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Technical and vocational education and the labour market in Guinea-Bissau

This communication is built around two axes:

1. Systematization of the evolving framework of the technical-vocational education within the framework of the education and training system of Guinea-Bissau: fundamental problems, evolution of the legal framework, diagnosis of the situation, prospects for technical and professional education in the fundamental documents, panorama presented by the international agencies.
2. Role of the NGOs in the implementation of technical-professional training (courses, type of courses, statistical data) and its relationship with the labour market, with particular emphasis in the actions promoted by Ação para o Desenvolvimento (AD, Action for Development).

Introduction

This paper begins by presenting the fundamental concepts related to technical-vocational education, thereafter VET. In the context of Guinea-Bissau, following a general characterization of the country educational panorama, the communication focus the evolution of VET in this context in relation with the global panorama regarding training centers, trainees and courses. The work of two specific NGOs is presented: the Training Centre implemented by AD and the vocational school supported by Ajuda de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo na Guiné-Bissau (ADPP-GB). Next, the paper focus the characterization of the labour market and its relation with the technical-vocational education. The paper concludes by systematizing some of the TEV system weaknesses and identifying some contributes to raise its profile.

1. What is technical and vocational education and training

Technical and vocational training is an education that aims is doting individuals with the skills and knowledge for the exercise of one or more professional activities. This instruction might occur before the exercise of the professional activity (initial training), or throughout professional activity (lifelong training). From a formal perspective it can be a teaching modality (ETP) that leads to the acquisition of academic degree and professional certification of the student / trainee (dual degree regime) and can also be carried out in vocational training centers. Nowadays the informal technical and professional training is also recognized. This training is the sum-up of the multiple experiences of individuals during their professional activity, being validated at an academic and professional level in many countries.

Political and social expectations about technical and vocational training are high. There is a direct relationship between this type of training, wealth creation and technological modernization. The formation of the active population generates skills that must be oriented towards the personal and social development of each citizen, to the needs of the labour market and the economy. Low-skilled labour, insufficient or inadequate knowledge and skills of human capital, contribute to low

levels of production. The fundamental strategy is to ensure the relevance of training and apprenticeships, meeting the aspirations of young people, responding to the labour market and providing the economy with the labour required for their development.

Technical and vocational education is included in the targets of the SDG 4 from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations, stating that:

4.3. By 2030, ensure equal access for all men and women to quality technical, vocational and higher education at affordable prices, including university

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of young people and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and professional skills, for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and vulnerable children.

2. Guinea-Bissau

An independent country since 1974, Guinea-Bissau has an estimated population for 2016 of 1.82 million inhabitants, 51.5% of whom are women, and an expected average annual growth rate of 2.3 between 2019-2024 (RESEN 2015). The population is mostly young and the majority lives in rural areas (60% of the total in 2014), despite the country's rapid urbanization (RESEN 2015). The capital, Bissau, concentrates a quarter of the total population, followed by the regions of Oio (14.9%), Gabu (14.2%), Bafatá (13.9%), Cacheu (12.8%), Biombo (6.4%), Tombali (6.3%), Quinara (4.2%) and Bolama / Bijagós (2.2%). It has a high fertility rate (4.16 children per woman), which is reflected in the growth of the working-age population (RESEN 2015).

Political and institutional instability have been recurrent factors since 1998 and contribute to the state's fragility. Since gaining independence in 1974, Guinea-Bissau has suffered four coups d'état (the last in 2012), sixteen coup attempts, and the average duration of the exercise of power is 2.5 years (UNESCO (2017), leading to the characterization of the country as one of moderate conflict. It is one of the poorest countries in Africa, dependent on foreign aid, seriously indebted, with several financial and macroeconomic problems and a persistent fiscal imbalance. Economic growth was 5.3% in 2018 and 5.9 / in 2017. The main economic activity is artisanal agriculture, based on cashew nuts for exportation and rice production for local consume, followed by fishing. Agriculture contributes 50% to GDP and almost the total exports and employs 85% of the active population. In 2010, 69% of the population lived below the poverty line (less than 2USD per day), with 33% of the population with less than 1USD/day. The highest rates of poverty are in the regions of Gabú (83.5%) and Cacheu (80.5%). The human development index was 172/177 in 2000, 175/177 in 2007 and 164/169 in 2010 (RESEN 2015). GDP decreased by 15% between 1997 and 2010, which reflects the impoverishment of the population and the Gini coefficient shows that inequality has been steadily growing (0.35 in 2002 to 0.5 in 2010).

