest obstacles are the poor image of vocational training in society (including among church-based decision-making bodies) and the academic focus of the education systems within which the programmes offered by churches are accommodated.

Ways of integrating career guidance into education and vocational training include:

- addressing career guidance in education programmes (interface with the education sector)
- supporting career guidance measures, such as vocational preparation courses or career guidance seminars in schools
- supporting enhancement of the image of vocational training through PR measures organised by vocational training providers
- funding career advisors in vocational schools and programmes. These people have multiple functions: they advise those applying for initial vocational training, coordinate work placement activities and advise newly qualified trainees on the transition to the labour market.

4.2.2 Approaches for vulnerable target groups

The term 'vulnerable target groups' is used here to refer to groups of individuals that are at particular risk as a result of their social context and situation – for example, young people living on the streets. Vulnerability is defined in very different ways in different socioeconomic contexts. Examples of vulnerable groups include particularly marginalised groups such as Pygmy communities in Central America and Dalits in southern Asia. Both these groups experience severe social marginalisation, including in the context of vocational training. They are likely to be discriminated against in the education and vocational training system, to have limited opportunities for earning a living as a result of low skill levels and to be systematically excluded from the labour market. Other vulnerable groups are:

- people with disabilities
- slum dwellers and street children
- prisoners
- ex-combatants, including former child soldiers
- religious and ethnic minorities.

Partner organisations also define young people who have been subjected to abuse and young people with addictions as vulnerable. Likewise classed as vulnerable are migrants who are unable to integrate socially and economically into their new settings.

In connection with programmes for vulnerable groups it is necessary to bear in mind that isolated vocational training measures are of limited effectiveness. Measures need to form part of an integrated approach and be combined with other social integration and inclusion measures.

Approaches can be roughly divided into:

- positive discrimination methods – for example, awarding grants specifically to promote the participation of vulnerable groups in standard vocational training measures
- vocational training measures specifically intended for a selected target group and tailored to their needs
- measures at political level that promote the inclusion of vulnerable groups in the vocational training system.

4.2.3 Holistic approaches to vocational training

Holistic approaches to vocational training have the following characteristics:

- They aim at overall development of young people’s skills in order to enhance employability by providing training in vocational *and* social skills (reliability, teamwork, stress management, non-violent handling of conflict). Surveys of entrepreneurs as part of the evaluation process emphasise the part that social skills play in employability.
- They promote young people’s personal development and enhance self-confidence, autonomy and feelings of self-worth.

A key element of this is life-skills training, which in addition to specific training in social skills also incorporates issues such as advice on health and nutrition and HIV/AIDS awareness; social-pedagogical support is also provided.

Holistic approaches are a hallmark of many of the partners in the vocational training sector funded by MISEREOR. For example, church-based vocational training institutions such as those run by the Salesians of Don Bosco, the Marianists or the De La Salle Brothers combine initial vocational training with recreational activities and social-pedagogical support for the young people. Central to the effectiveness of a holistic approach are the skills of the teachers, the use of modern participatory teaching methods and – as a special form of participation – peer education methods that involve young people themselves acting as multipliers.⁶

Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle de Gisenyi – Rwanda

Rootlessness and lack of prospects are ever-present in western Rwanda, where many refugees from the Eastern Congo have sought refuge. In the Rubavu district of Rwanda’s Western Province, the children and young people’s project ‘**Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle de Gisenyi**’ (VJNG) is working to address this holistically. Its programme covers literacy, schooling and initial vocational training, leisure activities, the inculcation of values, HIV/AIDS prevention and political education to encourage participation. Playing fields have been built and football and handball teams set up. Young people get involved in youth theatre and participate in dialogue events in order to discuss their role in Rwanda’s reconciliation process and come up with their own suggestions for resolving conflict. Through the project the children and young people experience community, advance their personal development and provide each other with mutual support.

4.2.4 Competence-based approaches to vocational training

In competence-based education and training (CBET), assessment focuses not on the acquisition of knowledge but on whether candidates have the skills needed to take up a particular occupation.

