

Qualitative Research Report
by the Mala Project

Reviewing the Connection Between the Skills Centres and the Job Market in The Gambia



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1. Abbreviations

DoSBSE	Department of State for Basic & Secondary Education
GEIPA	Gambian Investment and Export Promotion Agency
GYIN	Global Youth Innovation Network
MoBSE	Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoT	Ministry of Trade
MoYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
NEMA	National Agricultural Land and Water Management & Development project
NACCUG	The National Association of Corporate Credit Union of the Gambia
NAQAA	National Accreditation Quality Assurance
NAYCONF	National Youth Conference
NEDI	National Enterprise Development Institution
NTA	National Training Authority
NYC	National Youth Council
PGVS	Presentation Girls Vocational School
PIA	President's International Award
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
US	United States
YEP	Youth Empowerment Project of the Gambia

2. Overview of suggestions

2.1 Basic and Secondary Education

Suggestions

1. Schools should monitor their students more sufficiently, in order to avoid drop-outs fleeing the Gambia through the backway.
2. There should be stricter academic rules concerning the secondary school diploma, to ensure a coherent level of knowledge.

2.2 Skills centres/ Technical Vocational Educational Training (TVET) institutions

Suggestions

1. There should be stricter academic rules for the entry of a certain course at a skills centre, to ensure a coherent level of knowledge in the classes.
2. Skills centres should possess a coherent curriculum and syllabus of the courses involved imposed by NAQAA.
3. Skills centres should have an entrepreneurship course incorporated in the curriculum of the skills centres for all professions (e.g. carpentry, mechanics, cookery, tailoring).
4. Organize regular meetings with the different representatives, as well as lecturers and tutors of the different skills centres both private and public skills centres, to exchange ideas, plans and the content of the provided courses.
5. Create a list of all graduates of the individual skills centres, involving their current job and contact details.

2.3 Apprenticeships

Suggestions

1. The duration of apprenticeships is ought to be limited to a certain time period by installing a policy.
2. A maximum allowed duration that a tailor can teach an unpaid apprentice to increase the level of teaching and generate an income for apprentices.
3. Qualify and license tailors to a certain level to teach apprenticeships.

2.4 Cultural findings

Suggestions

1. The image of TVET-schools should be improved, in order to make communities more aware of its importance and value.
2. The Gambian mindset of business tailors should be more focused on possessing a structural set-up and productivity.
3. Gambian tailors should have a more open attitude towards having tourists as part of their customer segment.
4. Schools should try and educate their students on the possibilities of saving money, instead of relying on others.

2.5 Economic system, Government and Export

Suggestions

1. The Gambian government ought to adjust export and import regulations and policies to make the Gambian economy function more optimally.

2.6 Tailor business development and systems

Suggestions

1. Expand existing micro-enterprises in order to stimulate specialization and growth.
2. Communicate the importance of differentiation, innovation and creative promotion between the tailors and the products, hereby increasing heterogeneity.
3. Improve the quality of the detailing and finishing, hereby increasing the value of the clothing.
4. Respond to the demand for western clothing of the youngsters and demand from the tourists.
5. Increase the productivity and structure within the enterprises and hereby increase the trust of the customers.

2.7 Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship organizations

Suggestions

1. The organizations should improve communication between each other.
2. Organizations ought to collaborate more in terms of funding and trainings.
3. The organizations should focus more on the promotion of their activities to reach their target groups.

2.8 Funding

Suggestions

1. The financing possibilities for start-ups available to the students and young people should be communicated more effectively.
2. Students should become conscious of their own abilities in creating a starting capital, rather than waiting for financial help.

2.9 NAYCONF

Suggestions

1. Students should be given more time to present their outcomes to the audience, because this ought to be the most important outcome of the NAYCONF.
2. MoYS ought to form a committee that ensures the outcomes of the NAYCONF conference will be implemented.