More than half of the population is under 25 (63.5%) Young people aged 15-35 make up Young people (15-35 years old) represent 50.2% of the general population and 80% of the poor. In 2016 this group had an unemployment rate of 89% that was even higher among women. Occupation of young people aged 15-24 was 10.6% in 2009, with only 4.6% for women. Disabled people represent 13.5% of the population and live mainly in rural areas (59.4%) (RGB FADI). The education system (12 years of schooling) underwent a major reform in 2010-2011. It has evolved positively in terms of expanding access to basic education, but dropout and failure rates remain high. According to RESEN 2015, in 2009 the schooling rate was 59.4% for boys and 58.7% for girls and the dropout rate was 57% for girls and 43.6% for boys. But 44% of children aged 6 to 11 years (compulsory education) are out of school (RESEN, 2015). For every 100 children enrolled in the first year of basic education, only 40% reach the sixth grade (RESEN 2015). The resources

applied in the education system are not used effectively: 46% of education resources are wasted in situations of abandonment and failure in basic education, 33% in general secondary education and 17% in complementary secondary education (RESEN 2015). The situation of girls is particularly serious: for women aged between 22 and 44, the probability of being literate having attended 6 years of schooling is of 65% (Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2006). This means that the frequency of the education system and progression in it do not lead to the acquisition of fundamental skills, a situation worsened by the instability of the academic years. 50% of adults are illiterate, but with a wide gender gap: 45% in men and 71% in women (RESEN 2015).

3. Vocational Education and Training in Guinea-Bissau

The technical school in Bissau was created in 1959, just one year after the first high school, and remained operational until 1980. It was always considered a second-rate education, suitable for peasants and low-income students, while high school education would be the most suitable for “civilized” people¹. Together with this technical school, for students of a secondary level, another school of arts and crafts was created in the island of Bolama aimed at students of the elementary level. During the period 1969/1973, under the political program *Por Uma Guiné Melhor*, several short professional courses were implemented. However, the devaluation of the technical education worsened after independence. Thus, if in 1974 the number of students enrolled in technical and professional education represented 19% of the total of high school students, in 1975 this percentage dropped to 11.1% (Sena, 1977, quoted in Furtado, 2005). In 1980 two VET centers were created: the Technical Institute for Professional Training (ITFP) and the first Professional Training Center, Vitorino Costa, under the tutelage of the State Commission for National Education and Culture (CEENC). The ITFP was later renamed National Institute for Professional Training (INAFOR), with competences in the areas of training, planning, coordination and evaluation of training actions, as well as of government advice and assistance in matters of professional training policy. It is a collective body governed by public law, endowed with legal personality, administrative, financial and patrimonial autonomy, responsible for the implementation of the government's policy regarding technical and vocational education and training through training centers. However, until today, INAFOR is an institution that does not fulfill the objectives of its creation.

The following training centers were created in the 1980s:

- Industrial Training Center (CENFI, later CIFAP - Industrial Training and Professional Learning Center) located in Bissau. It is responsible for promoting training in the field of industry, through apprenticeship courses (courses lasting three years for candidates qualified with the 6th grade).
- Administrative Training Center (CENFA, ENA since 2010) with headquarters in Bissau and dependencies in the regions, it is responsible for promoting technical learning courses in the areas of accounting, secretarial and IT.
- Agricultural Training Center (CEFAC), located in the south of the country, is responsible for promoting short courses in the fields of agriculture and related areas.
- Experimental Community Training Center (CEFC), located in the south of the country, it is responsible for promoting short courses in the areas of management, basic accounting, bicycle repair and rice hulling machines, production of handmade soap, treatment, smoking and drying fish, sewing and others.

¹ The indigene regime, classifying the population in “civilized”, “assimilated” and “indigenes” groups, was revoked in 1961, but this class/racial division persisted in social practices.

These public technical and vocational training centers were joined by the new private and community VET centers. A total of 9 new centers opened between 1981 and 2004. However, between 2004/2005 and 2012/2013, the number of students enrolled in professional and technical education raised from 721 to 931, which represents a slow adherence to this subsystem of schooling and training. Also in 2012/2013, the private offer enrolled and trained 46% of these trainees (RESEN 2015).

