

SWISS VET INITIATIVE – Newsletter 3/2015



1. Boosting Swiss Vocational Training in India

The Quality Assurance Project (QAP) trains vocational trainers and examiners in India according to Swiss specifications. It is a further step towards strengthening the quality of Swiss vocational education in India, as a part of the Swiss Vocational Education and Training Initiative in India (SVETII).

The SVETII QAP strengthens bilateral cooperation between Switzerland and India in VET as agreed on by Minister of Economy Johann Schneider-Ammann and the Union Minister of Labor and Employment and Chairman of the National Skill Development Corporation Subramanian Ramadorai in 2012. The

project began on September 1, 2015 and includes development of competence profiles and courses for training vocational trainers, examination experts and other governance staff required to run the dual-track apprenticeship system. At the outset, a range of modules for standardized training will be developed. Through SVETII QAP, the involved associations and institutions in coordination with SkillSonics guarantee Swiss quality standards in India's mechanical, electrical and metal trades. By improving vocational training quality, SVETII QAP is laying the foundations for increased economic exchange between India and Switzerland.



The SkillSonics delegation visits the Ecole de construction in Tolochenaz (left) and Bobst in Mez, Switzerland (right).

Over 100 Programs on Offer

In the framework of the SVETII over a 100 apprentice training programs and courses in the mechanical, electrical and metal industries are being offered in cooperation with Swiss partner organizations and associations. Successful graduates receive a recognized diploma from Swissmem, the Association of Swiss Mechanical and Engineering Industries.

Implementing Swiss vocational training in India benefits Swiss firms there who suffer from a shortage of skilled employees. In a country where only two percent of the

workforce has had vocational training, Indian companies are progressively recognizing the value of Swiss vocational training.

When implementing the dual vocational training system according to the Swiss model in India, we take local economic and cultural conditions as well as the existing educational system into consideration. Swiss and local companies who train apprentices are getting involved. These include Rieter, ABB, Holcim, Bühler, Burckhardt Compression, Bobst and Starrag.



The SkillSonics delegation at the Mechatronics School Winterthur and the Ausbildungszentrum Winterthur, Switzerland.

SVETII's partners are well-known state and private organizations and associations in Switzerland and India, respectively. On the state level in Switzerland, the pilot project of the Swiss VET Initiative as well as the recently launched Quality Assurance Project are supported by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) and the Mechatronics School Winterthur (MSW). Leading know-

how partners in the private sector include Swissmem that sets the requirements for vocational training and is responsible for the Swiss certification of the apprentices. In India, SkillSonics' partners are the National Skill Development Organization (NSDC), the Capital Goods Sector Council (CGSC) and other important actors in the area of vocational training.

2. Swiss VET Wins International Recognition



The introduction of Swiss vocational education and training to India in the framework of the SVETII is a success. The Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) has mastered challenges in the implementation of Swiss skills such as the active involvement of trainees in courses and their ability to work independently. In this interview, Dr. Cornelia Oertle, Director, SFIVET, explains the role Switzerland can play in international vocational training and the importance of industry and other local organizations.

You have been Director of SFIVET since February 1, 2015. In this capacity, what are your priorities?

An important priority is implementing the SFIVET board's strategy. This is already in full swing. We want to promote the perception of SFIVET and its reputation as *the* expert organization for vocational education and training questions in Switzerland as we are the only active vocational education specialists in the country. We want to ensure brand

leadership in basic and continuing vocational education and training through a high level of innovation. We also want to strengthen SFIVET's position in Swiss tertiary education through clarification of status and accreditation. Part of this strategy and focus is development of SFIVET's international relations and involvement in international cooperations.

How does the Swiss vocational school pedagogic and didactic approach function? How does it fit into the dual system and what does it contribute?

There is no Swiss vocational school pedagogic and didactic approach as such. In Switzerland, a wide range of pedagogic and didactic models are used in vocational schools. Recently, however, we have observed a trend where the competence-oriented approach to contextual learning that SFIVET has co-developed is being used more widely. Since 2013 all educational ordinances include a training syllabus which focuses on professional situations that define professional targets. The dual system should teach apprentices the necessary competencies for specific occupations. Contextual learning and the capacity to make the transition from theory to practice is of central importance. The competence-oriented approach to contextual learning supports this.

