



**NATIONAL TEVET CONFERENCE_
“Promoting TEVET for Socio Economic Development in Malawi”**

**20th -21st April 2023
Bingu International Convention Centre, Lilongwe**

COMMUNIQUÉ

We are delighted to present this communique following the highly successful National TEVET Conference, held on April 20th and 21st, 2023. The conference convened over 400 participants from diverse backgrounds, including Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), academia, development partners, employers, TEVET service providers, apprentices, private companies, local and international organisations, researchers and development partners.

The primary objective of the conference was to foster collaboration among stakeholders, enable the sharing of best practices, and facilitate the development of innovative strategies to enhance the provision of Technical, Vocational, Education, and Training (TEVET). Organised into three sessions, the conference focused on critical topics such as policy formulation, access, inclusivity and employability; financing and sustainability; and quality assurance and productivity enhancement interventions.

During the opening ceremony, the Guest of Honour who is the Minister of Labour Hon. Agnes Nyalonje, emphasised on the importance of the conference and highlighted the need for collective action to address the challenges facing the TEVET sector. This was in recognition of the crucial role that the sector plays in the economy mainly as it interacts more strongly with the world of work, the world of industry and the world of labour. It was also highlighted that TEVET is a bridge to the world of entrepreneurship through self-employment and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development which eventually contributes to the realisation of Malawi 2063. It was further pointed out that TEVET access in the country is relatively low due to a number of challenges which include infrastructural deficit,

low levels of quality instructors and obsolete equipment. In this regard, the Minister encouraged all stakeholders to invest in the sector to enhance access to TEVET. Throughout the conference, keynote speakers, resource persons and participants engaged in robust discussions and proposed practical solutions for the immediate, short-term, and long-term application in the TEVET sector. As organisers of the conference, we recognize the significance of this platform and are committed to taking the necessary actions to ensure successful implementation of the proposed strategies and recommendations.

We the organisers of the conference;

Acknowledge that;

1. There is a need to promote and enhance TEVET's interface with the overall education system to ensure seamless movements and progression between general academic programmes and TEVET programmes and prioritise it as a key vehicle to achieve Malawi's 2063 aspirations and ensure international competitiveness.
2. The country is facing a problem where a large number of MSCE candidates are unable to access TEVET, and an increasing number of youths are dropping out of secondary school. Furthermore, even TEVET graduates are struggling to find employment, with around 31% facing challenges in entering the labour market.
3. TEVET providers' capacity to deliver quality training is hindered by the lack of adequate human resource, updated equipment as well as infrastructure in training institutions, which calls for investment in infrastructure and automated machinery.
4. The need of having a policy framework and guidelines that clearly provides policy direction on TEVET and engineering as well as the finalisation of the National Qualifications Framework.
5. Intellectual property must be introduced in the system since some TEVET beneficiaries are innovators and need to protect and patent their innovations.
6. Collaboration within the sector is crucial. This can be enhanced by placing the right people in the right areas to facilitate coordination and communication. On the other hand, weak governance of the sector can hinder effective collaboration and coordination efforts.
7. Stakeholders need to develop and review collective strategies that support the recognition of technicians in the workplace and address challenges in the TEVET sector.
8. The success of the TEVET sector depends on adequate financing, given its high cost compared to other sectors, and the need for more financing streams to support it.

9. The importance of establishing fully-fledged incubation centres for innovations and technology transfer offices in training institutions that train hands-on artisans and technicians.
10. The ongoing review of the TEVET Act needs to incorporate the significant outcomes of the National conference, which includes the four themes presented to improve TEVET: align education and training agents, professionalise TEVET, transform curriculum into a functional model, and develop TEVET teacher development policy and guidelines.
11. The need to reposition the informal sector as the engine for socio-economic development in the country.
12. The importance of rigorous training of trainers in TEVET institutions including special education training to achieve Malawi's 2063 aspirations and quality training.
13. Collaboration for productivity: The need to leverage TEVET through capacity building and establishment of the National Productivity Center to enable sustainable socio-economic growth.
14. The need to ensure equitable access to TEVET, improve employability, and promote job creation for graduates, while also prioritising the training of highly qualified individuals over just focusing on numbers.
15. Efforts are needed to address the skills mismatch between employers and TEVET graduates and to ensure that TEVET graduates receive the recognition they deserve to make the sector more attractive to young people.
16. Quality assurance is fundamental to qualifications as it enhances confidence and trust among the employers.
17. Limited engagement of communities in innovation programmes and lack of innovation curriculum for the informal economy.