Furtado (2005), within his analysis of the historical evolution of the administration and management of the Guinean educational system, refers to the permanent lack of quality of the technical and professional training system and the absence of a clear policy to respond to the country's needs in the short, medium and long term. Based on a study of the educational system of the mid-1980s (Guterres et al, 1985), he identifies the main causes that contributed to this situation. These are due to: i) the lack of studies on labour needs, mechanisms for monitoring and assessing the impact of technical education courses taught in the country, as well as data on the follow-up of the trainees in technical education; ii) the low entry profile of students who accessed professional training courses conducting to a low level of skills acquired; iii) the lack of courses in the field of agriculture, livestock and fisheries, employing more than 80% of the population, which have a great weight in exports and in the formation of GDP; iv) the absence of professional components in general and complementary education; v) absence of medium courses, at the level of the 10th to 11th classes; vi) lack of resources; vii) the lack of information, monitoring and vocational and professional guidance in secondary education (7th, 8th and 9th grades); viii) the absence of institutional relations between the school and economic activities; ix) weak inter-ministerial cooperation (Furtado 2005, p. 438).

As for today, technical and professional training continues to be a sub-sector of the education system within the framework of the basic law (2010). According to the 2009-2020 Guinea-Bissau Education Sector Policy Charter (MEN, 2009):

The objectives for the ETFP policy are focused on strengthening the piloting and management of the system, improving quality, developing a professional training offer for the finalists of the system, as well as offering qualifying technical education. In order to improve quality, it is proposed to design and implement appropriate training programs; renovation of equipment and teaching aids; promotion of alternating training; supply diversification; increasing reception capacities for existing establishments and creating new establishments in the regions; when possible, the partial assumption of the costs of vocational training in order to make it accessible to a larger number of students; diversification of specialties aimed at priority sectors of the economy and the recruitment of trained trainers. The strengthening of measures to encourage girls' schooling and retention in the system is prioritized, introducing policies and incentives to increase their number in secondary and higher education. (ADPP 2019).

VET implementation is under the jurisdiction of two ministries since the 2015 organic law: the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative Reform and Labour (MFPRAT) is responsible for professional training, and the Ministry of Education, Higher Education, Culture, Youth and Sports (MEESCJS) ensures technical and professional education. ETP is offered by both public and private establishments such as civil society organizations and religious organizations, and by community schools. Public training offers have two features: a) short duration professional training (1 year or less) for young people who have completed compulsory education (6th year of basic education); b) technical and professional education, aimed at young people who finished the 9th year, lasting 3 years. The private and community offer is not regulated, so the type of courses and the entrance requirements are diverse.

Vocational training is insufficiently supported and funded. In 2013, the education system was allocated 11% of the state budget (comparing with 23% in the continent) but ETP received only 2.5% of that budget, i.e. 0.0275% of the state budget (RESET 2019). This is the expression of a lack of political guidance, equipment, trainers, educational and financial resources, and updated programs. Nevertheless, VET was highlighted in the new strategic political and educational programs: the 2015-2025 *Terra Ranka* plan focused on ETP as a strategy to modernize the economy and reduce poverty; in 2019 the European Union funded the RESET (Relance de l'Enseignement et Formation Professionnelle et Technique pour l'Emploi), an ambitious plan aiming to modernize the area.

Training centers

In 2017 there were 20 training centers in the country, 12 of which were private, 6 public and 2 managed at the community level. They were concentrated in Bissau and in the Cacheu and Oio regions. These 3 regions concentrated 75% of training establishments and 90% of trainees (UNESCO 2017). FCT's coverage is 264 trainees per 100,000 inhabitants (RESEN 2015).

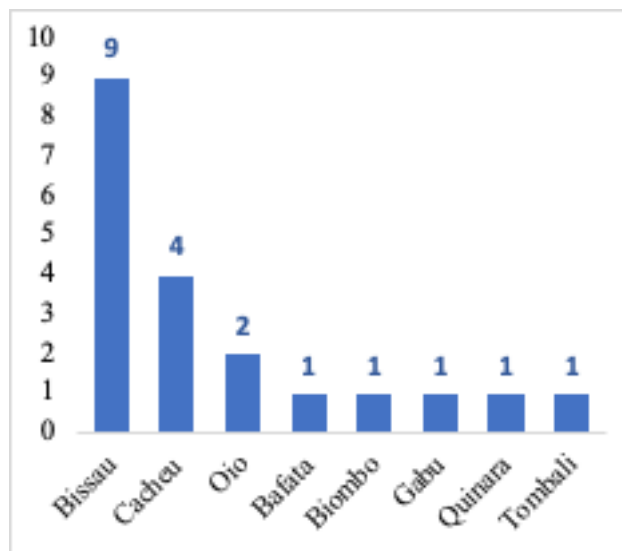


Table 1: Territorial distribution of training establishments in 2017

Source: UNESCO 2017

The trainees

2,851 individuals were trained during 2013-2014 and 4724 during 2014-2015 (UNESCO 2017)

