



## GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF SUPPORT REQUESTS

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These guidelines provide information about the VET (vocational education and training) Toolbox. They are designed to help requesters of support to draft and submit requests so that these are in line with the VET Toolbox's requirements. When these guidelines are followed, the VET Toolbox support can be made available in a speedy and appropriate manner thus leading to the result desired by the national stakeholders.

We will soon have our web based portal online under the following link: [www.vettoolbox.eu](http://www.vettoolbox.eu)  
There you will find further information and the answers to most questions on the support. Whilst it is not online yet, kindly send the filled in request form and/or address any questions you might have to the team of the VET Toolbox Coordination Hub using the following email: [info@vettoolbox.eu](mailto:info@vettoolbox.eu)



## Introduction to these Guidelines

The present guidelines explain the VET Toolbox, the support it provides and how to access this support.

If you consider requesting support from the VET Toolbox, it will be essential to follow these guidelines for a successful submission of your support request.

The VET Toolbox is a new programme in support of vocational education and training (VET) in partner countries that are recipients of European Union's (EU) and EU member states funded development cooperation.

The VET Toolbox's activities are funded by the European Union and the German Government. The programme is implemented by four bilateral European agencies: the Belgian technical cooperation agency Enabel, the British Council, the German Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Luxembourgian LuxDev. The activities started at the end of 2017 and will end in September of 2022.

The VET Toolbox's activities aim at improving the effectiveness of VET and labour market reforms in the partner countries so that

- ☑ they are more demand-driven and responsive to labour market needs and
- ☑ VET and labour market services provide increased access to inclusive (self-)employment.

## What support is available?

The VET Toolbox's support is available to selected partner countries upon request.

The support that will be provided can focus:

- ☑ on how to reach a stronger involvement of the private sector in VET teaching and learning and/or
- ☑ on how to base VET and labour market policies on evidence of successful job creation, income increase and improved working conditions.

Several support modalities are accessible free of charge to local VET stakeholders and partners from selected countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. These are the following:

1. Capacity building, know how, advice and guidance in the requesting country through **short-term experts**. The experts' best practice expertise is based on the bilateral agencies' implementation experience in VET and labour market support in partner countries and in Europe. This knowledge is available to the VET Toolbox partner countries so that they can choose the approach that best suits in their context;
2. **Twinning** of institutions with similar objectives and mandate for an exchange of experiences on VET and labour market services;
3. Funding of **grants** focussing on the theme of inclusion in VET;
4. **Local and regional seminars** to showcase experiences.

These guidelines provide information on the first modality, the short-term advice. In order to access its high-level expertise and know how, certain requirements need to be met. The following pages answer these questions:

- what does the support specifically entail ?
- who can request the short-term advice ?
- how to request it ?
- who to contact in case of questions.



## Step 1: Check whether you meet the eligibility criteria

### Which countries can benefit from the support ?

The VET Toolbox supports selected partner countries where a VET and labour market reform process has already initiated or is in an advanced state of planning. This means that the VET Toolbox does not provide international funding for the reform process itself but acts as a support facility for stakeholders to better address and steer the reform process.

For a first round of requests we will accept support requests from a limited number of countries.

### Activities suggested for funding from the VET Toolbox will clearly need to be linked to the following :

Employment is a key factor for development and inclusive growth, economic opportunities, improvement of living conditions and poverty reduction. To ensure quality employment and decent work, vocational education and training is key to equip the labour force with adequate skills for jobs. In order to orient VET systems and training so that the youth is equipped with the right skills and competences needed on the labour market and so that jobseekers qualify for jobs from hiring employers, private sector involvement in VET and in labour market activities is key.

For VET to provide training and qualification options for a large number of the population, the teaching and learning needs to be inclusive. It needs to provide access and advancement opportunities for a large



Private sector involvement and inclusiveness in VET are therefore important areas of support provided through the VET Toolbox.



One important pre-requisite for the request to be approved is that it supports an ongoing or planned VET reform process in the country the request originates from.

### Who can submit an application for funding from the VET Toolbox ?

The VET Toolbox welcomes support requests from actors involved in TVET and labour market services in the beneficiary countries, for instance

- Ministries, regional and local entities responsible for the design and the implementation of national and regional policies regarding VET and employment;
- national vocational authorities and regulatory bodies, including training funds;
- quality assurance organisations responsible for learner assessment and examinations;
- public, private or mixed VET training institutes (including community schools with VET delivery) and VET pre-service and in-service instructor training institutes;
- national, regional and sectorial business and professional associations and other civil society organizations.

