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Vocational Education Lao PDR (VELA)

The VELA project supports the Government of Laos in introducing the dual TVET approach to develop a skilled work force that meets the needs of the labour market.

Context

After years of continued growth, the economy of Lao People’s Democratic Republic has suffered from the effects of Covid-19 and rising prices. The pandemic led to a severe interruption of education and training for more than two years. Economic recovery and development are hindered by high inflation and the lack of a skilled workforce, particularly in the country’s economic centres. Due to economic pressure, the enrolment of students into education has dropped dramatically at all levels.

So far, the national Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system has provided only a limited number of graduates with skills required by the Lao labour market. The public and private sectors have not yet been able to address these challenges. Dual-Cooperative Training (DCT), where the public and private sectors share the responsibility for skills development, can help to create a workforce that meets labour market needs.

Project Title	Vocational Education Lao PDR (VELA)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project regions	Lao PDR (Luang Prabang, Champasak, Vientiane Province and Vientiane Capital)
Leading executing agency	Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Duration	2019 - 2024

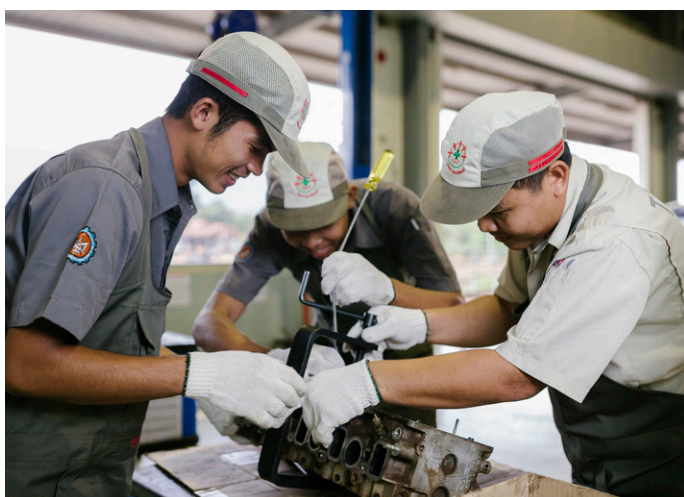
Objective

Dual-Cooperative Training (DCT) courses for relevant professions have been established in the dynamic economic centres of Lao PDR.

Approach

VELA supports the Lao Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI) in further developing and establishing DCT in close cooperation between state and private sector. Activities include:

- At college level: developing capacity to plan and implement DCT in provinces with high demand for skilled labour. To do so, colleges collaborate with companies, who provide about half of the training.
- Improving IT infrastructure and its use, introducing ‘green TVET’ and comprehensive career guidance services for students.
- At the private sector level: supporting the LNCCI with setting up a DCT Service Centre that offers information, recognition and advocacy services to businesses interested in DCT.



*In-company trainer supervising students while they practice in the Automotive Mechanic Course
Photo: © GIZ/Phoonsab Thevongsa*

- Supporting a more active role for the private sector in the steering of DCT in coordination with public actors.
- With the Vocational Education Development Institute (VEDI): integrating the DCT approach into the training of TVET teachers and managers, as well as digitalising the training curricula.

Impact

The delivery of TVET using a DCT approach with 50 % of the training taking place in companies was endorsed as an addendum to the national TVET-law in 2020. With the roll-out of 8 DCT courses which are aligned to the needs of the labour market, the project further supports the establishment of DCT in the Lao TVET system. More than 500 students enrol in DCT annually. Students are now better prepared to take up employment. According to a tracer study in 2021, 79 % of DCT graduates are employed or in further education convinced of its effectiveness, the Ministry of Education and Sports advocates for the expansion of DCT in its colleges.

Using standardized processes, college managers and teachers at four flagship colleges in Luang Prabang, Champasak, Vientiane Province and Vientiane Capital have taken on their role in DCT, jointly with partner companies. To promote DCT, PR materials have been developed and colleges are implementing



A TVET teacher in a practical class for 'Food/Beverage and Food Production Professionals'

Photo: © GIZ/Phoonsab Thevongsa

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their marketing strategies to attract more students. Career guidance services are now available in TVET schools and provide orientation to their students, communities and secondary schools.

As the voice of the Lao private sector, LNCCI provides leadership for companies engaging in DCT. LNCCI has established the DCT Service Center which will provide all services required by the private sector, such as development of occupational standards, in-company training of trainers and certification services. LNCCI has awarded enterprises and education institutions for their engagement in DCT in a prestigious event with the 'Skills Development Award' in 2023.

Gender and Economic Development

The project supports better access to DCT courses that are of interest to both women and men. Marketing materials that catch the interest of women e.g., for technical professions are being used. The target proportion of women in DCT courses supported by the project is 40%.

A skilled workforce forms the basis for the further development of a competitive Lao economy. Through DCT, young people are trained with the skills required by the private sector. At the same time, graduates can expect better employment opportunities.

About GIZ Laos

GIZ, as part of German Development Cooperation, has been active in Laos since 1993, mainly on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and its donors and development partners. Currently, GIZ is implementing numerous projects in three core areas: a) rural development, b) conservation of nature and natural resources and c) sustainable economic development.

Please visit www.giz.de/laos for further information.

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On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)