Locality	ST	% ST	LT	% LT	Total	% Total	% Girls ST	% Girls LT	% Girls total
Bissau	1 619	56,2%	1 418	77,0%	3 037	64,3%	20,0%	46,8%	32,5%
Cacheu	767	26,6%	146	7,9%	913	19,3%	32,1%	24,0%	30,8%
Bafata	55	1,9%	210	11,4%	265	5,6%	56,4%	37,1%	41,1%
Biombo	40	1,4%			40	0,8%	45,0%		45,0%
Oio	269	9,3%			269	5,7%	17,1%		17,1%
Quinara	103	3,6%			103	2,2%	27,2%		27,2%
Tombali	30	1,0%			30	0,6%	100,0%		100,0%
Gabu			67	3,6%	67	1,4%		32,8%	32,8%
Status									
Public	963	33,4%	410	22,3%	1 373	29,1%	17,7%	32,9%	22,2%
Private	1920	66,6%	1431	77,7%	3 351	70,9%	28,8%	46,3%	36,3%
Together	2 883	100,0%	1 841	100,0%	4 724	100,0%	25,0%	43,3%	32,2%

ST: Short Training

LT: Long Training

Table 2: trainees by region, type of training and gender, 2014-2015

Source: UNESCO 2017

There is a predominance of training given in private centers, which outnumber public centers (we do not know where the community members are included). Most of the training took place in the capital. The small number of trainees in Biombo (40) must be explained by the proximity to the capital, but the small number in Tombali (30) and Gabu (67-very poor region) must be explained by the lack of supply. The number of trainees who attended short training courses (1 year or less) was higher than those who attended long-term training (3 years). With the exception of Tombali where training was only attended by trainees (30), in the remaining regions the number of trainees was superior to trainees.

The Report on the Situation of the National Education System - RESEN (MEN, 2015), states that between 2004 and 2012, the number of students in the ETFP went from 721 to 931. In 2013, 46% of students in the sub-sector received private provision, compared to 36% in 2005. In Guinea-Bissau, in 2014, only 56 students were registered in ETFP per 100,000 inhabitants, while the average for countries with similar level of development was 396. In 2004-2005, the number was 52 trainees per 100,000 inhabitants. The sector's average growth rate, therefore, was only 3% from 2004 to 2014.

Training providers are not certified. There is no national qualifications system or national qualifications catalog.

Training

Training courses are divided between short duration (6 months to 1 year) and long training (3 years). In 2015, 23 specialties were offered by the establishments of the VET, around 41 short courses and 36 long courses. Note that certain specialties exist simultaneously in the two types of training while that do not exist that are exclusive in the short training or the long training

Specialties	Number of short courses	Number of long courses
Administration / Communication	1	5
Agriculture / Agropastoral	3	1
Construction	1	3
Communication / Marketing		2
Management Accounting		10
Sewing	3	
Cooked	1	
Education		1
Electricity	6	2
Electronic		1
Cold / Air conditioning	1	
Computer science	1	2
English language)	1	
Masonry	2	
Mechanical / Electricity Auto	1	1
General mechanic		2
Carpentry	3	1
ICT		1
Plumbing	4	
Public health		1
Secretarial office	11	
Dyeing	2	
Total	41	33

Table 3: list of specialties, short and long courses

Source: UNESCO 2017

In 2015 the largest number of courses offered were in the areas of secretariat, accounting and management, followed by the area of electricity. It is worth noting the weak representativeness of training in the agricultural area (10.7%). Formations are not linked, so trainees always start at the beginning of any course. These are based on theoretical knowledge and are not organized by skills. The soft skills that characterize modern jobs are lacking. The courses are not organized by competencies nor do they have the profiles of the trainees defined.