3. Introduction

The Mala project is a project created by the Delft University of Technology as part of the minor program International Entrepreneurship and Development. During a period of three months we, three university students, conducted our research in the Gambia by the name of project Mala. Mala means “to light” in Mandinka, which brings us to the mission statement of our research;

“The Mala project wishes to bridge a gap between students and the textile industry existing out of a lack of entrepreneurial skills, knowledge of the industry and financial means, to light up the path for young entrepreneurs.”

The research attempts to formulate answers to the following three research questions;

1. What aspects in the educational system in the Gambia need improvement in order for it to function in the most optimal way?
2. What are the cultural implications on the effectiveness of entrepreneurship in the Gambia?
3. What aspects in the textile production would need improvement for it to function in the most optimal way?
4. In what way could the gap between the textile education (students) and the economic market (industry) in practice be narrowed down in an entrepreneurial way?

In this report we will first discuss the theoretical framework related to our research. This framework will provide the knowledge we obtained from conducting a literature research and contextualize the situation in the Gambia. Thereafter we will discuss our methodology and the set-up of the research including the observed limitations. This is followed by the results of the research as well as the discussion and potential suggestions that could be implemented by the different stakeholder groups. This section attempts to answer the research questions stated above. This will lead to our conclusion including the future perspectives and possibilities of this research.

4. Theoretical framework

4.1 The Gambia

The Republic of The Gambia is the smallest country on the African mainland and stretches 450 km along the Gambia River. In total the country covers an area of approximately 11 square kilometres (BBC, 2017). The North, East and South the Gambia is bordered by Senegal, and in the West by the Atlantic Ocean. The country itself is divided in six regions: Banjul region, Central River region, Lower River region, North Bank region, Upper River region and West Coast region (Shirley law, 2017). The Gambia lies within the tropical sub-humid eco climatic zone. During mid-June to early October there is a small rainy season followed by a long dry season from October to early June (UNDP, 2016).

The population of the Gambia consists of 1,8 million people comprising a 2.8% growth rate (BBC, 2017) (UNDP, 2016). The Gambia is the most densely populated country in Africa with 96 inhabitants per square kilometer. The median age of the inhabitants of the Gambia is 19.8 years (UNDP, 2016). There are eight different groups living in the Gambia. The largest one is the Mandinka tribe (42%), followed by the Fula tribe (18%), the Wolof tribe (16%), the Jola tribe (10%), the Serahule tribe (9%) and others (4%). The different tribes all have their own language and traditions, but they succeed to live side by side with a minimum amount of conflicts between the tribes. Inter-tribe relationships are normal, which means that the tribes became mixed over time. The Gambia is seen as a very peaceful country compared to other countries in Gambia (Access to Gambia, 2018) (UNDP, 2016).

The official language is English, however most local people speak either Mandinka or Wolof. In the Gambia most people speak three to four languages, which makes it easy for the different tribes to communicate with each other (Access to Gambia, 2018). The religion of the inhabitants of the Gambia is mainly Islamic (90%), besides the Islam there is Christianity (9%) and traditional believes as well as others (1,0%) (Clark A., Gailey H, Forde. E, 2018).

4.2 Educational system

The formal educational system in the Gambia is divided into three sectors; basic education, secondary education and post-secondary education (tertiary education). The first two sectors are under the umbrella of MoBSE (Ministry of basic and secondary education) and the last sector is under the umbrella of MoHE (ministry of higher education). Next to the formal education, there is also the Madrassa education (Arabic school). The quality of the schools is regulated by NAQAA (National Accreditation Quality Assurance Authority), former called NTA (National Training Authority) (DoSBSE, 2006).

4.2.1 Nursery school

Nursery schools are privately owned schools in which children can start their education. Children usually spend two to three years at nursery school before they enter the formal educational system starting with basic education (Access to Gambia, 2018).

4.2.2 Basic education

Basic education includes lower basic school, comparable to primary school, upper basic school and Adult/Non-formal education. Lower basic school runs from grade 1 till grade 6 and upper basic school runs from grade 6 till grade nine. The basic education is primarily funded by the Government (DoSBSE, 2006).

