



Validation of skills in vocational training

Advisory service

The challenge

People acquire skills throughout their lives. In low or middle-income countries, however, this process often takes place outside of a formal education system. This is the case in particular among young people, who undergo traditional training in micro and small enterprises in the informal sector or through 'on-the-job' learning in a family business. With no state recognition of their skills, they are frequently denied access to the formal education system and to formal labour markets, thus preventing them from earning more money under improved working conditions. Finding work in the formal labour market abroad is not possible either since they have no evidence of formal qualifications. At the same time, there is often no social recognition of their professional skills.

Our approach

GIZ supports the validation of formal, non-formal and informally acquired professional skills. Our approach involves:

- » Establishing pathways that also enable disadvantaged groups to access the formal education system
- » Developing specific skills that strengthen human resources in the responsible institutions and facilities in a targeted manner. We also work to establish national occupational standards that facilitate skills validation
- » Drafting integrated solutions that link up a diverse range of measures. For example, skills development for strategic positions is combined with training courses for workers and with information campaigns for employers and the general public

Our services

We advise partner ministries, regulatory authorities, national training providers and test centres on establishing a valida-

tion system to recognise formal, non-formal and informally acquired skills. Key advisory themes include occupational standards, national qualification frameworks and transparent examination systems. GIZ supports the validation process end-to-end, throughout the different phases. We start by advising partner governments on certificates, costs, and financing options. In this context, we take into account the country-specific challenges and development strategies. We also help establish a system to determine non-formal and informal learning outcomes, which forms the basis for formal certification. Following on from this, we advise our partners on drafting standards and on establishing an assessment grid for validating learning outcomes. We work closely with the private sector during this step. Finally, we support the development and strengthening of the skills of test centres, thereby enabling them to certify validated learning outcomes in an unbiased manner. We also advise on the introduction of 'skills passports'. These provide potential employers with documentary evidence of informally acquired skills, without the need for an elaborate validation process. Where a validation process highlights gaps in a person's skills when measured against the national occupational standards, targeted further training can close such gaps and build a bridge to the formal education system and labour market. We provide advice on developing such training courses and on mainstreaming them in the national education and vocational training system. We also support partners in setting up and implementing awareness raising programmes to promote social acceptance of certificates.

The benefits

GIZ offers innovative, tried-and-tested approaches to validating formal, non-formal and informally acquired skills. These approaches foster links with the formal education system, thereby supporting access to the formal labour market. GIZ networks closely with the organised business



community in Germany and around the globe. These contacts help to strengthen associations in our partner countries and to build viable partnerships. Ongoing dialogue within a renowned international community of experts ensures that bestpractice approaches can be transferred and adapted. The approaches are tailored specifically to the respective country context.

An example from the field

Myanmar is setting up a system to test and certify professional skills. A project commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) supported the National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA) in this task. The Promotion of Vocational Education and Training in Myanmar project advised NSSA on the development and piloting of financing options for measures to recognise skills and certificates. National standards for professional skills at different qualification levels were also developed. Here, the project helped the NSSA sector committees to identify professional standards that were in demand and develop them together with businesses. The project also helped the authority to select and accredit test centres, train testing staff, and develop examination questions and assessment schemes. Potential employers are able to use NSSA's website, which also received project support, to validate certificates. The website also informs citizens about how they can certify their skills, evaluate examination requirements and close any gaps in their skills.

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