	Total	Poids des spécialités%	Total	Poids des spécialités%
Administration / Communication	323	11,2%	422	22,9%
Agriculture	309	10,7%	4	0,2%
Construction	48	1,7%	177	9,6%
electricity	298	10,3%	87	4,7%
Computer science	253	8,8%	41	2,2%
Auto mechanics / electricity	34	1,2%	24	1,3%
Carpentry	237	8,2%	15	0,8%
Sewing	139	4,8%		
Cooked	31	1,1%		
Cold / Cl	18	0,6%		
Masonry	138	4,8%		
Plumbing	202	7,0%		
Secretarial office	818	28,4%		
Dyeing	35	1,2%		
Management Accounting			609	33,1%
Education			175	9,5%
Electronic			29	1,6%
Mechanical			54	2,9%
ICT			101	5,5%
Pulb health			103	5,6%
Together	2 883	100%	1 841	100%

Table 4: trainees by speciality, 2014-2015

Source: UNESCO 2017

There is a major imbalance between urban and rural contexts and by gender. Women focus almost exclusively on training offers in gender based jobs (cooking, sewing, fruit processing, etc.). Only 5% of the active population has vocational training at the secondary level or higher (RESEN 2015). The offer depends on the capacity of the training center and not on the needs of the labour market. Training involves the payment of tuition fees, whether in public, private or community centers. Public centers are the responsibility of the State, but, as it happens in the regular education system, trainees pay to ensure its regular functioning. In private establishments, trainees pay higher fees. These payments are diversified as there are training grants and payments depend on the duration and type of training.

Specialty name	Frais minimum de formation	Frais maximum de formation
Accounting	75 000	559 250
Communication	30 000	559 250
Computer science	22 500	559 250
Construction	40 000	543 000
Administration	176 000	535 000
Cooked	25 000	500 000
General Electricity	163 600	500 000
Dyeing	150 000	500 000
Electricity building	27 500	180 000
Plumbing	40 000	180 000
Carpentry	40 000	135 000
Agriculture	10 000	97 000
Secretarial office	25 000	79 000
Sewing	22 500	27 500
Auto Mechanics / Electricity	-	180 000
Masonry	41 500	-
Cold / Air conditioning	41 500	-

Table 5: Minimum and maximum tuition fees according to the specialty, in CFA francs

Source: UNESCO 2017

With regard to long courses, 1,841 learners are enrolled, more than three quarters of them (78%) in private establishments. Girls represent just under half (43%) of the learners. For short courses, the enrollment stands at 2,883 learners, of which nearly 67% are enrolled in private establishments and only 25% are girls (UNESCO 2017).

The Trainers

Whether in public or private centers, trainers have permanent or temporary contracts. They can work in the centers in full or part time. For the year 2014-2015, trainers with a permanent contract represented around 46% of all trainers, and civil servants around 43%. They are mostly men: 86% of a total of 353 (UNESCO 2017).

Examples of training centers

Two of the most active of the training centers are the School of Arts and Crafts of Quelélé (NGO AD) and the vocational center of Bissorã (NGO ADPP). Quelele's School of Arts and Crafts was created in 2001 by the NGO Ação para o Desenvolvimento (AD) and was based in a Bissau neighborhood. In 2003, this school was associated with the S. Domingos Rural Training Center.

In 2019 the Professional Formation training was divided in the following formations:

Child education	14	271
Cooking and Household Arts	6	137
Computer repair and maintenance	32	0
Dyeing cloths	5	15
Processing and conservation of fruit	5	53
Small business management	23	31
Solar panels and electric pumps	30	0
Electronics / Radio and television	33	1
Electricity	34	2

Table 6: Quelele's professional formation training

Source: AD. Director's Report, 2020

All courses include an internship. The school is attended by trainees from every districts of Bissau. For several years it was the only center to train monitors for pre-school education (3 levels of training) which remains the area with the greatest weight in the center's overall training. It develops short and medium duration courses for initiation to training or for training. The Rural Training Center of S. Domingos has courses in Carpentry, Locksmiths, Transformation of Agricultural Products, Cutting and Sewing, Informatics. In recent years, entrepreneurship modules have been introduced. These centers employ 37 technicians, 8 of whom are assigned to the administration and 29 trainers (20 men and 17 women)

The second center focused is Bissorã-ADPP Center. Aid for the Development of the People for the People (ADPP-GB) is a Guinean NGO integrated in the network of associations PEOPLE TO PEOPLE working in Guinea-Bissau since 1981. This NGO launched and administrates a training center located in Bissorã, in the northern region. This center, that operates as a boarding school, started its activities in 1997 and by 2018 has trained 1,580 young students. Women represent only 20% of trainees.

Course	Men	Women	Total
Agriculture	271	182	453
Construction	559	0	559
Management and administration and	201	125	337
Solar energy	107	13	120
Installation and maintenance of water pumps	94	4	98
Domestic electricity	104	4	108

Table 7: Distribution of trainees by course and gender at the Bissora training center

Source: ADPP: Training report.