What role does SFIVET play in SVETII?

From the start of the project, SFIVET was

involved as a partner and expert organization.

Describe SFIVET's work in India.

Our experts are involved in activities from supporting the development of new curricula to the monitoring of final exams. Teachers, instructors and examiners are trained according to SFIVET parameters. The most important task is training multipliers who will gradually take over the functions of the SFIVET experts.

What has your experience with the SVETII trainees been? Where have you focused your training efforts?

We have focused on developing competence-oriented training and teaching. The Indian instructors had to learn a different pedagogical culture and adapt to new forms of teaching. They faced a challenge because in Indian society it is not customary for young trainees and students to actively engage in the learning process or to work independently.

But they displayed a lot of openness to these new approaches. The difficulty is, rather, in implementing them on a daily basis. The Indian teaching personnel are highly qualified even though the infrastructure at their disposal is much worse than that of our instructors.

How did you coordinate your activities with other SVETII programs?

The collaboration with SkillSonics and other partners including SERI and

Swissmem was constructive and driven by a mutual desire to ensure that the project succeeds.

What could your experts learn from the Indian pedagogical approach?

Indian instructors have to work in much more difficult conditions with their students. We learned that even with simple instruments one can teach successfully.

India lacks well-trained professionals. That is why the Indian Government launched an initiative to train 500 million apprentices by 2022. What role can Switzerland, SFIVET and SVETII play in this plan?

We can only play a supporting role. In India as in other places, it is not just about creating new educational structures but involving industry on a large scale to become a partner in vocational training. Achieving this requires a particularly strong and resolute Indian partner who knows how to incorporate the Swiss contribution into the existing Indian system.

How is the dual vocational education system accepted in other countries?

It is gratifying that the advantages of the dual system are finally being recognized. International interest in the Swiss vocational training system is expected to keep growing with more countries adopting the system and adapting it to local conditions.

3. About SkillSonics

SkillSonics provides vocational education and training (VET) services based on the Swiss demand oriented dual-track system to companies and educational institutions. Companies engage SkillSonics to implement customized skilling solutions that improve their productivity and competitiveness. SkillSonics offers programs for entry level and advanced shopfloor professionals, trainers and examiners. It also supplies associated services in VET based on proven Swiss processes and methodologies. SkillSonics adapts its programs, courseware and delivery methods to suit the needs of industries in India and other parts of the world. The SkillSonics approach aligns with existing local education and training systems and adjusts to local social and economic conditions.

The SkillSonics team has run the SVETII since 2008. As a result of the pilot project's success and growing interest from the Indian authorities and Swiss government, respectively, the project partners decided to scale the VET model up throughout India.

SkillSonics is incorporated in Zurich and Bangalore and has partnerships with recognized organizations in Switzerland and India active in VET:

- Swiss Mechanical and Electrical Manufacturing Industries (Swissmem)

- Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET)
- Mechatronics School Winterthur (MSW)
- Federation of Swiss Food Industries (FIAL)
- Working Group of Food Technologists (AG LMT)
- National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

Further tie-ups with Swiss partners are being considered.

So far, about 500 entry level professionals have been trained and certified in one- and two-year courses as production technicians (multi-skilled, welding and electrical). About 4'500 employed technicians have taken short term courses in various fields including maintenance and painting. At the same time, over 200 teachers, instructors and examiners have participated in trainer courses offered by SkillSonics. Currently, training takes place at 20 locations across India.

Approach

SkillSonics offers the full range of services to develop and implement the VET model. These are as follows:

- Analyse labour market needs and design implementation model.
- Provide training content for trainers and apprentices.

- Manage training, assessment and certification of apprentices, teachers, instructors and examiners.
- Coach partners in all aspects of VET implementation.

SkillSonics ensures that SVETII participants achieve international quality standards in the workplace through its rigorous implementation and supervision of all project phases.

How does Swiss VET work?

