

Vocational education

With a good connection to the labor market

WILDE 
GANZEN 

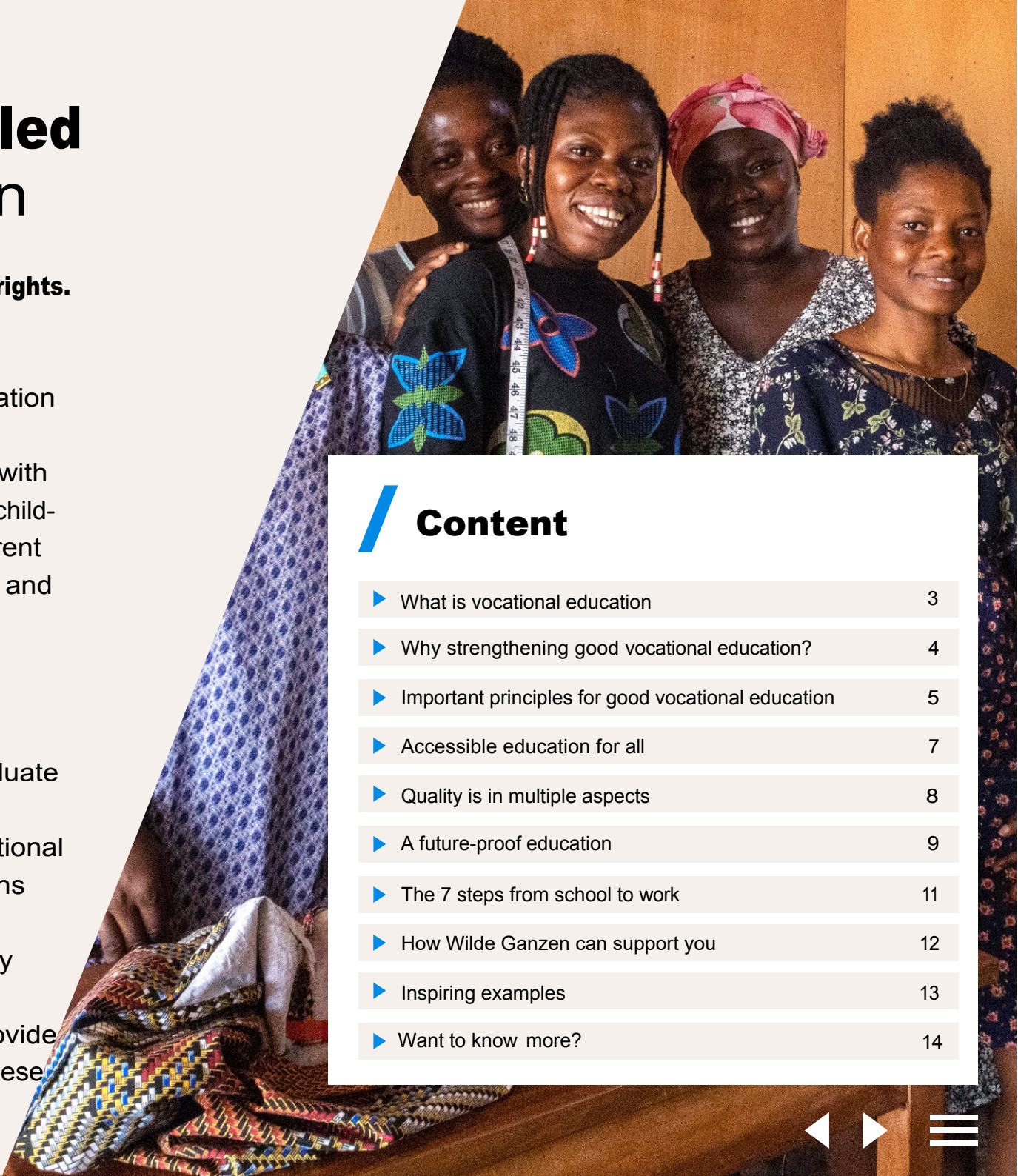
Everyone is entitled to good education

The right to education underlies all other human rights.

Good education is aimed at students becoming independent citizens, capable of active participation in society.