⁶ See MISEREOR, Africa and Middle East Department (2011): op. cit., p. 14

Competence-based approaches to vocational training originated in anglophone countries and over the past decade they have become highly valued in international vocational training work. They provide a number of opportunities to improve the relevance and quality of vocational training and gear it to the needs of the labour market:

- While conventional formal vocational training frequently focuses on the recall of knowledge, CBET – working with certified assessors from the private sector – prioritises the assessment of practical vocational competence. The design and implementation of the assessment procedures is a key quality characteristic.
- Improving the permeability of training and certification systems and recognising informally acquired skills – e.g. allowing individuals to be assessed for skilled craft or trade qualifications who have not attended a vocational school but have acquired their skills by informal means.

Alongside the above-mentioned opportunities, there are a number of risks associated with the introduction of CBET:

- Breaking down initial vocational training into small modules makes implementation of CBET more difficult; in particular, it increases the costs of assessment procedures.
- The approach is not especially compatible with a holistic training strategy that involves the acquisition of vocational, social and entrepreneurial skills.

Competence-based approaches can be incorporated into existing programmes as follows:

- The quality of vocational training frequently suffers from the absence of competence standards relating directly to the labour market. Quality can be significantly improved by introducing such standards. However, standards must be drawn up and harmonised in collaboration with the private sector (e.g. local chambers of skilled crafts and trades). Simple assessment procedures, preferably involving external assessors from the craft or trade in question, ensure that the competence standards are achieved.
- Non-formal vocational training measures can also benefit from the introduction of competence standards. This requires the preparation of simple framework curricula and the introduction of easily applied methods of monitoring learning outcomes.
- Links between non-formal and formal vocational training can be created by introducing 'bridging courses' that prepare trainees for state assessment procedures. However, such measures are only of relevance to MISEREOR's partners if they demonstrably improve the target groups' labour market prospects.

4.2.5 Traditional apprenticeships

In Africa and parts of Asia, traditional apprenticeships in micro and small businesses in the informal economy are still a widespread form of initial vocational training that fulfils an important social function and in some cases is deeply rooted in tradition. The characteristics of traditional apprenticeships are as follows:

- Training is often based on a verbal agreement between the instructor – who is usually the owner of the business – and the trainee and/or his/her parents.
- Training takes the form of informal learning that is incorporated into the work process; it covers all aspects of an occupation as traditionally practised.

- The length of training is flexible and depends on the learning outcomes.
- The costs of training are split: supervisors invest their working time in the initial vocational training process, while trainees work for little or no money, sometimes paying training fees as well.

The strengths and weaknesses of traditional apprenticeships:⁷

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulated system, embedded in social systems • Few barriers to access in terms of education level and social status, good access for poor groups among the population including those with low levels of education • Well geared to practical requirements and labour market conditions, because initial vocational training takes place in the workplace and is integrated into the work process • Trainees acquire entrepreneurial skills through practical action • Cost-effective, functions without state subsidies • Supply and demand largely in balance, because governed by the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the absence of rules (e.g. from craft or trade guilds): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – risk of exploitation of trainees by the owner of the business; risk of child labour – instructors pass on only parts of their knowledge – length of initial vocational training unregulated and sometimes very long • Insufficient access to innovation and new technologies leads to stagnation • Cements gender stereotypes in the world of work • Insufficient recognition of initial vocational qualification (only in the immediate local setting) • May exacerbate social marginalisation (e.g. of particular ethnic groups), particularly if segments of the informal economy are dominated by individual groups

Only a few vocational training partners supported by MISEREOR cooperate with traditional apprenticeship schemes, which are usually regarded as outdated or as competition. However, opportunities arise in connection with:

- measures for integrating disadvantaged groups into traditional apprenticeship schemes
- cooperative models of vocational training: the practical initial vocational training takes place in skilled craft or trade businesses (see next section).

A further but significantly more complex step would involve introducing dual elements into traditional apprenticeship training, for example by providing complementary training in vocational schools for apprentices from micro businesses. However, such models – which are sometimes piloted by state development cooperation – go beyond the promotion of small businesses and can only fall on fertile soil if local businesses are willing to engage with it, skilled crafts and

⁷ See International Labour Organization, ILO (2015): Youth Employment Inventory; http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_459556/lang--en/index.htm (accessed on 10 August 2016). (2012): Upgrading informal apprenticeship, a resource guide for Africa. Geneva, p. 16–18.

trades are organised into sector associations and vocational schools are prepared to collaborate closely with the crafts and trades.

