Toolkit for Employers: Work Readiness Programmes for Youth
10 March 2017

Presented by:

ECAM
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Preface

This Toolkit for Employers was developed through a partnership between the Employers’ Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM) and the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN) and was drafted by an independent consultant. Input was collected from employers, government, trade unions and UNESCO during a collaborative workshop held in March 2017. This Toolkit forms part of the core guidance for Employers from the GAN National Network (GNN) in Malawi.
I. Objective

The purpose of this Toolkit is to provide employers in Malawi with information relevant to the provision and promotion of work readiness programmes for youth. It provides background information on the opportunities and challenges in the Malawian context, and identifies the national and international entities addressing this issue as well as the relevant laws, regulations and programmes. Instructional information on how to set up a work readiness programme is also included, including potential sources of funding and the systems for qualification and certification in Malawi.

It is hoped that this Toolkit will be a useful resource for employers as they establish work readiness programmes in their company and promote opportunities for youth in their economic sector.

II. Key Definitions and Concepts

The term work readiness programme (WRP) encompasses various forms of on-the-job training, including apprenticeships, internships and traineeships. These various forms of work readiness training are defined below, but for the purposes of this Toolkit the term work readiness programme will be used to include all of these forms, except in cases where a particular type is specified.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines apprenticeships as: “Training programmes that combine vocational education with work-based learning for an intermediate occupational skill (i.e., more than routinized job training), and that are subject to externally imposed training standards, particularly for their workplace component.”¹ The minimum age to work in Malawi is set at 14 years of age under the Employment Act of 2000. The key elements of an apprenticeship are:

- It is based in the workplace.
- Apprentices learn under the supervision of the employer.
- It is intended for young people.
- The fundamental aim is learning a trade or acquiring a skill.
- Training is systematic and follows a predefined plan.
- It is governed by a contract between apprentice and employer.

An internship, in contrast, provides job training for professional careers and is similar in some ways to apprenticeships, but the lack of standardization and oversight leaves the term open to broad interpretation. Intern positions may be paid or unpaid, and are usually temporary. Both apprenticeships and internships describe on-the-job training that takes place at the workplace and involves a written or oral contract drawn up between the apprentice/intern and the employer. However, some of the main differences between the two include:

• **Characteristics of the Job:** While this distinction is no longer broadly applicable at a global level, in the Malawian context, internships relate largely to white collar and professional jobs and focus on soft skills, while apprenticeships are traditionally provided for trade, technical and vocational careers.

• **Characteristics of the Apprentice/Intern:** Interns may be college or university students and graduates, high school students, or post-graduate adults. Apprentices in the formal economy, on the other hand, may or may not have previous education and are often legally obliged to attend part-time vocational institutions to receive training. The skills being learned at the workplace. This has led to a dual system within apprenticeships, where the training in the workplace exists in parallel with the training provided at a vocational institution.

• **Degree of Regulation:** In most jurisdictions, apprenticeship is regulated, while internship is not.

• **Certification:** Typically, an apprenticeship leads to an official certification at the end of the training, while an internship does not.

Formal technical, entrepreneurial and vocational education and training (TEVET) in Malawi is provided through technical colleges, community-based training centres, and private technical and vocational training providers. It is a dual system, where on-the-job practical training is combined with theoretical courses in a technical college. These can be divided into two types: regular and parallel. Regular programmes are regulated trainings and apprenticeships sponsored by the Technical Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA). In 2015 the Government of Malawi established eleven Community Technical Colleges throughout the country that target youth in the informal and rural sector, and expect to establish seventeen additional community colleges by the end of the 2015/2016 financial year.

Parallel training programmes run under the responsibility of technical colleges, including apprenticeship and non-apprenticeship programmes. Nonregulated training is also offered through a variety of private training providers and nongovernmental organisations and can vary in terms of course duration and subject areas covered.

