

Implementation Research

Drivers and Barriers of Scaling-Up the Dual VET-Apprenticeship Pro- gramme in Nepal



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Drivers and Barriers of Scaling-Up the Dual VET-Apprenticeship Programme in Nepal

Scaling up a Dual VET-Apprenticeship programme is challenging because the combination of classroom education and workplace training requires coordination among several actors from the education and employment system. Therefore, this project analyses the drivers and barriers of scaling-up a new Dual VET-Apprenticeship in Nepal.

The Dual VET-Apprenticeship in Nepal

This project analyses the Dual-VET Apprenticeship that started in September 2018 as part of the Enhanced Skills for Sustainable and Rewarding Employment (ENSSURE) project. This formal Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programme lasts for 24 months. The first three months consist of classroom education. The following 20 months combine four to five days of workplace training per week with one day of classroom education per week. Finally, the last month consists of classroom education. The Dual VET-Apprenticeship leads to a certificate equivalent to the Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC).

Empirical Implementation Research Framework

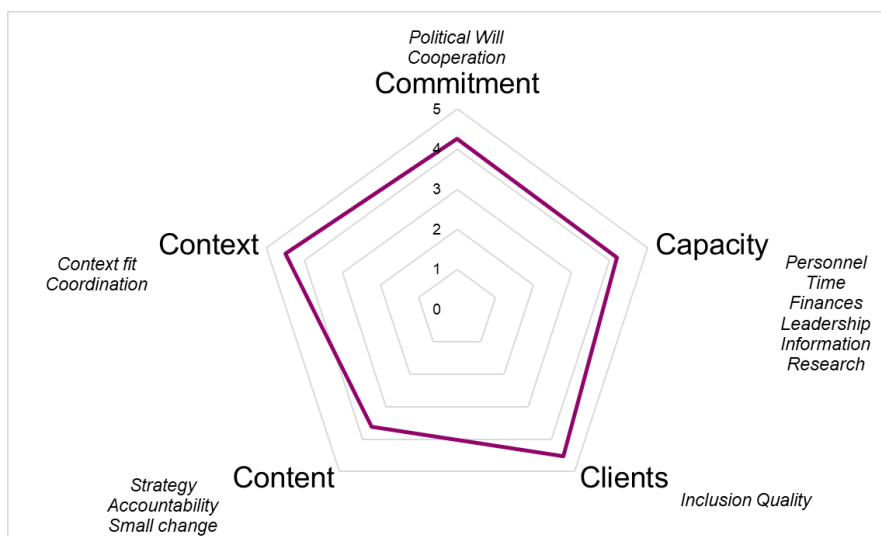
The analytical framework distinguishes five dimensions that could be drivers to implementation: commitment, capacity, clients, content and context. Caves, Baumann and Renold (2019) differentiate this so-called 5C framework of Najam (1995) into several aspects, allowing to measure implementation drivers and barriers empirically. The measurement is based on eight semi-structured interviews with government representatives, government consultants and interview partners from industry associations conducted in May 2019 and help to prepare online surveys which will follow next year. Furthermore, the results build upon preliminary insights from semi-structured interviews with schools, apprentices and companies conducted in November 2018.

Many Implementation Drivers Present

The interviews present a positive view about the presence of implementation drivers to scaling up the programme. The interview partners are mostly confident that the Dual VET-Apprenticeship can be scaled-up. This view is reflected in their assessment of various implementation drivers as summarised in Figure 1. However, the interviews show also a number of implementation barriers that need to be considered carefully.



Figure 1: Assessment of Implementation Drivers



Notes: Source: Own depiction. The figure displays to what extent the five dimensions represent implementation drivers on a scale from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Very much). Italic text describes the aspects of each dimension. Data based on semi-structured interviews with government and industry representatives. N=8

Commitment of government actors, companies, industry associations and apprentices involved in the Dual VET-Apprenticeship is relatively high and represents an implementation driver. There are two main exceptions to this finding. First, schools and teachers might lack commitment to the new programme because they lack the resources to implement it. Second, trade unions are not involved in the programme so far, raising the question if and how they affect the programme as it scales up.

Capacity in terms of personnel, finances and time also represents an implementation driver. As mentioned above, resources of schools and teachers in terms of finances and personnel are an exception in this regard. Furthermore, capacity in terms of available information represents a potential implementation barrier. This lack of information is particularly high for schools, teachers, companies and trade unions. However, this is common within first and second cohorts of pilot projects because many people need to understand the innovations.

The **clients** dimension captures to what extent actors have the appropriate roles in the programme. Generally, the interview partners assess this as an implementation driver. The main exception is that industry associations could play a more pronounced role in the future.

The **content** dimension represents the most critically evaluated implementation driver dimension. The assessment of long-term strategy is generally positive, though interview partners raised questions about the sustainability of the programme due to uncertainty about the future legal framework as Nepal is currently undergoing lots of changes due to the new Constitution of 2015 (Renold and Caves, 2017, Renold, Bolli and Caves, 2018). The interviews further revealed some concerns about quality assurance of both classroom education and workplace training. Finally, the interview partners consider the reform a substantial change. Hence, the required adaptations make scaling up the programme more challenging. Nevertheless, the interview partners believe that the implementation can succeed.

Finally, the **context** dimension is an implementation driver as the interview partners believe that the Dual VET-Apprenticeship fits the Nepali context well. However, they underline that such a success depends heavily on the new TVET Act which could be expected in 2020.

Policy Recommendations/Policy Implications

This project analyses drivers and barriers of scaling-up the Dual VET-Apprenticeship programme in Nepal. The results suggest that scaling-up is possible due to the presence of many implementation drivers. Although this investigation is not yet based on a full stakeholder survey, the preliminary results based on a few interviews of key experts may indicate that scaling-up could be possible. Decision makers should carefully follow the developments regarding these implementation drivers to verify these first results.

This study shows that the scaling-up of the Dual VET-Apprenticeship programme in Nepal is feasible. For this, it is, however, necessary to strengthen the factors that are the drivers of the programme and weaken the factors that are the barriers. Intensive interaction among all actors at the policy as well as at implementation levels would help enhance the commitment of all actors involved in the programme, create an opportunity to identify and discuss shortcomings and develop ways to address them, overcome the situation of lack of communication and information sharing among the stakeholders, and contribute to distribute, accept, and clarify roles and responsibilities among actors. It is also important to include the potential stakeholders in such interactions who directly or indirectly influence the programme.

Finding additional resources, either from the existing sources or from alternative sources, are also important to address one of the potential barriers of the programme like lack of resources. In order to address the concern of sustainability that emerged prominently in the process of this study, the government and companies need to express their commitment towards the programme. The government can make its commitment through legal and policy provisions and by developing an environment where the companies find an encouraging role for them. Companies might provide an important alternative source for the programme. Likewise, state and local governments could also be important resource providers – financial and non-financial resources.

The proposed TVET Act could play a catalyst role in creating the environment for Dual VET-Apprenticeship. One important policy implication of this study is the need for emphasizing comprehensive research works that would help decision making.

This Policy Brief is based on

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Links

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