4.2.3 Secondary education

Secondary education exists out of senior secondary, which runs from grade 9 till grade 12. These schools are, in contrary to basic education, mostly funded by the private sector (DoSBSE, 2006).

4.2.4 Post-secondary education

Post-secondary education is divided in two levels; TVET-schools and higher education.

4.2.4.1 TVET-schools

“The programs for Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) in The Gambia aim to prepare and mobilize human resources to meet both manpower needs and provide employment opportunities in the country.” (DoSBSE, 2006; p.9). TVET schools learn vocational craft professions such as tailoring and constructing. There are publicly funded institutions, which means they are government funded, and private institutions, indicating they are self-funded or funded by the private sector (DoSBSE, 2006).

4.2.4.2 Higher education

Higher education includes teachers training, college and university. To enter higher education, it is obligatory to finish senior secondary school with a set level of grades. There are several colleges in the Gambia, but only one University (DoSBSE, 2006).

4.2.5 Madrassa education

Madrassa education, also called Arabic school, is a different school form from the formal educational system (English school). In these schools Arabic is used as the main language and the schools are a medium of instruction and possesses a strong Islamic orientation (DoSBSE, 2006). Children that attend this form of education will most of the time also attend the formal educational system afterwards. Arabic school nowadays do have to provide a certain level of English, mathematics and science to be qualified as a school (DoSBSE, 2006).

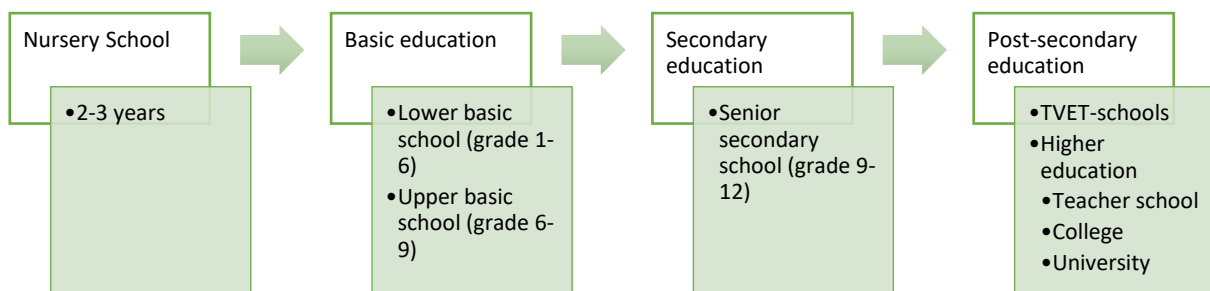


Figure 1: The Gambian educational system

4.3 Gambian Government System

After a 22-year reign of president Yahya Jammeh the governmental situation of the Gambia has changed in January 2017 with the election of the new president Adama Barrow. Jammeh came to power in 1994 in a bloodless coup and imposed an authoritarian rule. The maximum of income taxes imposed is 35%, and corporate taxes reach a maximum of 32%.

4.4 Businesses and the job market

Tourism and agriculture are the most influential sectors of the Gambian's Gross Domestic Product. Although the Gambia is a small country, it is attractive to tourists, due to its wide variety of birds, as well as the availability of the beaches at the coast accompanied by the high temperatures during the dry season. Tourism is therefore one of the largest industries in the Gambia. It comprises 18% of the total GDP of the Gambia (Heritage, 2017). The tourism sector however was heavily influenced during the past few years by the Ebola threat in other countries in West-Africa such as Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, which caused tourists to choose other destinations (World Bank, 2017). The other large industry in the Gambia is agriculture. The agricultural sector is dependent on the intensity of the rain season and differs per year. It comprises 30% of the GDP of the Gambia. The economic outlook for the upcoming years depends on the ability of the newly installed administration to successfully respond to these, and future developments (UNDAF, 2016).