Informal vocational training is provided largely through traditional apprenticeships in the informal economy, where a trainee enters into an agreement with a master craftsperson. This type of technical training represents by far the largest number of students in Malawi. In Malawi, informal training occurs mostly in traditional and typically male-dominated trades, including tailoring, bicycle repair, boat building, construction, mechanics, welding, woodwork and shoe repair.

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III. Opportunities, Challenges and Benefits of WRPs in Malawi

Experts agree that youth unemployment is linked to a multitude of social issues concerning economic growth, health, sustainable development, civil unrest, and state stability. While the number of young people entering the market has been growing rapidly each year, the country’s economy has not been growing quickly enough to meet the demand for employment. Uncertainty regarding weather conditions, insufficient power supply, the ongoing suspension of budget and high inflation has contributed to stagnant growth.

Despite high levels of unemployment, research confirms what employers and government representatives commonly express: there is a lack of available young people with the skills to meet existing labour market needs in Malawi. This disparity is referred to as the skills mismatch. Various studies have identified a shortage of skilled workers as one of the key constraints to both local and foreign investment, and Malawi lacks the mid-level technical skills necessary for driving industrialization and structural transformation. Recognizing this significant challenge, in 2013 ECAM member companies prioritized skills development as one of the five main focus areas for their advocacy efforts.

Employer-driven education for workers, through quality work readiness programmes – such as apprenticeships and internships – is a proven avenue to address the skills mismatch. Combining practical training with classroom learning also allows the employer to match the training with their particular needs. WRPs attract young people to an organisation and allow companies to train and to assess young workers, increasing their pool of potential qualified candidates for long term employment.

The demand for WRPs in Malawi continues to grow; the number of trainees at Lilongwe Technical College was eleven times greater overall in 2015 than it was in 2005, and twelve times greater among females. However, the ILO estimates that roughly 90% of those willing to undertake vocational employment find themselves working in informal sectors due to financial and non-financial barriers which may include unaffordable fees, illiteracy, physical disability, stereotyping, etc. Most of these trainees are not paid, live and work in abhorrent conditions and are unregulated. The informal sector forms a substantial link to the formal economy through the supply chains, and the need for providing decent work conditions affects the Malawian economy as a whole.

The level of benefit to employers and youth directly depends on providing a quality WRP that ensures the apprentice/intern is informed about their social and labour rights, their responsibilities toward the

3 This notion is confirmed in various studies, including the Malawi Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises Assessment Report, the Ease of Doing Business Report and the Global Competitiveness Report, published in 2013.
4 These figures were calculated during the current study by assessing the admissions intake data at Lilongwe Technical College.
5 ILO (2010), Employment Report #9, Geneva: ILO
company and any health and safety risks in the workplace. A quality WRP displays the following characteristics: (a) learning objectives and tasks should be outlined in a written agreement; (b) the intern should have a supervisor in order to ensure these objectives are reached; (c) an evaluation system should be in place to monitor the progress of the intern and the quality of the internship. 

The demand for quality WRPs presents employers in Malawi with a huge opportunity not only to address the skills mismatch, but also to address the unemployment crisis among youth in Malawi and combat systemic poverty.

IV. Steps to Establishing a Work Readiness Programme

1. Strategy: Preparing to take on an Apprentice/Intern

Developing a quality WRP begins with the following steps:

- Conduct an internal assessment of the company’s skills needs, capacity for training and supervision, and available funding, as well as the roles that may be filled by an apprentice/intern.
- Link the WRP to the overall goals of the company in order to ensure that the programme meets the long term needs of the company.
- Establish a structured linkage between training institutions, government and employers, as a clear and streamlined relationship between all parties will help ensure the smooth provision of WRPs.

2. Clarity: Engagement of the Apprentice/Intern

A clear job description and written learning goals will help both the employer and the apprentice/intern to understand and agree on the expectations and objectives of the apprenticeship. This is often documented in a work Contract, which is described further in the Malawi GNN Employer Code of Good Practice. Provisions may include:

- The duration of the apprenticeship;
- Information about remuneration; and
- A clear and detailed job description.