Good education is inclusive, student-centered, with good facilities, a pedagogical vision, a safe and child-friendly climate, student guidance, student and parent participation, good teachers, a good curriculum and good school management.

Good education goes beyond the school itself. Education experts agree on what the education standards are. The Education Inspectorate evaluate the schools accordingly to approve and give recommendations. It means also that an educational institution is familiar with the laws and regulations within education in its own country and follows government policy. This document is specifically about vocational education. We explain what vocational education is, what is important to provide good vocational education and where Wilde Geese can support.



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What is vocational education

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET), is defined by UNESCO as: education, training and skill development related to a wide variety of occupations, production, services and livelihoods. Vocational education is important to make students more likely to participate in the labor market upon completion. This also allows them to participate more actively in social and political life.

Formal and informal

Vocational education comes in many forms. There are formal courses at a recognized institute. Here students obtain an official diploma. But there are also many informal ways of vocational education, through training or internships (informal apprenticeship), for example. This informal education is becoming increasingly important in society. Especially for young people seizing opportunities to look for work.

Some vocational training courses last several years (such as training as an auto mechanic), but there are also short-term training courses in which people learn, for example, to make soap. Some training is very theoretical, while others are very practical. Collaborations between vocational schools and informal training offer many opportunities. This improves artisans' ability to innovate and diversify.

Why reinforcement of good vocational education?

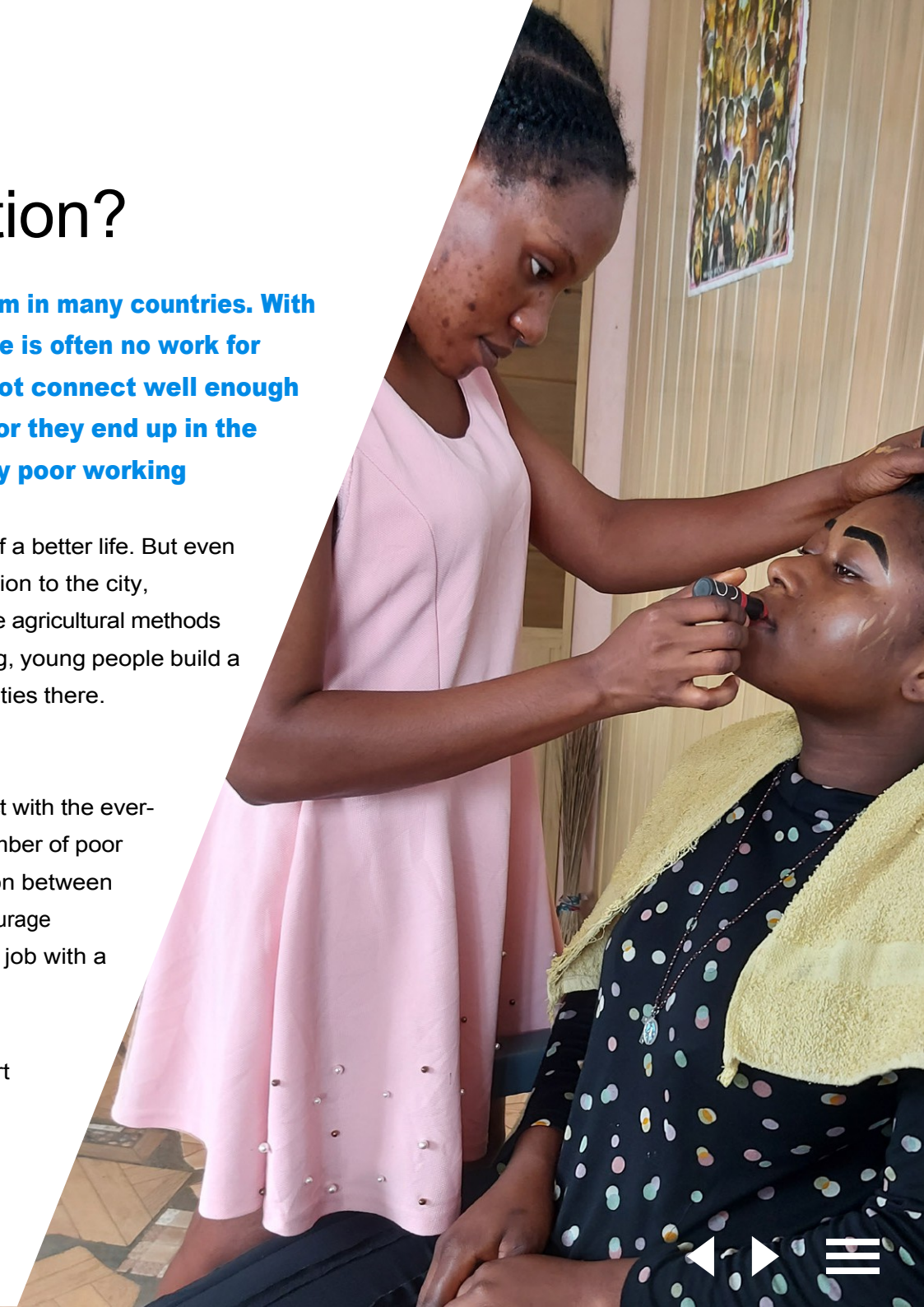
Unemployment - especially youth unemployment - is a major problem in many countries. With population growth, there are more and more young people, but there is often no work for them. They are insufficiently educated or their education does not connect well enough to the labor market. They are trained for jobs that are not there or they end up in the informal economy that is unregulated and often characterized by poor working conditions.