A total of 48,6% of the population was considered to live in poverty as identified by the World Bank in 2015. In rural areas, this percentage can get as high as 70% (Heritage, 2017). The informal sectors dominate the urban sectors of cities such as Serrekunda and Banjul, while the rural sectors focus on agriculture. The Gambia is ranking 155th out of 177 countries in the 2007/2008 UNDP Human Development Index Ranking (Heritage, 2017). This low rating is caused by a high rate of illiteracy, a low life expectancy, a relatively high death rate and the GDP of the Gambia. In addition, the public debt of the Gambia is 91.6% of the total GDP (World Bank, 2017).

Due to an overvaluation of the exchange rate of the Dalasi, more financial strains have been imposed on the Gambian economy. A new policy that lifts currency controls installed in 2016 is supposed to decrease and ease these financial strains and contribute to the growth of the Gambia (World Bank, 2017).

Due to its favourable geographical position in West-Africa the Gambia has possibilities to function as a hub, in which potential future possibilities lie. A lot of young Gambians however try to flee the Gambia and reach Europe by making use of the backway. This is caused by a deteriorating economic situation, the past political instability, and a lack of future possibilities for employment for the youth. Hereby the migrants will travel illegally to countries such as Libya and will try to reach Europe by boat. This is one of the most pressing problems currently in the Gambia (Nshimyumuremyi, Arvantis, Gassama, Lal, Janneh, 2017).

Potential future employment can be observed in the opportunities of entrepreneurship which has not been touched upon on a bigger scale in the Gambia. The lack of growth in the entrepreneurial sector depends on the lack of entrepreneurial skills, lack of the possibilities of acquiring financial starting capital, and unfavourable policies by the government (Nshimyumuremyi, Arvantis, Gassama, Lal, Janneh, 2017).

This paper focuses specifically on the possibilities the textile industry offers to the Gambia, as well as entrepreneurship within the textile industry. The textile market is a small proportion of the total contribution to the GDP. The textile production is mainly focused on small-scale, local, tailor-made clothing.

4.5 Textile market & clothing industry of the Gambia

The tailoring and textile production is one of the most important cultural activities in West-African countries such as the Gambia (Rovine, 2009). The textile production in the Gambia mainly relies on tailoring shops which usually consist of one tailor doing the job. Often this tailor is also being accompanied by one to four students doing an apprenticeship to learn the profession. The work of the tailor relies on the demand of the customer, the tailor mainly sews the clothing and usually the customers purchases the fabrics. In the Gambia there are two main traditional techniques of producing fabrics, batik and tie and dye. Further processing of fabrics is done by sewing which is the most common used technique in the Gambia. Tailors that dye their fabrics (for batik and tie and dye) purchase the undyed damask or brocade imported from the United Kingdom, China or India and retailed by Lebanese traders (Prom, 2000). Cotton used in the Gambia to produce fabrics is mainly imported from neighbouring countries like Senegal (Prom, 2000). Another important component of the tailoring industry is the seasonal nature of the profession, the demand is higher during the dry season and lower during the rainy season. Furthermore, an important competitor with the local textile production are the cheaper foreign imported factory textiles (Rovine, 2009).

4.6 Export & import

The Gambia is known as the 185th largest exporter in the world as observed by the OEC. In 2015 the Gambia exported a total of 188 million US dollars and imported 912 million US dollars, which indicates an enormous discrepancy between export and import. The top export products are rough wood, coconuts, brazil nuts, ground nut oil, tropical fruit, and scrap iron. The government revenue depends intensively on the ground nuts exports, leaving the Gambia influential for fluctuations (Heritage, 2017). In addition, a small proportion of export is in the export of light pure woven cotton, which comprises a total of 140 thousand US Dollars, while the largest import product is light pure woven cotton worth 141 million US Dollars. The largest proportion of import of the Gambia is delivered by China, Senegal, Brazil, India and the Netherlands. This has resulted in a negative trade balance of 794 million dollar in 2015 (OEC, 2017).

4.7 Micro-finance possibilities

Lack of finance is one of the big problems for Gambians that want to start a business. Loans from the bank usually have a high interest rate, grants are difficult to receive, and micro-finance institutions are insecure about their own funding and difficult to get in touch with. The main goal of micro-finance institutions is to reach clients in the poor layers of the population and financial sustainability (Mersland & Storm, 2008). These institutions are often managed by international directors in the Gambia, Mersland and Storm state from their research improved financial performance comes with a board consisting of local directors.