3. Structure: Orientation and Management

Managing a work readiness programme well ensures that the apprentice/intern is a valuable contribution to the company and effectively improves their skills. This begins with a detailed orientation, which will help ensure the apprentice/intern acculturates to the company’s values, management style and job tasks. This may include:


Adapted from the 2014 Employers’ Guide to Quality Internships by the European Youth Forum (Ibid.)
• A tour of the workplace;
• Introducing them to other staff members; and
• Providing them with relevant information, including a tour of the workplace, introductions to other staff members, and relevant health and safety information.

Appointing a mentor to guide the apprentice/intern throughout their time at the company will help the youth to grow in understanding their role and maximizing their effectiveness within the company. A good mentor will:
• Work with the apprentice/intern to establish clear learning objectives and performance evaluation criteria;
• Meet with them regularly to discuss questions and complaints; and
• Assess their progress at predefined intervals and reinforce their motivation.

Youth face many barriers in accessing WRPs, including being unpaid and struggling to pay their monthly living expenses. The provision of sufficient compensation for their living expenses not only allows the apprentice/intern to dedicate the necessary time and attention to perform well at their job, but a well-trained youth may become a valuable future employee. Investing in WRPs, in many ways, is an investment into the company.

4. Improvement: Evaluating the Work Readiness Programme

Performance reviews will help to ensure that the learning objectives of the WRP are being met and that the youth is performing all of their assigned tasks. This includes their work etiquette and attitudes toward work, as well as their skills and knowledge. Performance evaluations may include a midterm and a final review to assess how well they’ve performed, and explore opportunities for long term employment.

Example performance review questions may include:
• How well has the apprentice/intern met the learning objectives?
• What projects have they completed or contributed to?
• What have they learned that makes them more prepared for the labour market afterward?
• How well have they performed as a member of the staff?
• In what areas do they have room for improvement?

V. Qualifications and Certifications for Apprenticeships

A. Entry Qualifications

Entry qualification for apprentices and interns/trainees in Malawi is the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE), though the informal sector accommodates those with qualifications below the MSCE. The Junior Certificate of Secondary Education (JCE) is a similar certification that was abolished in 2015.

Formal TEVET training targets youth who have received the MSCE, though some will accommodate JCE holders, especially during the transition. Informal classes, on the other hand, target JCE holders and below, including vendors and school drop-outs who are not able to advance to further studies and have moved into self-employment.

B. Certifications of Completion

Previously, three certification systems existed in Malawi to acknowledge when an apprentice successfully completed their technical and vocational training:

- **The National Trade Test (NTT), administered by the Ministry of Labour:** This is the oldest qualification system in Malawi, and is three-tiered. Assessment consists of a theoretical and practical module with emphasis on practical dexterity. There is an open admission to the test, which means candidates do not need to have attended a training programme to take the test.

- **The Malawi Crafts and Advanced Crafts Certificate, administered by the Ministry of Education through MANEB:** This is a two-tier qualification system introduced in the 1980’s and in contrast to the NTT, it is programme-based. The completion of two years of training college is required for the Crafts Certificate and four years for the Advanced Crafts Certificate.

- **Competence Based Education and Training (CBET), introduced and managed by TEVETA:** This is a four-level credit point system introduced by TEVETA in 2005. It requires attendance in a specified training programme and is the target qualification for the formal TEVETA-sponsored apprentices and trainees.

In light of challenges caused by multiple curricula and certification systems, in January 2017 the three curricula were harmonized and aligned under the Technical Qualification Framework (TQF). During the three-year phase out of the old system, the three previous certification systems will still be accepted. Trainers are being inducted on the implementation of standards and assessment included under the new TEVET curriculum.

UNESCO is also working on developing a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which would integrate education and training beginning from primary school through the doctoral level. Qualification framework is not an assessment framework; however it would provide descriptors which inform competencies that can be assessed.