4.2.6 Approaches involving cooperation with the private sector

Cooperation between vocational training institutions sponsored by MISEREOR and the private sector (i.e. with local trade and service businesses and, where it exists, with the formal economy) addresses a number of issues:

- it helps gear initial vocational training to the labour market,
- promotes the organisation of practical placements and facilitates entry into work after the completion of training (see the section ‘Approaches to promoting employment in the context of vocational training’),
- creates the conditions for dual forms of initial vocational training with two defined learning venues (basic training at the training centre and practical units in a business),
- enables initial vocational training institutions to be sponsored by the private sector.

Different forms of cooperation are appropriate in different contexts (urban or rural, informal or formal economy). In practice the extent of collaboration also varies widely, ranging from the isolated organisation of practical placements to fully cooperative forms of training. As a general rule, the less an initial vocational training institution collaborates with the local economy, the greater the risk that what is taught will not meet the requirements of the labour market.

Gearing the course programme to the market: examples from the field

Before **Samvada in India** launches a new course, a feasibility study is performed. This involves asking key stakeholders operating in the field of the new course for their opinion. These stakeholders may be businesses or individuals currently working in the area in question. This process not only identifies work-related requirements but also enables Samvada to make contact with possible employers and assess the potential for students to find work upon completion of their course. The study also explores the existing range of courses in the particular area and what need there is for additional courses. This feasibility study then serves as a basis for drawing up the curriculum for the new course. Samvada involves experts in the field, state stakeholders and businesses in this process. The first year-group to take a course is evaluated in detail as a pilot group and if necessary the curriculum is then adjusted. In addition, Samvada networks with employers. This helps it obtain feedback on the performance of the course graduates who find work. These networks are not a one-way street: Samvada uses them to encourage employers to be open to working with people from disadvantaged population groups (such as members of lower castes, women, Muslims) and to consider employing them.

Casa de Passagem in Brazil has also built up a network of partnerships and cooperation schemes with local employers. The network can highlight labour market needs and it also supports young people who have completed their training in the search for work. The content of the initial vocational training courses offered by Casa de Passagem is adjusted on the basis of intermittent market analyses as well as being defined in part by the young people’s priorities.

Work placements are a component of many initial vocational training programmes: in some countries (such as Viet Nam) they are now a mandatory component of formal vocational training. However, there are wide variations in quality. Institutions that are in continuous contact with businesses are in a significantly better position to find and monitor suitable work placements than those whose contact is only sporadic.

Regular and systematic cooperation between training institutions and businesses is necessary as a foundation if cooperative initial vocational training models are to be effective.

In practice the type and extent of cooperation varies. Cooperation tends to involve small trade and service businesses rather than businesses in the formal economy. Some projects sponsored by MISEREOR transfer all the practical elements of initial vocational training to selected skilled craft or trade businesses.

Cooperative initial vocational training in craft businesses:

The example of Côte d'Ivoire:

In the north of the capital **Abidjan**, which has a population of around 4.7 million, lies Abobo, the city's second-largest neighbourhood. Abobo consists mainly of slums. Around 50 per cent of young people aged between 12 and 20 have no school-leaving qualification. Many of them can only find work as untrained sellers or domestic workers. Young women are frequently drawn into prostitution, while young men are politically abused by violent and power-hungry groups. Cocomy, in the centre of the city, is the embassy quarter and one of the more upmarket neighbourhoods. But here, too, there is hidden poverty, because many domestic workers have settled here. On account of their low earnings it is difficult for them to fund their children's schooling and initial vocational training. In 1985, in an attempt to break the cycle of poverty and violence, the Jesuit Centre de Recherche et d'Action pour la Paix (CERAP) set up **Action Sociale en Milieu Urbain (ASMU)**, which since 1992 has been providing vocational training in both Abobo and Cocomy. ASMU is also involved in health policy and its campaigns for land rights.

ASMU serves a model for vocational training in Côte d'Ivoire, especially with regard to holistic, cooperative initial vocational training. After a three-month vocational guidance stage, young people are placed in training workshops and given appropriate support. Alongside the workplace-based initial vocational training ASMU offers additional courses in functional literacy, soft skills, life skills, setting up a business and business management. It also provides training to trade associations, citizens' groups and church organisations. For example, trade organisations are provided with information on issues such as bank services, savings schemes, simple bookkeeping for micro entrepreneurs, the production of business plans for people starting up a business, and management. There is support and coaching for trade associations and non-governmental organisations as well as for apprentices. Support to apprentices is provided both in the trade workshop and in the family setting.