Therefore, propose the following **recommendations**:

1. Promote and enhance TEVET's interface with the overall education system as it was noted that there are some disjoints between TEVET and the overall education system.
2. Finalise the National Qualification Framework which would allow for students to have seamless movements and progression routes between general academic programs and TEVET programs with progressive descriptors.
3. Increase allocation of resources towards TEVET in the national budget so as to ensure that the sector effectively plays its role in the industrialization, agricultural commercialization and mechanisation and urbanisation of the country as per Agenda MW2063.
4. Promote strategies on greening the TEVET sector so as to enhance sustainable environmental management and agriculture.

5. Promote use of digital skills in the sector so as to make the sector relevant to the 4th Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0).
6. Develop a national skills development strategy which should focus efforts outlined in the MW2063.
7. Intensify career guidance programmes, information sharing and mainstreaming of TEVET at all levels of education to attract more youths.
8. Promote access to TEVET for vulnerable and marginalised groups in pursuit of inclusive education and training.
9. Promote and strengthen use of research in TEVET to inform decision making.
10. Evaluate and enhance the current TEVET curriculum to ensure its responsiveness to global technological advancements, and design a comprehensive mining industry-specific curriculum that practically aligns with MW2063 objectives. The curriculum should encompass critical aspects such as mining safety, health, surveying, planning, design, environmental management, geology, and processing.
11. Revisit remuneration structures in consultation with employers to support recognition of artisans and technicians.
12. Promote financing of innovation interventions in the TEVET sector and establish Technology Transfer Offices in TEVET Provider Institutions to support innovation and promote Intellectual Property Rights.
13. Establish TEVET Sector Working Group to enhance coordination and collaboration in the Sector.
14. Develop a robust data management system in the TEVET sector to enhance availability of reliable TEVET information.
15. Establish business incubation hubs to help TEVET startups as well as provide operating capital through among other windows, Zantchito project, similar financing programmes as well as financial institutions.
16. Develop a National Productivity Policy to provide the necessary policy direction for productivity interventions and consensus on the interpretation and the need for increased productivity.
17. Intensify stakeholder awareness campaigns on productivity enhancement programs including traditional leaders who can then disseminate the knowledge to their communities.
18. Encourage active engagement with the industry in TEVET programming so as to enhance quality and relevancy of the programmes.
19. Promote internship and apprenticeship programmes to reduce skills mismatch between the industry and supply.
20. Support Recognition of Prior Learning initiatives to certify skilled artisans and technicians who acquire their skills informally
21. Need to establish Technical Teachers Training College and a TEVET Awarding body in Malawi

APPRECIATION

We wish to express our profound gratitude to the Honourable Minister of Labour, Mrs Agnes Nyalonje for gracing the conference.

Our gratitude also goes to the TEVET Authority Board Chair, Mr Don Whayo; Principal Secretary for Labour, Mr Wezi Kayira; Principal Secretary for Administration in the Office of the President and Cabinet and parliamentarians.

We will not do justice if we don't extend our gratitude to various Chief Executive Officers and Director General such as Mr Chancellor Kaferapanjira and Dr Thomas Chataghalala Munthali who have sacrificed their valued time to ensure this conference is a success.

We also express our thanks to Keynote speakers (Professor Noel Kufaine and Mr Cyprian Mayamba), all presenters, various government officials, our esteemed traditional leaders, representatives of various development partners and Non Governmental Organizations present and all the participants present here.

Elliot Mulanje
Chairperson, Organising Committee
21st April, 2023