Regarding quality assurance, TEVETA has a three-tiered system including the accreditation of trainers, programmes and training institutions.

C. Recognition of Prior Learning

For those youth who have proficiency and previous experience in the relevant skills for their sector or industry, but do not necessarily have the formal education or certification, ILO and MOLYSMD are currently collaborating in the development of a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system that would replace the NTT under the new system.
VI. Sources of Funding for Work Readiness Programmes

A. Apprenticeships

At the supply level, the following funding is available for apprenticeship training:

1. Public technical colleges and community technical colleges are funded by the Government of Malawi.
2. Private TEVET schools are mainly funded through fees paid by the students.
3. TEVETA administers apprenticeship programmes, the TEVET Levy (including funds for social security benefits for apprentices), and government subvention to TEVET.

At the demand level, students pay school fees to attend both public and private technical schools.

At employer level, arrangement can be made between TEVETA and the employer whereby in the first year TEVETA pays 75% of the costs while the company covers 25%; in the second year the costs are split at 50%; in the third year TEVETA covers 25% while the employer pays 75%; and for subsequent years of training, the full responsibility lies with the company.

According to TEVETA, employers contribute 1% of the payroll to the TEVET Levy Fund which is managed by TEVETA. This fund is then used to provide reimbursements to employers on various technical and vocational training programmes. By providing information on the training, the costs they incurred, employers can claim a portion of these costs back from TEVETA based on prearranged agreement.

B. Internships

Employers provide for the whole cost of an internship arrangement, and whether they provide a stipend or other form of remuneration is at the discretion of the company.

VII. National and International Entities addressing WRPs in Malawi

Below is a description of the key associations, public institutions and international organisations that are stakeholders in Malawi with regard to the provision of WRPs.

A. Associations

1. Employers’ Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM): ECAM is the only institution recognized by the Labour Relations Act of 1996 as a representative body of employers in Malawi and accordingly it forms part of the tripartite structure in Malawi’s labour market. ECAM’s primary role is the promotion, guidance and protection of employers’ interests in labour, employment and socioeconomic issues. ECAM advocates for an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises.
2. Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MCCCI): MCCCI is a partnership of enterprises and associations representing all sectors of the economy of Malawi. It is committed

9 TEVETA Levy requirements can be accessed at http://www.teveta.mw/index.php/tevet-levy
to the achievement of Malawi’s socio-economic development through joint action and enlightened dialogue among private sector members and constituencies. They offer office premises for Small and Medium Enterprises.

3. Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU): MCTU was founded in 1964 to represent trade unions in Malawi and is an integral part of the tripartite in the labour market. It is on the board of TEVETA, where it advances the interest of employees with regard to technical, vocational and skills training in Malawi.

B. Public Institutions

1. Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sports and Manpower Development (MOLYSMD): MOLYSMD provides policy direction and guidance on all labour administration and vocational training matters. The Ministry is also mandated to protect and develop the labour force in order to contribute to the socioeconomic development of Malawi.

2. Technical Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA): TEVETA was established by the TEVET Act of 1999 with the purpose to facilitate the provision of technical education and training opportunities and facilitate such training. TEVETA establishes the regulations regarding apprenticeships, training accreditation, and manages the TEVET Fund which is financed through the TEVET Levy. TEVETA also implements programmes in the informal economy consisting of promoting community participation in economic development initiatives. Under this programming, TEVETA implements skills development initiatives, on-the-job training and other programmes that run in coordination with partners.

3. National Youth Council of Malawi (NYCOM): NYCOM is a statutory corporation, established through the National Youth Council Act of Parliament, No. 22 of 1996. NYCOM was set up after government realized the need for a more focused coordination of youth development programmes, which was deficient in the country’s development plans. The Youth Council is the key institution working to ensure the effective implementation, coordination and evaluation of various youth development programmes in Malawi. It mobilizes and regulates youth organisations in Malawi by linking schools and college graduates with potential employers.

4. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST): MOEST equips students with knowledge, skills and values to be self-reliant and to contribute to national development. Education in Malawi promotes national unity, patriotism, and the spirit of leadership and loyalty. Students are trained to have acceptable moral and ethical behaviour and are imparted with vocational and entrepreneurship skills including appropriate resource utilisation and management practices.

5. Malawi Institute of Education (MIE): MIE was established under the Education Act of 2013 and is responsible for designing, developing and evaluating the national curricula for schools and colleges. It also evaluates textbooks, teachers’ guides and other instructional materials, disseminates relevant education information, trains and assists in the training of teachers. Other functions related to the conduct of the institute’s examinations and the award of degrees, diplomas and certificates.
6. **Ministry of Gender, Children and Community Development (MOGCCD):** MOGCCD's mission is to promote social economic empowerment and the protection of women and children using community and welfare approaches. It is mandated to provide policy guidance for women and child development services. It is responsible for putting in place systems to develop instruments, structures, policies, guidelines and programmes so that Malawi will become a nation with dignified, healthy, protected and prosperous women and children.

C. International Organisations

1. **Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN):** GAN is a coalition of committed companies, international organisations, businesses and employers’ federations who promote and create work readiness programmes for youth and foster skills development for businesses. It provides an opportunity for various stakeholders, including employers, government, international entities, and individuals to network and coordinate in the promotion of work readiness programmes. Malawi participates with the GAN through the Malawi GAN National Network (GNN), which is managed by ECAM.

2. **International Labour Organisation (ILO):** Formed in 1919, the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers representatives to set labour standards, develop policies, and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men. The ILO supported Decent Work Country Programme prioritizes youth development and empowerment, including youth employment, as a key priority area to sustain and accelerate economic growth. The ILO in collaboration with ECAM, TEVETA and the Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sport and Manpower Development has successfully piloted a work based learning programme in the horticulture industry which is now due for replication.

3. **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO):** Malawi joined UNESCO in 1964 and UNESCO is actively working to promote and improve WRPs in Malawi, including the creation of promotional and awareness materials and the harmonization of TEVET curricula and assessment standards under the TQF. They are also contributing to the development of a National Qualification Framework (NQF) and a Malawi Qualifications Authority to oversee all qualifications in Malawi.

D. Other Partners

- Students’ unions
- Religious youth groups and associations
- Academic institutions
- Training providers’ associations
VIII. Relevant Laws, Policies, Regulations and Programmes in Malawi

Below is a description of the relevant laws, regulations and programmes in Malawi that relate to the provision of WRPs for youth.

A. Laws

1. **Employment Act (2000):** This law includes important references to ensuring that young people between the ages of 14 and 18 should not work in situations that are "(a) harmful to the health, safety, education, morals or development of such a person; or (b) prejudicial to his attendance at school or any other vocational or training programme." An exception to the minimum age of 14 for work is granted if it is in the context of a vocational technical school or other training institution and approved by a public authority to be an integral part of the educational or vocational training programme.

2. **Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education Training Act (1999):** The TEVET Act described the objectives of TEVET in Malawi and established the Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority of Malawi (TEVETA). In addition, it introduced a TEVET Levy for the TEVET Fund, which was officially set at 2% but is implemented at 1%, to be paid by employers, including government, in order to create a sustainable financial framework for TEVET in the medium term.

3. **Education Act (2013):** The Education Act provides for the establishment, administration and management of primary, secondary and teacher training schools. It established institutional structures to support this education system by creating bodies responsible for advising on matters pertaining to education in Malawi, developing curricula, registering and licensing teachers, and providing registration and inspection for all schools and teacher training colleges, including private schools and colleges. It also established the Teachers Council of Malawi and the Malawi Institute of Education.