The example of the Philippines:

The **Marist Technical Training Programme (MTTP)** is a cooperative initial vocational training programme in the Mindanao region of the southern Philippines. The training provider selects the trainees in collaboration with state youth employment agencies; priority is given to young people who have dropped out of school, have no formal school-leaving qualification and therefore cannot access the formal vocational training system. MTTP organises introductory courses ('How should I behave on the job?') and supplementary seminars. All the practical training takes place in the workplace in small businesses. Businesses receive no financial remuneration for this but instead can access the project's support services, which include help with accessing loans and arranging further training courses for master tradespeople. The project also encourages the small businesses to engage in social responsibility activities.

In newly industrialising countries, cooperation with the formal economy is becoming increasingly important. Businesses are interested in recruiting qualified young workers but often have difficulty finding the right young people on the local labour market. Collaborating with training institutions enables them to select suitable workers (e.g. by providing work placements). In some

cases businesses may award bursaries or support partner institutions in material ways as part of their corporate social responsibility.

These collaborative schemes have potential but are also not without risk. When selecting businesses, it is particularly important to pay attention to their social standards. Evaluation sometimes reveals cases in which trainees have had to perform activities that could be harmful to their health, or accidents have occurred at work that the project partner was unaware of. Frequently, too, trainees may be asked to do irrelevant or menial work. These examples emphasise the importance of systematic monitoring of work placements and of the jobs that are obtained on completion of initial vocational training.

4.2.7 Approaches to promoting employment in the context of vocational training

The primary aim of vocational training is to develop or improve employability. However, trainees who want to enter employment and earn an income often encounter obstacles that can be influenced only indirectly by vocational training. These obstacles include the geographical distance between target groups and potential labour markets (for example for newly qualified trainees from rural initial vocational training centres), social and cultural marginalisation in the (labour) market, and young people's difficulty in accessing start-up capital and markets in order to become successful entrepreneurs. Promotion of youth employment tackles these obstacles and seeks to remove them specifically. It is a separate area of activity but one that is closely linked to vocational training.

An employment promotion tool that is frequently used by vocational training institutions and programmes is a job placement service for newly qualified trainees. For example, some MISERE-OR partners have established contacts with the private sector (see the section on 'Approaches involving cooperation with the private sector') and are now building on these links. Job offers are frequently made following work placements.

In the context of the informal economy and vocational training in rural areas, paid work performed for an employer can be hard to come by. Promoting self-employment is often the most effective means of getting people into work. Good practices on the part of vocational training institutions include:

- Running business incubation programmes for ex-trainees to enable them to develop their own businesses.
- Supporting the transition to self-employment through counselling and mentoring.
- Putting newly qualified trainees in touch with microfinance institutions and providing them with advice services in this connection ('credit education').
- Providing grants for the purpose of setting up a business.

In many cases 'self-employment' means a one-person micro-business.⁸ However, good initial vocational training is often not sufficient to enable (young) people to set up a business successfully on their own. They also need business skills, access to loans, social security, etc. If self-employment is to be promoted sustainably, projects must foster an appropriate setting.⁹ A single

⁸ SUM Consult GmbH (2016), op. cit., p. 50

⁹ SUM Consult GmbH (2016), op. cit., p. 66

organisation cannot cover everything, so good networking and referral to other services are important.

Helping newly qualified trainees to become self-employed

In **India**, jobs in rural areas are in short supply. On completion of training, many young people therefore turn to self-employment. Some partner organisations make use of the people's strong community structures – especially savings groups – to support them in this. These savings groups typically consist of between ten and 20 people, often all women. By saving collectively and building up some basic capital, group members enable themselves to take out microloans in order to buy items such as sewing machines. The two partner organisations **CMSSS (Chikmagalur Multipurpose Social Service Society, Hassan)** and **CSS (Chotanagpur Sanskritik Sangh, Ranchi)** are members of the Indian Functional Vocational Training and Research Society (**FVTRS**); together with **Myrada** and **Jan Sewa** they support such savings groups and put their graduates in touch with them. A requirement at Myrada is that even before initial vocational training commences, a savings group undertakes to make a loan to trainees who are planning to become self-employed. In addition, CSS has helped three production groups to organise themselves. Between ten and 15 women work together in each production group. The money made from selling their products is divided between them in accordance with the work done by each. One of the production groups has even rented a sales room where its various products are displayed. CSS also organises quarterly alumni meetings which support the new entrepreneurs in discussing their experiences.