Young people are moving en masse from the countryside to the city in hopes of a better life. But even there, there is often no (good and decent) work for them. To counter the migration to the city, vocational training can respond to the need for more knowledge about innovative agricultural methods and digital opportunities in rural areas. In this way, thanks to vocational training, young people build a living in their own environment by responding to the possibilities and opportunities there.

Decent jobs with decent income

It is very important for vocational schools operating in urbanized areas to connect with the ever-growing informal sector and informal apprenticeship system. An increasing number of poor young people are looking for employment in cities. By encouraging cooperation between vocational schools and businesses and by offering vocational schools to encourage knowledge about new digital technologies, students are better able to find a decent job with a decent income.

Quality and relevant vocational training is important to give young people a good start in the labor market. But they can also help them enter later. People who dropped out as children get the chance to still learn a profession.



Key principles for good vocational education



1

Put the student at the center

What would students like to learn? What can they do? Where are their aspirations and what are their talents and opportunities, as well as challenges for students to get there? Learn more about their living situation and other aspects that impact their lives. Involve students in policies and evaluations through a student council.

2

Ensure proper embedding

Because the government often falls short where vocational training is concerned, many NGOs, social enterprises and religious institutions step into this gap. It is important to consider how the education or training fits into the broader context. Who are the potential students, how is the informal apprenticeship system organized, how can you connect to that, and what are the companies that offer many employment opportunities and what is the government doing?

3

Engage the community

Work with as many stakeholders as possible. Parents, students and teachers are the direct stakeholders. But you also have government, traditional leaders and professionals. Collaborating with other educational institutions makes it easier for students to move from primary and secondary education to vocational education. The more you involve everyone from day one, the better the education takes root in society.

4

Needs assessment

Before starting a project, it is important to do research. Not only determine what students want, but also what the needs are among local businesses. Even once the program has started, it is important to continue to gauge the needs of students, teachers, the market, government and other stakeholders. The market is changing rapidly. It is also important to identify what training is already being offered in the area. Do you really need to start a new training program for electricians if there is one a little further down the road? is already one, or would you be better off helping that school deliver better education?

5

Connect to the market

A common challenge in vocational education is that training is not always a good fit with the market. What is in demand? Which sectors have future prospects? In many countries, vocational training is often very theoretical. Provide practical subjects, offer entrepreneurial skills and ICT training. Provide internships and stimulate innovation. In this way you prevent students from not being able to find a job or from pushing other carpenters and hairdressers off the market, thus shifting the problem of unemployment.

6

Aligns with government policies

In each country, the context and legislation is different. It is important to know what laws and regulations exist regarding vocational education, what curricula exist and how to issue a recognized diploma. Find out what priorities the government has and work with the government as much as possible.