The VET Toolbox support is meant to be a complementary action to an ongoing VET and labour market interventions' reform process in the beneficiary country. **For a request to be successful, it requires therefore the agreement of a relevant national government entity through a supporting letter.** The VET Toolbox encourages cooperation with other partners in the beneficiary countries, such as with other public or private institutions or with development partners.



Any request should indicate clearly how local ownership is ensured.

Requests introduced jointly by public and private sector entities will be welcome.

If you are not part of the aforementioned institutions and wonder whether you could be eligible, please do not hesitate to contact us through the following email: [info@vettoolbox.eu](mailto:info@vettoolbox.eu)

## Step 2: Identify your needs

Identify your need of support according to the concrete phase of the VET reform process in your country.

VET-systems often do not produce graduates that possess the right skills and competences, due to a number of reasons. The lack of private sector involvement in the training and missing linkages between vocational education and training with formal and informal business are two important limiting factors. Other aspects averting VET to champion employability include system weaknesses as a result of limited evidence-based policy making and often scattered responsibilities at country level. Finally, VET-systems often encounter the same difficulties as all other public education systems in targeting the most disadvantaged groups, including from the poorest quintile. Then these groups have to overcome many challenges in order to increase their chances to hold a decent job because of limitation to their access to VET.

It is important to strengthening the demand-responsiveness of VET so that it contributes significantly to the enhancement of the partner country'/ies' VET system/s. In many cases the VET systems, the way they are set up, do not tackle the prevalent high levels of under- and unemployment, especially among young people or women. This leads to insufficient job creation, poor quality of jobs, and persistent high levels of informality and low enrolment in VET programmes, particularly of the most vulnerable groups. To address these issues successfully, targeted measures to meet these challenges are recommended to be included in the formulation of national employment and VET strategies, as well as in VET policy and delivery.

The following non-exhaustive table provides an overview of thematic areas available for support from the VET Toolbox. Your support request may thus cover one or more of the thematic areas below. Suggestions for new and additional areas of intervention are equally welcome as long as they are in line with the following two overarching themes

1. increasing VET's orientation on demand and responsiveness to labour market needs and
2. increasing VET and labour market services addressing access to inclusive (self-) employment.

More than making available pre-formulated advice, the VET Toolbox will work closely together with the requester/s and/or the national stakeholder/s and will offer expertise and know how on the theme requested. It will support its adaptation to the particular country context, thereby taking into account the institutional set up, the distribution of mandates and the capacities of the institution/s.

### AREA 1 : VET system and labour market analysis

- **LMIS (Labour Market Information Systems)** give an overview of where jobs and employment potential is in the given country and in which sectors and regions there is potential for new employment or a likelihood of downsizing of jobs in the near future, generally broken down in sectors and regions.



## AREA 1 : VET system and labour market analysis

- **Rapid labour market assessment** provides a limited scope yet a quick result to an analysis of employment and employment potential according to range chosen for the analysis (can be sectoral, regional or occupational).
- **Gap analysis tool on LMI** – Whilst Labour Market Information (LMI) is generally a comprehensive system of quantitative and qualitative data related to workforce and employment, a gap analysis studies the difference between on one side an existing or anticipated situation in terms of employment (growth or reductions and conversion), and on the other side work-based learning and training capacity, the availability of skills amongst the (target) population, expectations, readiness, labour mobility and training interest.
- **ELMA (Employment and Labour Market Analysis)** an analytical framework used in a step by step approach to analyse regional and sectoral national labour markets and employment and their potential.
- **Skills anticipation studies** – are an analysis of industry-specific job potential in an economy, region or sector (or a combination thereof) normally with a view to prepare the workforce and make available skills development opportunities to future job applicants and current jobholders.

## AREA 2 : Sustainable mechanisms of consultation and active participation of the private sector in VET and labour market interventions

- **Governance** refers to all processes and set up of leadership for, in this case, an institution through a set of pre-established rules and regulations, processes and designated funding. In this context it could for instance refer to the responsibility and/ or autonomy of training institutions.
- **Financing** - a generally comprehensive and integral system of providing and disbursing funds according to set priorities for the implementation of policies, setting up of institutions and, in most cases, also for their operations.
- **Training delivery (apprenticeships)** refers to the organization of vocational training or skills development. When aiming at engaging the private sector in training, then agreeing on apprenticeships in companies of the formal and informal sector for work-based learning can be one option of many.
- **Advisory councils** these are or could be established for training institutions for instance and are a way to orient the institutions vision, mission, priorities and operations.
- **Curriculum development** is the update of the training content -and sometimes methodology- for teaching and learning. When the labour market needs in a given economy are known, then curricula can be made more responsive to these needs to facilitate hiring and economic growth. The curricula can be benchmarked to comply with international standards and correspondingly certified if this is sought after by hiring companies.
- **Assessment/standards** generally refer/s to the verification of competences and knowledge that were acquired (or not) in the course of a training. Standards are bases of reference in a curriculum; competences are others.