5. Methodology

This research is based on first-hand interviews conducted with multiple stakeholder-groups. The goal is to create a comprehensive overview of the available information by analysing the different perspectives and groups that are engaged in the connection between the employability at the job market, entrepreneurship and the skills centres. This involves the perspectives of the influential entrepreneurship organizations, but also the opinions of the students and teachers. The interviews contained semi-structured questions (Appendix 1). Summaries of the taken interviews are provided in appendix 3. The groups of students of the different skills centres and tailor businesses have been thematically structured according to the provided answers. An overview of the different organizations and institutions that have been interviewed is given in the following paragraphs.

5.1 Educational Institutions

- National Accreditation & Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA)
 - o Government led organization focused on the educational system.
 - o Meeting and interview
- Presentation Girls Vocational School
 - o A private skills centre providing home-management, secretary, hair-dressing programs.
 - o 4 days of observation and interviews as well as an organized 7-lesson entrepreneurial workshop in collaboration with the school.
 - Principal
 - 3 teachers
 - 3 students
- President's International Award (PIA)
 - o A public skills centre offering carpentry, electricity, auto-mechanics, tailoring etc.
 - o 3 days of observation and interviews.
 - Principal
 - 4 teachers
 - 2 students
- Insight Training Centre
 - o A private college and skills centre providing several programs such as tailoring, carpentry, construction etc.
 - o 3 days of observation and interviews.
 - Principal
 - 2 teachers
 - 4 students
- École Satang Diabang, Senegal.
 - o Successful skills centre in Senegal
 - o 1 day of observation and interviews.

5.2 Tailors and Tailor related organizations

- Five micro-enterprises located in Tanji, Kombo area, West Coast region.
 - o Separate interviews
- Facil – medium enterprise
 - o Visit and Interview through e-mail.
- African Arts and Dutch Design – exporting to the Netherlands
 - o Interview

5.3 Youth Empowering and Entrepreneurial organizations/individuals

- Youth Empowerment Project (YEP-Gambia)
 - o Interview
- EMPRETEC
 - o Interview
- NEDI
 - o Interview
- Start-Up Incubator
 - o Interview
- GYIN
 - o Interview
- National Youth Council
 - o Meeting
- Gambian Youth Chamber of Commerce
 - o Interview

The educational institutions we have researched are a mixture of private and public institutions. NAQAA, being the implementing factor of education in the Gambia, was part of this research. The skills centres that have been observed all have in common that they provide a tailoring program and are located in the Kombo area. In addition, a skills centre in Senegal was observed due to its different set-up but similar objectives towards tailoring. It was used as a comparison.

The tailors that have been interviewed had different nationalities and were chosen because of the proximity to one another. In addition, the medium sized enterprise Facil was contacted due to its size and set-up. Graduates of PIA were also employed by Facil, which made it interesting to observe the skills of the graduates, and quality of the education.

To gain experience and knowledge about entrepreneurship in the Gambia we conducted a 7-lesson entrepreneurship workshop focused on the home management section providing tailoring and cookery on Presentation Girls Vocational School. Hereby we observed the responses of the students, and their abilities to understand the contents of the course in the duration of a 7-lesson workshop. The lessons were adjusted during the workshop to fit the level of the students and the recommendations from the teachers. We focused on creativity and differentiation in the workshop, as well as an active way of teaching the students. A practical assignment was involved, mainly focused on making a business model canvas and a presentation, in which the students pitched their start-up idea. The workshop manual was influenced by several Dutch entrepreneurship books, as well as information gained from an entrepreneurship trainer at GGTI. Furthermore, we attended an entrepreneurship workshop of a Dutch entrepreneur, representing a Dutch program of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, named; PUM. Through this we obtained useful information which we incorporated into our own entrepreneurship workshop.