Accessible education for all

Education is a right for everyone. Whether you are male or female, with or without disabilities, religious or non-religious, poor or rich: equal access for all is very important. Often girls, people with disabilities, young people from families living below the poverty line or people from minority groups have greater chances of dropping out of education. Through vocational training, they can still build an independent life.

It is therefore important to carefully examine the options available to people who have fewer opportunities, and how to respond to their needs and desires. It goes beyond simply providing access. Perhaps people just need something else to successfully complete an education. Consider building modifications, translations, different learning materials, one-on-one tutoring, peer support and additional involvement of these vulnerable students' social network.

And affordable

In addition to a school being open to all, it is also important that education be affordable. Vocational education is often not free, as primary education is. Still, it can be made accessible to all, for example through available scholarships. Another solution could be to give students some kind of credit and pay it back slowly when they actually have an income after graduation.

Some schools charge different fees for different groups of students, with this the richer students help pay for the poorer ones. And sometimes a school can earn other income that can lower tuition fees.



Quality is in several aspects



1 Teachers

A good teacher is essential to a good education. This means that teachers must not only have current subject knowledge but also be didactically and pedagogically well versed.

Schools need an educational policy, which the school team also adheres to and promotes.

2 Curricula

Curriculum development is a government task. For primary and secondary education, this is (almost) everywhere well regulated. For vocational schools, it is often a different matter. Find out if there is a national curriculum for vocational schools and if the vocational school has its own curriculum. You can also check with schools that offer similar courses. Work with government, universities and industry. Use state exams to develop a curriculum.

3 Infrastructure

Quality teaching takes place in an appropriate environment. Classrooms, workshops and laboratories must be fit for purpose. Accessibility is also important, for example for students with disabilities. When you think of vocational education, you also think of good and safe tools and machines.

4 Social security

The quality of management matters. They are there to facilitate a safe and educational school climate that is welcoming and student-centered. There should be policies for issues such as exploitation, sexual harassment, abuse and bullying.

5 Evaluate

A quality program has room for evaluation, with (former) students indicating how satisfied they are. This allows you to adapt the training to the needs of and developments in the market.

6 Internships

A good internship gives students the opportunity to experience their profession in practice. Good supervision is essential here. The school should screen these internships for quality and safety. But guidance from internship providers is also a good idea. By maintaining contact with alumni who have found a place in the job market, you can find new internships.

A future-proof education

A good education prepares students for the future. But is itself future-proof as well. These are aspects to consider in sustainability:

Finance

Sustainable vocational training is financially independent of external support. This is not always feasible. But being financially resilient is possible. This means that the school has multiple sources of income and is not fully funded from outside sources. The school must be able to self-finance its running costs. In the case of vocational education, school fees are often charged, and, for example, products or services can be sold to customers. But it is also a possibility that the government, businesses or, for example, the church will help pay.

Social capital

Many vocational schools target people who are struggling financially. They may have little money, but they have a lot of social capital. People have huge networks they can leverage. By engaging students, you create engaged alumni, which can become important social capital for the entire program. They can offer new internships, share experiences and help improve the program.

Board

A sustainable organization also means a strong board and solid management formed by people rooted in the local community, in the sector and beyond. A good board brings together different areas of expertise. Once you have mapped out what expertise is needed, you can look for the right people for it. For example, you need board members with knowledge of finance, communication and fundraising, but representatives from the education sector and relevant companies are also interesting as board members.



Relationships

Enduring relationships with various players in the sector are essential. With government and industry, it is important to sign agreements (Memoranda of Understanding). By agreeing on mutual complaint settlements and establishing together what the goals of cooperation are, you create lasting relationships.



Employment

Setting up so-called job centers is a good way to help graduates secure a place in the labor market. A job center performs a bridging function between studies and the labor market, where young people with completed vocational training are helped to get in touch with internships or employers. A job center can be linked to vocational training, but can also be an independent organization.