From 2018 onwards, new courses on computer science, bicycle and motorcycle mechanics, sewing and fashion and entrepreneurship were launched. The duration of the training is 11

months and it includes 6 weeks of internship in specialized companies. The center has encouraged trainees to organize together to create self-employment initiatives. The COTEFORC Cooperative and the COAJOT Agricultural Cooperative emerged. In recent years, entrepreneurship modules have been introduced.

Labour market and employment

Guinea-Bissau does not have safe and current official data on the level of employment, nor devices to record unemployment. The available statistical data is already a few years old and is often different from report to report. We used three sources of information: RESEN 2015, UNESCO Report on the relation between VET and the labour market (2017) and the study of the framework, development perspectives, survey and characterization of commercial and industrial companies in Guinea Bissau (ANEME e AIDA 2018). In 2010 about half of the Guinean population was active and 96.1% declared themselves employed, which meant an average unemployment rate of only 3.9% (the unemployed person is considered unemployed, available to work for wages or not, looking for work) (RESEN 2015, p. 80). But we have to consider visible underemployment of part-time workers who would like to change their situation and invisible underemployment, consisting of full-time workers who earn less than the minimum wage in force in the country. There are no data on invisible underemployment and, according to ILAP 2011, underemployment visible affected 35% of the employed active population, that is 33% of the total active population in the country (RESEN 2015).

The informal sector of the economy represents 90% of the labour market. Most of the jobs are in agriculture, fishing and forestry, which represent 72% of jobs, and 99% of these are informal and traditional. Many of the activities are seasonal and there are neither employees nor contractors. The tertiary sector (transport, commerce, administration, services) is increasing and represents 23.5% of the jobs available. The secondary sector (industry and construction) represent less than 5% of jobs, of which 71% are informal (ILAP 2011, in RESEN 2015). The urban informal sector is growing, but productivity has decreased, which leads to an escalate in poverty in urban areas (ANEME e AIDA 2018). But unemployment in the working-age population varies according to socio-economic, demographic, geographical, gender and educational factors. The activity rate is higher among older individuals, in men than in women, and in rural areas than in urban areas. Young people are relatively more affected by unemployment, as are women and urban people (RESEN 2015, p. 81). Unemployment is close to 5% for men and 3% for women; it reaches 5% of the 15-24 years, 6% of the 25-34 years and only 2% of the 35-64 years. Unemployment reaches 9.2% in urban areas and 0.7% in rural environment (RESEN, 2015)