In addition, several statistics and data have been obtained by requesting information from: YEP, NAQAA and KMC. Furthermore, to obtain more information regarding the opinion of the students and entrepreneurs themselves, the National Youth Conference (NAYCONF), located this year in Basse, was attended. This is a yearly conference focused on bringing together the youth and improving empowerment and employability. A total of four days of observation have contributed to the research. A short questionnaire was handed out to 69 participants at NAYCONF. The questionnaire provided the opportunity for the individuals to also state personal opinions regarding empowerment and entrepreneurship. In addition, a focus group discussion was held with the present individuals at the Youth Empowerment and Employment workgroup. Their opinion has been noted down and integrated in the results.

5.4 Limitations

The limitations of our research consisted mainly out of a lack of time. In a total of five months the research has been established. This involved a two months preparation in the Netherlands, as well three months spent in the Gambia to conduct the research. However, although many different organizations and institutions have been consulted, not all the involved parties have been discussed. This therefore influences the outcomes of the research.

Another limitation to our research is the expertise of the researchers. Since it was conducted by three students of the TU Delft, which were not specialized in this educational department certain observations might have not been conducted with the required academic expertise, or might contain certain prejudices.

In addition, the research was mainly focused on the Kombo area. The interviewed organizations are all located in the Kombo area. The rural area has not been adequately integrated in the results, therefore the observations and suggestions can only account for the Kombo area.

Lastly, a limited amount of information is available about certain aspects of the Gambia. This involves information about the economy of the Gambia and the educational system. Not all data provided or requested online and offline is up to date or correct. This is a limitation since it might have influenced the results to a certain extent.

During the next sections the following different themes will be discussed. Respectively:

- Educational System and Gambian Culture
- Tailor industry and Textile market
- Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship

6. Discussion and results of the finding

6.1 Visited skills centres

6.1.1 Presentation Girls Vocational School

Presentation Girls Vocational School is a relatively small, private, Christian TVET. The academic background of the girls that apply differ from being illiterate to graduates of the 12th grade. The illiterate girls will receive extra help of the teachers as well as the students. Therefore, due to the different academic background the academic level of the students differs. To be able to give as many girls the possibility to enrol for PGVS, including girls which had little to no previous education, the fees are kept low.

At the school, the different subjects the students can choose are hair-dressing, secretary, home-management including cookery and tailoring. The education lasts for three years, including a three-month attachment, related to their choice of subject.

PGVS prepares their students for the job market by providing extra lecturers given by the teachers. One example is the tailoring teacher, who takes responsibility for inquiring with the students who would want to start their own tailoring shop. The students that raise their hands will be invited for an extra class in which they will be informed about the way to start a business. A mentioned improvement by one of the teachers would be to update the courses more to the current standards of the market to be able to give the students the best preparation for future employment.

In addition, several students were interviewed and asked about their opinion about PGVS. All maintained a positive attitude towards the quality of the skills centre. Remarkable was the positive and tight bond between the teachers and the students. The two seemed mutually interested and engaged, the school is well-maintained and well-organized. Furthermore, the students possessed different motivations for being enrolled, however most were mainly concerned for improving their own future as well as the future of individuals close to them. Unfortunately, not all students are able to finish the study due to a lack of financial capabilities. As mentioned by the students, PGVS does try to support the students in every possible manner by extending deadlines or to look for sponsors.

6.1.1.2 Entrepreneurship workshop at PGVS by the Mala Team

One aspect that was mentioned several times during the interviews with multiple teachers and the principal of PGVS was the need for an entrepreneurship course in the vocational curriculum. It was considered to be a great advantage for the school and the students. Although several attempts were made, there was no budget available for employing an entrepreneurship teacher. Therefore, as part of gaining experience and knowledge about entrepreneurship in the Gambia we conducted a 7-lesson entrepreneurship workshop at the PGVS. This workshop consisted of theory lessons accompanied by practical lessons. During the theory lesson the following subjects were discussed:

- Introduction to Entrepreneurship
- Strategic plan: Management
- Commercial plan: Marketing
- Financial plan: The financial management