The 7 steps from school to work

Edukans has developed a roadmap on how to successfully set up vocational training. They, too, see many students who fail to find employment after their training because the training did not connect well with market needs. To connect students, market and training, they see seven steps:

1 Do market research

Which jobs are needed, and which ones are not?

2 Develop job descriptions

What skills do people need for these jobs? These include technical skills, but also social and entrepreneurial skills or ICT skills.

3 Develop or select curriculum

Based on the skills needed, you can develop, hone or adopt a curriculum from another course or the government. Sometimes there are interesting things to be found digitally as well.

4 Develop the training

A good training pays attention to theory, but also gives the opportunity to practice at school and at an internship company, for example.

5 Train the teachers

Good teachers should have the right practical knowledge and skills, but also be didactically sound.

6 Track your successes and evaluate

Discuss regularly with alumni and with relevant companies what is needed, how the training fits in, and what may need to be changed.

7 Innovate and learn

When you have developed a successful education, others can learn a lot from you. And you yourself learn from your colleagues as well. Sharing materials and curricula helps you become even better at what you do!



How can Wilde Ganzen support you

Wilde Ganzen is happy to promote the aforementioned principles of vocational education. Should that require capacity building, we can support that as well. Initially we cooperate in a project of up to twelve months. After an initial collaboration, we can also look at multi-year collaborations up to a maximum of three years.

Examples of projects and activities supported by Wilde Ganzen:

Investments

Investments in infrastructure (classrooms, workshops), facilities (electricity, water) and materials (tools, books, ICT materials) are all eligible for funding by Wilde Ganzen.

Capacity Development

Wilde Ganzen supports developing the capacities of teachers, internship providers and the management of a training program. It is also possible to agree on a consultancy track in which a local advisor gives advice on, for example, finances or improving relations with the government.

Lobbying and advocacy

If it is necessary to campaign towards, for example, the government to give more attention to vocational education, or to lobby for more or better internships, Wilde Ganzen can also support projects in this.

What does Wild Geese not support?

While we always tailor projects, there are also projects and activities that do not qualify for funding from Wilde Ganzen. Consider, for example:

- Shipping materials or tools that can also be purchased domestically.
- Paying tuition for students.
- Paying ongoing expenses, such as building rent, teachers' salaries. In the start-up phase, an exception can be made for this when there is a good plan to change it.
- Costs incurred by consultants or advisors from abroad.
- Training that is so expensive that it is accessible to only a small minority.

Inspiring examples



Connecting to the market

[CCPA Kisaro](#) provides agricultural training in northern Rwanda. Every week, a car full of crops leaves for the market in the capital, where the prices for the vegetables grown by the training as well as the farmers in the area are much higher.



Relevant internships

At the [Bulawayo Projects Centre](#) in Zimbabwe, people can learn a trade. But they learn there are also accounting, ICT skills and life skills. Many alumni start for themselves and then offer internships. This allows students to gain real experience.

Proper embedding

At [SEP-Sierra Leone](#), people can receive sewing training. After completing the training, they are included in the cooperative of tailors. That way they are not alone!



Working in a refugee camp

[Kaalo Garowe](#) trained a group of women in a refugee camp in Somalia in making clothes. They also learned bookkeeping and administration. With the new knowledge, they can again train new women in the refugee camp.



A successful job center Burkina

The TEVET Consortium of four vocational schools in Burkina Faso has established a job center that mediates between students and companies for internships and work. An important function complementary to the vocational schools.



/ Want to know more?



Learn more

Contact **Wilde Ganzen** at servicedesk@wildeganzen.nl or call +31 (0)33 204 5555 and choose option 1. Or contact your Projects Advisor directly.

Change the Game Academy

Would you and your partner like to map out who constitutes the community and which stakeholders are involved? Then you can use these (free) toolkits:



- [Stakeholder Analysis](#)
- [Module Mobilizing Support](#)
- [Participatory Action Research](#)

[OECD](#)

Information on Vocational Education and Training and adult education.

[Informal training](#)

Article in Taylor & Francis Online on informal education in African countries.

[World Bank](#)

Article on transition from school to work in Sub-Saharan Africa.

[UNESCO](#)

Web site packed with information about vocational education.