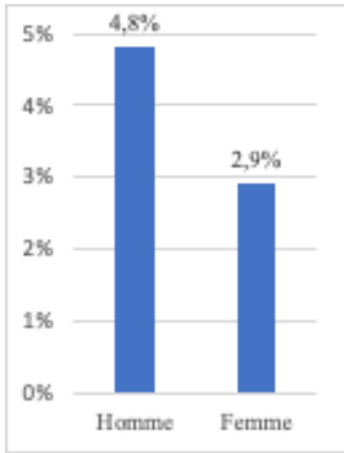


Figure 1: Gender unemployment rate
Source: UNESCO 2017

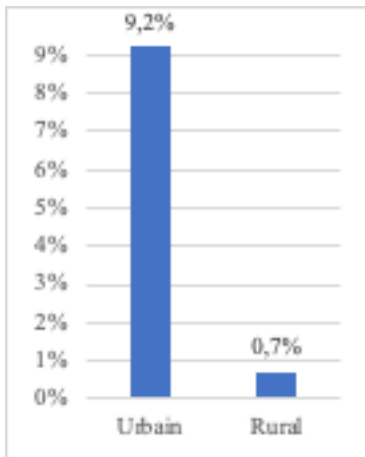


Figure 2: Urban-rural unemployment rate
Source: UNESCO 2017

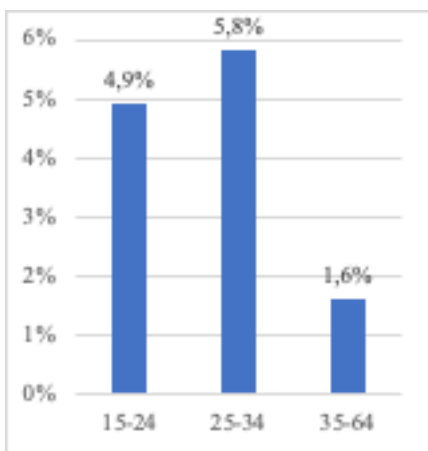


Figure 3: Unemployment rate according to age group
Source: UNESCO 2017

Paradoxically, unemployment increases with higher schooling. Most of those who work have lower qualifications than general secondary education (9 years) and according to the MICS survey (2011) it takes 10 years of complete study for the Guinean individual to be literate in a durable way in adulthood. Informal jobs do not require qualified labour and are occupied by those who abandon the education system or have only basic education. On the other hand, individuals with higher education are not interested in entering the informal labour market. Between 2002 and 2010, youth unemployment under the age of 30 globally decreased by half, with an unemployment rate from 15 to 29 years old that went from 12.6% to 5.5%. During this period there was a decrease in the level of unemployment from 9.8% to 1.5% for those with no education, from 14.8% to 3.3% for those with a primary education level, from 22% to 9.7% for active individuals with the level of general secondary, 6% for those with higher education and decrease of 16% for those with complete secondary education and VET (RESEN 2015). People with specific needs do not have access or have a difficult access to the labour market.

Labour market and training relation

The formal labour sector is located in state administration, in public sector companies and in some private sector companies. The informal rural and urban sector for 2018 was 90% of the work (ANEME e AIDA 2018). Private sector companies (80% of which were formed since 2000) are located in civil construction, the food industry, metalworking, wooden furniture, distribution of food and industrial products. Entrepreneurs questioned about the greatest difficulties they face identified in the first place the lack of qualified labour, followed by bureaucratic and financial reasons, technological failures (lack of digital connections), competition and the excess of labour. Entrepreneurs consider vocational training to be very important, have facilities for carrying it out and 77% of the surveyed entrepreneurs trained their employees between 2016-2018. These trainings were in the following areas: electronic maintenance, mechanical locksmithing, electricity, production management, quality, general information technology, CAD, hygiene and safety at work (ANEME e AIDA 2018). The modern labour market is very restricted (10% of jobs) and does not absorb graduates from higher education and vocational training. But businessmen point out the lack of qualified labour for their companies.

Relationship between training and business

Questioned about the training and education profile of their employees, entrepreneurs in 2017 identified the following:

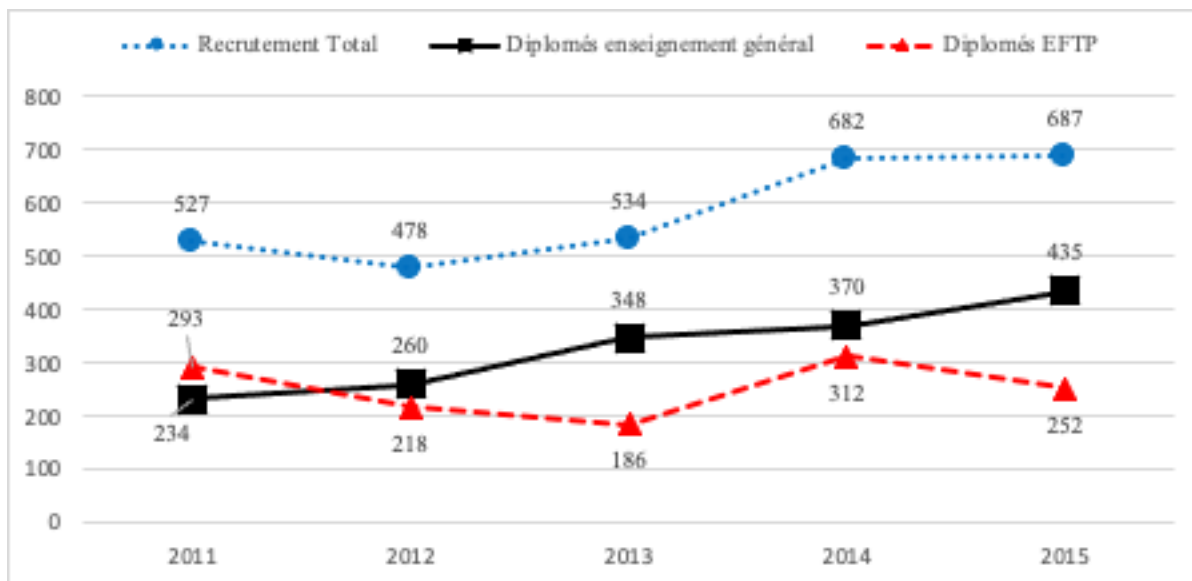


Figure 4: recruitment according to the type of training from 2011 to 2015

Source: UNESCO 2017

Vocational technical training is not the fundamental recruiting source for companies. When asked about the factors that are decisive when hiring an employee, entrepreneurs identified the following parameters: former professional experiences, complementing formations, coherence between the qualifications and the job, reputation of the educational institution, school grades, teachers recommendations.