During this process we developed a short basic manual focused on tailoring and cookery students at skills centres, which can be found in the appendix (Appendix 4). The lessons were based on this manual, hereby testing its validity. The practical assignment during the workshop required the students to form groups of three to four students, and hypothetically set-up a business using a business model canvas. The different aspects of the business model canvas were extensively

elaborated upon during the lessons. Afterwards the students received the time to fill in the different aspects for their particular business. This business was supposed to focus on their direction of studies. The student group consisted of girls in the second year of their three years home management program including cookery, designing and tailoring. Through the assignment the students would get to know the different involved aspects of starting a business and gain experience. At the end of the 7 lessons the students were asked to pitch their hypothetical start-up in 3 to 5 minutes. During the preparations for the presentation we tried to stimulate the students to be creative and different, since we consider this to be of high importance for the development of a successful entrepreneurship in the Gambia. The students were given several study materials, as well as a large poster to use during the presentation.

6.1.2 President's International Award

President's International Award (PIA) is a public school which was set up and funded by the previous president Jammeh and the duke of Edinburgh award. The school is part of the act of parliament which results in support from the government and low school fees. To generate income the school also has a restaurant, carpentry workshop and a hostel attached to the school which can be rented. The skills centre is focused on skills development of youth. Enrolled students are mainly students that have finished either 9th grade, 6th grade or the Arabic school. The school offers promotional exams to the next level and are verified by NAQAA. All programs also include a 3-month compulsory attachment.

PIA is focused on preparing their students for the job market. The curriculum of NAQAA also includes a business class for all the vocational skills, but the school is facing difficulties to be able to provide students with these classes. This is mainly caused by the fact that business teachers are difficult to find and demand a high income. Currently a volunteer is teaching a business course, in which students from all departments are introduced to the concept of entrepreneurship. PIA also focuses on the practical experience of the occupation the students wish to do after graduating. There is however a lack of communication with the graduates of the school. There is no record of the current jobs of the graduates, there thus is no real opportunity to learn from the experience of these graduates.

In addition, the skills centres could bring the students in contact with micro-financing organizations during the entrepreneurship course. The students that graduate and wish to start an entrepreneurship would then have more knowledge about the manner of acquiring starting capital. The school is connected to NEDI, they provide a business clinic to students before they graduate and when financial funds are available they also provide micro-financing. NEDI, PIA and YEP are working together to support the school. PIA for example currently has received sponsoring by YEP to improve the tailoring classes with sufficient equipment.

6.1.3 Insight Training Centre

Insight training centre is a very different school compared to PGVS and PIA. The school is not only a skills centre, but also a college. Next to that it has multiple locations; it has a location in Old Yundum, Serrekunda and Basse. The school offers multiple courses/programs for different fees and different time frames. Compared to the other schools, Insight does have more strict entry requirements. To enter a program a student is required to take an entry exam. This will decide if the students can start the course or if the student will have to start with an additional course first. The courses are strict and there are obligatory rules to obtain your diploma or certificate. If a student fails an exam, he or she can retake it not more than three times. After this the student has to start the entire course again. The head master of the institute has been to the Netherlands to investigate how schools work

there and applied this knowledge to improve the institute. For example, he keeps the statistics of graduated students up to date and makes sure that everything is well structured.

The school focuses on guiding their students to the practical job market by including practical courses in their programs. For example, the construction students are building a conference centre on the school property as one of their assignments. They get paid for this job and they can come as many times as they want, but one time is mandatory a week. Furthermore, the school owns its own radio station in which journalist students can practice their skills. This radio station also hires some students after they graduate, to immediately offer them a job. Next to these initiatives, the school tries to employ teachers that have a lot of experience in the field that they teach.

The tailoring classes will start in January, so we could not meet these students or attend the class. We did have the chance to talk to one of the tailoring teachers. She herself was a graduate of PGVS. The tailoring class takes six months and another six months internship. She tries to teach her students all she knows, but she admits that it would be good to have more teachers that are experienced in other fields for example batik. Furthermore, she tries to let her students be creative and create their own personality, which creates an open learning environment.