## AREA 2 : Sustainable mechanisms of consultation and active participation of the private sector in VET and labour market interventions

The assessment can be done according to national or international benchmarks. It can lead to an international vocational certification, giving more weight to the national diplomas and certificates in the technical field.

- **Career guidance** can be a helpful mechanism to inform about career options, training requirements and options and about job prospects. These career services can take many forms and include for instance coaching, employability training and others.

- **Regional seminars and policy dialogue** can serve as an exchange of theory and hands-on experience on specific issues and experiences.

- **PPP** stands for Public Private Partnerships. It refers to a cooperation between different partners for a joint purpose. These could be for instance a collaboration agreed upon between a public vocational institution and an employers association to offer sponsorship/s for the VET school in the form of individual or course scholarships or apprenticeship schemes for work-based learning or a donation for practical training workshops. Given the different nature of the participating institutions, setting up these partnerships and ensuring their success and factors for sustainability are sometimes a challenge.

- **Matching employers with job seekers.** For jobseekers to find a job and get hired, it is sometimes necessary to set up specialized matching services of the job seeking (youth) with hiring employers and their HR departments. These matching services could consist of job fairs, apprenticeship schemes, information about jobs and about application modalities.

- **Partnership with EU agencies** Since the European Union organises many activities and thematic cooperation schemes, information about them and support in the access to these opportunities through the EU Delegation could be part of a request to be addressed.

- **Management of training centers** gives important signals about its overall organization and funding. When engaging the private sector in vocational education, it can be reflected in the management of the respective training centers.

## AREA 3 : Promotion of inclusive VET training for the formal and informal sector

- **Recognition of prior learning (RPL)** refers to assessment and certification mechanism for knowledge and competences acquired through other than formal learning or the standardized training path in the country organizing the RPL.

- **Social dialogue in VET system.** In many economies social partners, representatives of employers and employees, play an important role in taking responsibility for the world of work. Their inclusion in the VET training policy and delivery can contribute to a more comprehensive training and learning as it is the case in many European countries.



### AREA 3 : Promotion of inclusive VET training for the formal and informal sector

- **Improving VET regarding vulnerable groups** refers to the access and to removing eventual obstacles for vulnerable groups to participate and benefit from training and the career options that are opened through it.
- **Prestige of TVET opportunities for disadvantaged groups and girls.** Many times careers that VET prepares for and that offer sustainable income generation have a low prestige in the population. They are associated with noise and dirt and are often considered a particularly unfit career path for girls and young women. Nevertheless they can constitute interesting and valid ways to make and sustain a self-determined life.
- **Upgrading skills in informal sector:** since many economies rely heavily on the informal sector for wealth and employment creation, it is important to include the informal sector businesses and their workers in a development of skills and of competences in order to increase competitiveness and offer sustained economic opportunities and provide goods and services to the (national) economy.
- **Placement with focus on vulnerable groups.** Vulnerable groups can have a more difficult access to jobs and might require support in particular areas. Different modalities like quotas, policies, coaching, providing services such as specialized transportation modes or childcare can open doors just as a targeted job preparation through job training opportunities for vulnerable groups.
- **Affirmative action initiatives** for girls is a form of positive discrimination to level the playing field for girls and young women. This way they are meant to access the same opportunities as their peers, boys and young men, who in many societies and cultures have an easier access and more opportunities.
- **Promotion on methodologies for special needs trainers/trainers.** For inclusiveness purposes, lowering barriers for access for students with limitations requires at times the use of new teaching and learning methods and most often teacher training. This can be part of a request, whilst any equipment and training material will need to be funded through other sources.

Apart from being in line with the thematic areas of the VET Toolbox you will need to ensure that:

- (a) there is no duplication of ongoing or planned donor supported actions in the requesting country, and that
- (b) a strong commitment from local stakeholders to participate in the support activity exists.

### Step 3: Consider cross-cutting issues

The VET Toolbox pays special attention to the **cross-cutting issues of gender equality and inclusion**. It supports interventions that put special emphasis on integrating inclusiveness and gender in VET's and labour market services' planning and delivery. These crosscutting issues should therefore be reflected in your request. If you do not consider them relevant to the particular request, please include an explanation as to why the cross-cutting issues were not deemed relevant.

**1. Gender equality:** The proposed intervention(s) should promote gender equality. Please indicate in your application whether you have a gender-specific approach to reduce ex-isting gender inequalities for the access and benefit from the VET system and job matching services, related structures and organisations.