Access to start-up capital is usually a major challenge for young people setting up a business (see Section 6.3). In promoting income-creating measures and micro and small businesses, vocational training is frequently a supplementary measure but it is not at the heart of the approach.

4.2.8 Community-based approaches to vocational training

Is family and social cohesion in rural areas or some urban neighbourhoods declining under the pressure of poverty and population growth? This question has already been asked in the 'Youth' guidance framework of the Africa and Middle East Department. Especially in slums, and especially when offered to young people individually, vocational training results in the trained person only being able to find work outside his or her familiar environment or even having to move away entirely. This leads MISEREOR partners to ask themselves whether individual sponsored students could 'give back' the support – the 'education subsidy' – that they have received. In the past, donations or ex-post fees have failed as an instrument. Linking initial vocational training to contributions to the community by apprentices or alumni has been considered but not yet implemented. However, such an approach could result in students and alumni of the vocational training institutions supporting marginalised neighbourhoods rather than moving away from them. The sample project described here involves a community-based youth support programme with elements of vocational training.

San Salvador: Supporting young people in the areas of human rights, social skills and careers

Lack of economic prospects and the disintegration of family structures on account of migration have resulted in the almost complete breakdown of social cohesion in El Salvador. People live

their lives in a persistent climate of fear and uncertainty: crime has risen sharply in recent years and gangs of predominantly young men (known as maras) rob, murder and extort protection money almost everywhere.

The project therefore comes under the headings of ‘non-formal basic education’ and ‘peace and conflict work’. One of its aims is that the measure should result in 20 per cent of the young participants finding employment, while another ten per cent should be successfully self-employed and another 20 per cent continue their schooling. This is a response to the fact that children, adolescents and young adults lack confidence in their development potential on account of poor initial vocational training, a lack of career prospects, lack of affection as a result of dysfunctional families, violence carried out with impunity, and stigmatisation as potential gang members.

As part of the social and pastoral work of the archdiocese of San Salvador, young people are contacted by pastoral workers in the archdiocese and encouraged to participate in training modules. These modules are designed to help them develop ‘life plans’. (I) ‘Together’: developing social skills for appropriate, positive and peaceful behaviour in everyday dealings with other people; (II) ‘Better at work’: motivation to look for work, help with clarifying interests / producing a CV / looking for work / interviews and recruitment tests; (III) ‘Successful self-employment’; (IV) ‘Living neighbourhood’: getting to know one’s neighbourhood, identifying with the community’s activities and with action for the community; (V) ‘Strong family’: strengthening relationships within the family and promoting good interaction.

At the end of the process participants decide what course they want their lives to take and find out about the next steps (resuming their education, looking for work, becoming self-employed). They continue to be supported by the archdiocesan staff as they put their plans into action. A particularly important factor is that the project’s key stakeholders are the young people and their parents. They are supported by the project teams, volunteers from the (parish) community and supporting organisations, such as vocational training institutions. The focus is thus on the young person in his or her social and family context. The intended impacts go far beyond obtaining employment.

4.2.9 Vocational training in the context of conflict and violence

Violent and long-running conflicts jeopardise family and community structures that play an important part in the protection, development and integration of children and young people.¹⁰ They also hinder the acquisition of vocational, personal and social skills, such as communication skills, empathy, a sense of responsibility and the ability to cooperate within the family and the community. As a result of the restricted functionality of public education systems, children and young people in conflict situations – and especially those from poor population groups – have only limited access to education. This makes it significantly more difficult for them to access or transition to further education programmes and vocational training schemes. The physical and mental effects of conflict, including trauma and health impairments, are further challenges that impede the social and economic integration of young people affected by conflict.¹¹

Vocational training in post-conflict situations and in ongoing situations of conflict and violence plays an important part in reintegrating groups affected by conflict as well as generally in the building of human resources for sustainable and peaceful development. It also provides a safe space for young people in violent contexts. However, the obstacles mentioned above must be

¹⁰ UNDESA (2007): World Youth Report: Young People’s Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges.