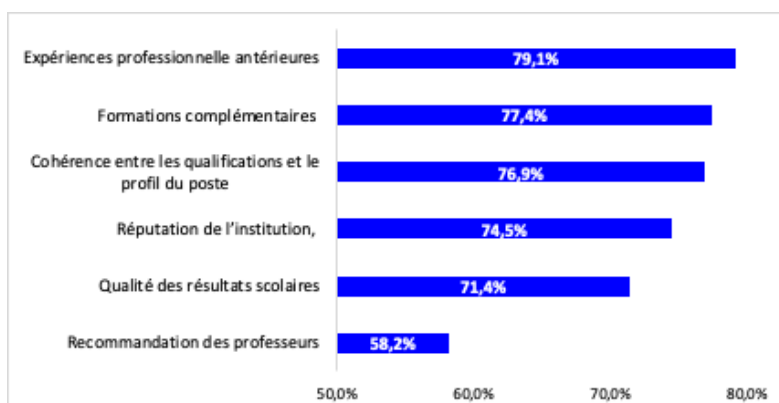


Figure 5: order of importance of factors for hiring employees

Source: UNESCO 2017

Employers in the formal labour market are generally not satisfied with the skills of employees coming from VET. This situation is due to several factors. In the formal private labour market the following were identified:

- a) There is a mismatch between training and the formal job market. For example, in 2010 most of the occupation of the active population was in agro-pastoralism, but only 6% of the trainees were enrolled in professional technical training in this area. In contrast, the service sector, where 82% of trainees enrolled, affected only 23% of jobs (RESEN 2015). The situation has not been changing;
- b) The training is not of quality, hence the entrepreneurs consider with one of their difficulties the excess of manpower. The curricula of VET are highly schooled and not inserted in the dynamics of companies. The stages are short or do not happen. Soft skills were not introduced in the courses (professional preparation, communication, interpersonal attitudes, for example). There is little relationship between training and the employer. These last ones receive the interns but do not participate in their formations at the centers.
- c) There are no skills certification or any national quality standards. VET is neither evaluated nor certified.

As for the traditional labour market, there is also a mismatch in terms of the courses offered, the site where they are made available, the contents of the courses and their organization. Concerning the formal sector of the state, the successive political and financial crises have hindered its modernization. In recent years there has been a deterioration in the civil service, which also translates into hiring people who are not assigned roles or asked for responsibilities. If we consider what has been considered the modern economy market (tourism, hospitality, development of new technologies, productive investments requiring new technologies), VET has to be revitalized. In the current context, job opportunities in the formal sector are lacking for young employees, but the existent offer for the most part do not have the relevant technical skills to enter the formal labour market. Women and especially rural populations are practically not represented in the modern sector. Urban men aged between 35 and 64 are the best represented in this sector (UNESCO 2017).

Finally, there are numerous obstacles to the creation of self-employment, especially of a formal nature: bureaucracy is heavy, the difficulties in accessing credit are great. Over the years, the small improvements in entrepreneurship are the result of microcredit awarded by NGOs. Also in the last few years, VET has introduced modules such as entrepreneurship, business plan. There are no business incubators to support anyone who ventures to create their business. However, the cooperative movement has presented solutions.

Conclusions

The history of the VET system in Guinea-Bissau is long and the problems in this training sector are structural, complex, systemic and have been going on for several years. They are framed in a fundamental problem that is the devaluation of this type of training by the young Guinean. International aid with some exceptions, like the Brazilian cooperation and the Italian religious cooperation, did not supported this type of training. The result of this devaluation is the reduced number of centers, the geographical concentration of those that exist in urban settings and particularly in the capital, the insufficiency of the legal framework, the lack of competence in the ministries and the poverty and abandonment installed in public VET centers. Entrepreneurs

have low expectations of trainees and therefore do not intervene as agents of change, challenging and modernizing courses, trainees, trainers and training centers. There has not been the political stability needed to implement medium and long term VET development plans.

VET's contribution to wealth creation, modernization of the economy, poverty reduction, reduction of inequalities, is far from reaching the objectives systematically announced in the reform programs and in the applications for international financial aid. Unemployment rates are low, but employment is based mainly on the informal rural and urban areas, with productivity at the level of subsistence of populations and VET has not reversed the situation and created human capital to leverage the economy. But human capital is decisive in creating a more just and equal world, hence the need for continued reflection on VET's vision and mission.

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