Apprenticeship training in Switzerland has a longstanding tradition. Today, VET is the predominant form of upper secondary education in Switzerland. About 70% of all young people are in a VET program. Most VET courses are offered through the company-based dual-track system, so-called because there are two places of learning – a vocational school for general education and a host company for practical training. In Switzerland, VET programs of two, three or four years exist in approximately 230 occupations in all fields of industry, including commerce, hospitality and agriculture.

Students are employed by a host company in their vocational area throughout the program. Those who wish to get a university degree following their apprenticeship may do so after fulfilling certain academic requirements.

Swiss VET is a joint public and private undertaking. The tasks are shared among the Swiss Confederation that functions as

the overall regulatory body, supervises in charge of quality assurance and recognition of programs; industry associations that define the training content and set benchmarks; 26 cantons that supervise implementation and run VET institutes; and host companies that hire and train apprentices under special training contracts.

The strength of Switzerland's VET system can be attributed to the following characteristics:

- Theoretical instruction and practical training are directly linked to company requirements.
- VET is not the realm of low achievers, but regarded as a desirable entry point to a promising career.
- VET offers career opportunities to participants since they have the relevant hard and soft skills combined with practical experience.
- The Swiss system allows participants to progress to higher education, including university.

Education in Switzerland is a holistic system geared towards the needs of the labor market. It is largely due to VET that Switzerland has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the world, and that its companies are successful both at home and in the global marketplace.

For further information about our services and courses, please contact info@skillsonics.com or visit our website www.skillsonics.com.

SkillSonics: Facts & Figures

Business Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provider of international vocational education training according to Swiss methods and standards ➤ Implementation of the Swiss Vocational Education and Training Initiative (SVETII) Pilot Project in India from 2008 to 2011 ➤ Implementation of project scale-up from 2012 onwards
Partner Organizations	<p>Switzerland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Swiss Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Industries (Swissmem) ➤ Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) ➤ Mechatronics School Winterthur (MSW) ➤ Federation of Swiss Food Industries (FIAL) ➤ Working Group of Food Technologists (AG LMT) <p>India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) <p>South Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Swiss-South African Cooperation Initiative (SSACI)
Affiliations and Memberships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) ➤ Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) ➤ Bangalore Chambers of Industry and Commerce (BCIC)
Locations	20 locations across 12 states in India, Bangladesh
Courses	<p>Over 100+ courses with modular structure and continued expansion.</p> <p>Delivery Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Theory courses taught by certified teachers: 15% ➤ Practical assignments supervised by company instructors: 50% ➤ Productive assignments: 35% <p>Categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Two to Three Year Course: Multi-Skilled Production Technician, Maintenance Technician ➤ One Year Specialization Courses: Electrical, Welding & Fabrication ➤ Short Term Courses (6 days to 3 months): Painting, CNC, Electrical Assembly, Cement etc. ➤ Work Place Competencies: Industrial Safety, Life Skills, Environment, Professional Behavior and Attitude ➤ Courses for Training of Trainers (instructors, teachers, assessors)
Examinations and Certifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Swissmem Standard Assessment ➤ NSDC SSC-Based Assessment ➤ Indian National NSDC Certificate ➤ Swissmem Diploma and Certificate ➤ SFIVET Certification for Trainers

	➤ SkillSonics Certificate for Short Courses
Apprentices/ Professionals Trained	➤ 500 new entrants (one- and two-year courses) – Swissmem certification ➤ 4’500 existing workforce (short term courses) - National and SkillSonics Certification
Trainers Trained	➤ Above 200 instructors, teachers and examiners
Staff	20+ employees in India and in Switzerland (management, engineers, content specialists, training and assessment experts, project managers)

We thank our partners in Switzerland and India.

SERI	State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation	www.sbf.admin.ch
SFIVET	Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training	www.ehb-schweiz.ch
SWISSMEM	Swiss Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Industries	www.swissmem.ch
MSW	Mechatronics School Winterthur	www.msw.ch
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation	www.nsdcindia.org
FIAL	Federation of Swiss Food Industries	www.fial.ch
AG LMT	Working Group of Food Technologists	www.lebensmitteltechnologie.ch

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