¹¹ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ (2014): Beschäftigungsförderung im Kontext von Konflikt, Fragilität und Gewalt. Erfahrungen aus der GIZ [Promoting employment in the context of conflict, fragility and violence. GIZ’s experience]. Working paper (unpublished). Eschborn, p. 7.

taken into account. It has been shown that, where vulnerable target groups are concerned, isolated vocational training measures are less effective than measures that form part of a broader approach to social and economic reintegration. Such an approach might include opportunities for catching up on basic education, psychosocial work, help in dealing with trauma, and social work within communities to promote social integration.

In the immediate post-conflict reconstruction phase, non-formal approaches (part-time courses) are most appropriate, since they can be organised more flexibly. Measures that lead directly to income-earning opportunities (e.g. initial vocational training in building trades relevant to the reconstruction) are particularly relevant. It is good practice to link vocational training closely to employment promotion measures, such as promoting business start-ups and agricultural rehabilitation. It is also worth arranging for initial vocational training to take place in local small businesses. This enables rapid implementation of initial vocational training that is practically oriented and close to the market; in addition, training subsidies can contribute to the revitalisation of these businesses.

Vocational training in crisis areas: Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo

Armed conflict involving elements of civil war has shattered South Kivu province in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Precarious slum districts have emerged in the hills around the provincial capital, Bukavu. It is estimated that only ten per cent of Bukavu's inhabitants who are able to work are in formal employment. All the rest – and particularly the less well educated – survive in the informal sector. Health services, education and so on are often unaffordable. Many children of school age do not attend school or leave school very early. In many families poverty leads to violence, drug and alcohol abuse and broken relationships. In addition to the large numbers of children and young people who spend their free time on the streets or try to earn a living there, it is estimated that there are 6,000 'street children' in Bukavu. They are the weakest link in a society that is in any case poor and they are vulnerable to assault, violence and exploitation. Although the DR Congo ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, officials and social services in the districts in and around Bukavu stand by and do nothing. The street children likewise receive no protection from the security forces (police and military). Quite the opposite: these children and young people are regularly harassed, robbed and physically and sexually abused by 'law enforcers' who use violence and threaten them with arrest.

The **PEDER programme (Programme d'encadrement des enfants de la rue)**, which was set up by an Italian congregation of nuns, provides an opportunity to counteract the insidious habituation of children and young people to violence. The contemptuous mentality that accompanies violence is challenged; prevention of violence and HIV/Aids education are key issues. Girls are presented with economic options that enable them to escape the life on the streets. Psychological and social support and literacy training prepare them for initial vocational training; PEDER's contacts with the judiciary and the police help prevent assaults, resulting in a new outlook.

4.2.10 Networks of non-state stakeholders in vocational training and their lobbying work

Until now there have been only a few established networks of state and church-based stakeholders in vocational training. Such networks include the network of Salesian Colleges in south Asia, a former platform of Catholic training centres in Ghana and the Functional Vocational Training Research Society (FVTRS) in India.

The roles of these networks vary widely. In the case of FVTRS the focus is on access to a small-project fund for non-formal vocational training financed by MISEREOR and on the accompanying

training of the vocational training providers in the FVTRS. With selected member organisations, the Salesian Don Bosco Tech network in South Asia participates in public calls for tenders and is therefore able to offer its members better access to state funding programmes and invitations to tender. The network also offers training courses and as a partner of bilateral donors it has benefited from corresponding capacity building programmes.

So far there has been only rudimentary representation of the interests of non-state and church-based vocational training institutions in dealings with state bodies, and non-state and church-based vocational training institutions have had little active involvement in the reform of vocational training, while in the education sector there are a number of positive examples of this. The institutions often lack the necessary skills and/or the access to state decision-makers at system level and the political will (vocational training suffers from a poor social image at partner level, too). Despite the important contributions made by church-based vocational training institutions in many partner countries, they generally lack influence at political level.

The following approaches could help to bring about change in this respect:

- Church lobby groups involved in education issues put vocational training on their agenda and include vocational training experts on their committees.
- Promoting inter-denominational networks in partner countries in which church-based providers are a key stakeholder in the vocational training system.
- Improving the complementarity of programmes (e.g. to complement each other or enable higher-level vocational training in other institutions, to divide up target groups, etc.).