**2. Inclusiveness:** The access to VET and labour market services should be available to the population irrespective of the origin, ethnicity, gender. Limitations based on physical integrity should be reduced to a minimum. VET and labour market services should rather open the door to a self-determined life, to self-realization and dignity based on a profession of choice exerted by the individual. In the support request it should be described how the proposed measure contributes to (further) inclusiveness of VET and labour market services.

## Step 4: What do short term support missions entail ?

**Support Requests for short term experts (up to 5 weeks):** The VET Toolbox provides on a short notice experts that will support you in the specific field you requested and for the stage of the VET and labour market reform in your country. Any of the four bilateral agencies will identify experts that best fit the profile required and normally with many years of thematic and regional expertise. The experts will provide their know-how whilst the ownership of the actions to be implemented lies with the national stakeholder. These short-term missions last generally 3-5 weeks in your country. Training workshops for the local counterpart staff can be part of the tasks of the expert. At the end of the short-term expert mission you will be requested to indicate whether this mission helped you to achieve the objective you had with the mission. If necessary, an exceptional repeat mission of the same or of another expert with a complementary profile could be scheduled.

### Other types of support: twinning

These guidelines refer only to targeted short-term expert assignments as support modality. In addition to that, the VET Toolbox offers also support in establishing twinings with similar institutions to yours in different countries. For further information on twinings please contact the VET Toolbox Coordination Hub through the following addresses: [info@vettoolbox.eu](mailto:info@vettoolbox.eu)

### Please note:

The VET Toolbox can unfortunately not fund any purchase of equipment nor any individual scholarships or individual's participation in local and regional seminars. If deemed necessary for the success of the proposed measure, these will need to be funded by sources other than the VET Toolbox.

Dual funding, meaning the support through short-term expert missions, twinning and local or regional seminars is possible whenever it can be convincingly justified.

However, any support through the VET Toolbox is meant to complement activities that are funded by the national and/or regional governments and/or other funding sources, e.g. in-country donors. Contributions from the requesting organisation and an active participation and cooperation are very welcome (for example by providing its own project staff, infrastructure such as office space, materials, etc.).

## Step 5: Prepare and submit your application

As soon as the VET Toolbox's website will be online, the support request form will be accessible and downloadable from our website [www.vettoolbox.eu](http://www.vettoolbox.eu) (under development). In the meantime, you will receive the form and the guidelines by e-mail. Please fill out the support request form to the best of your knowledge. State in the form whether and how the proposed measure or activity meets the VET Toolbox's criteria, why the proposed measure or activity is needed, how you are planning to undertake and monitor it and what results you expect to achieve. Once you have finalised your proposal, kindly send your support request form to [info@vettoolbox.eu](mailto:info@vettoolbox.eu)



or to:

The VET Toolbox  
Coordination Hub  
c/o Belgian Development Agency - Enabel  
Rue Haute 147  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium  
[Tel. : +32 2 505 37 00]

### Step 6: The VET Toolbox Coordination Hub reviews your application

The VET Toolbox Coordination Hub will screen the support requests regarding their eligibility and completeness first. Submitters whose requests do not meet the VET Toolbox funding requirements will be informed immediately.

If your request in general meets the requirements, but is lacking some information, the Coordination Hub of the VET Toolbox will contact you. In order to respond as best as possible to your request, the VET Toolbox Coordination Hub will require detailed information on the concrete needs and the expected outcome. Making the request more focussed will be the responsibility of the requester, but the VET Toolbox Coordination Hub will provide help for the finalisation of promising support requests. Once your request has been completed and is in line with the VET Toolbox funding requirements, it will be forwarded for information and comments to the:

- EU Delegation Office in the requesting country and
- Donor coordination round or its lead in the requesting country to ensure complementarity and to avoid duplication of the support action foreseen.

### Step 7: Approval and delivery of the VET Toolbox's support

Once your application is approved, your support request will be transferred to one of the four bilateral agencies implementing jointly the VET Toolbox. This will be either Enabel, GIZ, British Council or LuxDev. The designated agency will then contact you regarding the short-term expert support that will be made available soon thereafter from VET Toolbox funding and the activity can then be implemented on the basis of the agreed VET Toolbox terms and conditions.

### Step 8: Share your knowledge and results

The support mission shall be used as the basis of a tool to be developed by the short-term expert and the implementing bilateral agency. This tool will then be shared on the VET Toolbox's web portal [www.vettoolbox.eu](http://www.vettoolbox.eu) (under development) so as to provide know-how to other entities and individuals from other countries that might not be eligible to VET Toolbox support. Your active collaboration in this respect will be appreciated.



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