



# Quick Brief

A news update from the NBI on its programmes, business leadership and issues on sustainable development.

2 July 2018

## **Building the capacity of public TVET colleges to deliver Green Skills: Roundtable discussions on the renewable energy technologies sector**

**The Green economy provides a range of entry pathways into technical occupations with opportunities in Installation, Repair and Maintenance Occupations that lend themselves to large-scale employment in big companies and small to medium size enterprises, as well as to self-employment. However, the supply of skills for the Green economy, particularly through the public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college system, is limited. This presents an opportunity to enhance the capacity in TVET colleges to optimise pathways into Green occupations on a scalable and sustainable basis.**

The National Business Initiative (NBI) hosted roundtable discussions on 24 May 2018, on Building the Capacity of Public TVET Colleges to deliver Green Skills for the Renewable Energy Technologies (RET) Sector. The dialogue forms part of NBI's scoping exercise aimed at informing the design and delivery of a three-year programme that will demonstrate a scalable and sustainable model of TVET college pathways into employment and self-employment in occupations in the Green economy, with a particular focus on renewable energy technologies.

The roundtable was first in series of engagements to be had with social partners in: understanding the composition of the sector; identifying areas growth and their respective skills needs; mapping key role players; and identifying practical steps for enhancing the capacity of TVET colleges to deliver Green skills.

Representatives from government, industry associations and councils, research institutions, SETAs, donor and multilateral United Nations agencies took part in the session.

The discussions raised issues relating to barriers and opportunities as follows:

- Policy uncertainty and regulatory barriers have resulted in wastage of resources and job losses where investments are made in training programmes that have no relevance to sector demands. Participants highlighted the need for a policy environment conducive to rapid technological changes and job creation such as aligning training with demand in Special Economic Zones.
- A skills development legislation with a narrow focus on accredited training which often limits swift responses to new developments in a fast-changing technology-driven environment. The discussions highlighted the role that professional bodies and industry associations could play in developing sector-specific and demand-driven training and encouraged the recognition of informal training and workplace-based learning that does not result in a qualification.
- Qualifications are fragmented and pathways into Green jobs are generally restricted and do not facilitate easy transition from current jobs into Green occupations and jobs. The discussions recognised the role that TVET colleges could play in providing foundational skills in operator and technician-related jobs in installation, repair and maintenance from which to develop some specialisations for renewable energy technologies and Green occupations.
- Support for TVET college students to run successful small and medium size enterprises should form an integral part of the training programme design and delivery. The calibre of TVET college lecturers therefore should be such that this goal can be realised.

The session concluded with the agreement that adopting an ecosystem approach where all key role players develop a shared understanding of the problem and jointly agree on the appropriate interventions would ensure that all partners discharge their allocated roles and responsibilities towards an agreed common purpose. The dialogue highlighted the need to harness the role of business in identifying demand, driving innovation and availing expertise and resources. A key consideration in this regard would be to build on what is currently working whilst at the same time endeavour to develop new approaches and models that position TVET colleges for a highly paced and technology-driven world of work.

The consultations with role players are continuing. Please get in touch with **Cecil Macheke** if you would like to make an input into the discussions.

## Business Action for Sustainable Growth

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