B. Policies

1. **Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) II (2006-2011):** The MGDS Strategy is the overarching medium-term strategy for Malawi, designed to attain the nation’s Vision 2020. The MGDS builds on the Malawi Economic Growth Strategy that emphasized the need to create a conducive environment for private sector investment and the creation of employment opportunities. One of the priority areas is sustainable economic growth, which includes enhancing employment and income by increasing the number of women and youth who actively participate in economic activities.

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2. National Employment and Labour Policy (2014-2019): A five-year strategic document (2014-2019) that provides a guidance framework for the country's efforts to achieve productive and decent employment and enterprise development, including compliance with labour standards, social protection and social dialogue. It provides a Youth Employment strategy that reads, in part, as follows: "The policy will ensure the creative energies of the young people are harnessed and utilized for productive and decent employment through entrepreneurship and enterprise development for national development."

3. TVET Policy (2013): The TVET Policy objectives include promoting an integrated, demand driven, competency-based, modular technical, entrepreneurial and vocational training system.

4. National Youth Policy (2013): The primary purpose of the National Youth Policy is the empowerment of youth in Malawi. It recognizes that youth have the right to gainful, decent employment opportunities either in any sector on completion of formal or non-formal education, and/or when entering the legal working age in Malawi. Youth economic empowerment is identified as a priority area for action.

5. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Policy (2012): One of the aims of this policy is to increase the contribution of MSMEs to economic growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation in Malawi. It recognizes that successful MSMEs have the potential to uplift women, youth and marginalized groups from poverty and that youth employment and entrepreneurship should be promoted.

C. Regulations

1. TEVETA Act, Regulation #6: Regulation 6 of the TEVET Act governs the roles and responsibilities that the employer and apprentice/intern have toward each other, such as the right to payment, and for the apprentice/intern to faithfully serve the employer.

D. Programmes

1. National Youth Internship Programme (2010): Currently the NYCOM are coordinating, under their Youth Participation and Economic Empowerment Project, a youth placement, mentoring and internship programme with employers. The council links school and college graduates with potential employers. Once identified and accepted by the employers, they are mentored under a training contract for a period of at least one year at no cost to the employer.

2. Malawi Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) (2011-2016): The DWCP is the main vehicle for delivery of technical cooperation with the ILO and its purpose is to coordinate, harmonize and align technical assistance and financial resources to promote the ILO's global Decent Work Agenda. Country Priority 1 seeks to strengthen the economic and labour market policy frame and

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ii Government of Malawi (2014), National Employment and Labour Policy. Lilongwe: Ministry of Labour, Youth and Manpower Development
create more and better employment and income generation opportunities, particularly for vulnerable groups including youth. It is currently under revision.

**IX. Relevant Research and Data on WRPs and Youth Employment in Malawi**

The following is a list of research and reports related to the provision of WRPs in Malawi. It is meant to serve as a reference for further information as needs arise. Documents can be provided upon request by ECAM and GAN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRP-related Studies that have been conducted in Malawi</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. ECAM (2015) Survey on Intake of Apprentices and Interns to Improve Employable Skills through Industrial Attachment</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. GAN (2017) Documentation and Assessment of Apprenticeship and Internship Programmes in Malawi</td>
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| 11. RTC (2014) Apprenticeship in Malta, Results of a study among apprentices and employers, Malta Safford, Kimberly; Cooper, Deborah; Wolfenden, Freda and Chitsulo, Joyce (2013). ‘Give Courage to
the Ladies: Expansive Apprenticeship for Women in Rural Malawi. Journal of Vocational Education & Training, 65(2)

12 TEVETA Apprenticeship programme, Tracer Studies for TEVETA Graduates,

TEVETA Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) Authority (2016),

13 TEVET Authority Planning and Research Division (2016) TEVET Graduates Employer Satisfaction Survey. Lilongwe: TEVET Authority


15 GiZ (2008) Where has the University Education Gone?

National-level Statistics for Malawi


International Information on WRPs


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