Besides the centre itself, the school is starting a new project. They will open a class at jail to provide, especially female, inmates with free tailoring education so they will be able to connect to the job market once they will participate in the daily civil life again. This project is supposed to start in January 2018.

6.1.4 Senegalese École Satang Diabang

The École Satang Diabang is a private school in Senegal focused on tailoring, hairdressing and cookery. The students are mainly illiterate girls, within this institution they are provided a second chance in life in exchange for a low fee. The funding is provided by both the fees of the students, the small restaurant and shop they have started and external support from funding organizations. Through responding to the market needs the school attempts to convey relevant information and skills to their students. The girls that focus on tailoring for example learn a unique technique of Batik and tie and dye, hereby differentiating themselves from apprentices and other skill centres.

Entrepreneurship is of high importance to the École Satang Diabang. Almost all teachers have experience in entrepreneurship by running a business themselves besides teaching at the school. This stimulates and inspires the students to start a business. In addition, the Senegalese government has recently implemented the obligatory entrepreneurship course at all Senegalese skills centres. The teachers receive training and an extensive manual of teaching entrepreneurship. A total of five teachers of the École Satang Diabang have attended this training and can be considered qualified to teach the business course, which will be provided for two hours every week the upcoming three years.

Taking this school as an example one can observe a difference between other similar schools in the Gambia. Although schools and skills centres in the Gambia wish to focus on entrepreneurship, and wish to implement this in their curriculum, it is not yet implemented accordingly. There is no regulation of entrepreneurship and tailoring courses by NAQAA or any other institution/organization. In addition, the focus of the École Satang Diabang is at conveying the values of competitiveness and creativity to their students.

6.2 Educational related findings

The following section attempts to answer RQ1: *What aspects in the educational system in the Gambia need improvement in order for it to function in the most optimal way?*

6.2.1 NAQAA

All educational institutions are connected to NAQAA, which falls under the umbrella of the executing part of the Ministry of Higher Education of the Gambia. NAQAA is responsible for reviewing or improving the proposed curriculums of different educational institutions and reviewing the facilities available. In addition, NAQAA possesses the authority to license teachers and lecturers and apprenticeships when they are assigned and qualified by NAQAA. Without the provided license, a teacher is not able to be paid, as well as officially registered in his profession. A volunteer is solely allowed to teach for a total of three months without a license. If, and when, a student will go on attachment as part of his or her education the attachment could be reviewed and qualified by NAQAA as well.

Part of the following suggestions provided in the research, based on the interviews taken with the different stake holder groups, will request NAQAA to take part and action in order to improve the relation between the job market and skills centres. Due to its authority NAQAA will be addressed. Several plans already have been established in cooperation with entrepreneurship organizations and institutions and NAQAA is working on improvement. The suggestions given in the report are based on current observations of the implemented policies.

6.2.2 Basic and secondary education

Suggestions

1. Schools should monitor their students more sufficiently, in order to avoid drop-outs fleeing the Gambia through the backway.
2. There should be stricter academic rules concerning the secondary school diploma, to ensure a coherent level of knowledge.

Drop-outs

The youth of the Gambia do not always follow the usual path of education like explained in the theoretical framework. Firstly, some children never even get the chance to go to school due to a lack of financial capacities. There is also a high drop-out rate at 9th grade or stop after grade 12, for example due to financial reasons or family reasons. The children of these two groups either help at home, continue with an apprenticeship, try and start for themselves, go to a skill centre or in some ways go through the back-way to Europe. To prevent dropouts from fleeing the Gambia by use of the backway, closer monitoring of these students is recommended.

Stricter academic rules

During our visits to different skills centres, we noted that although schools require a certain level of education, this will not automatically lead to a standard level of education among the students. This is due to the fact that high school students are able to pass grade twelve without ever having to pass any course. Students can graduate without having obtained sufficient minimal knowledge. It would be recommended to add certain academic rules to senior secondary school, so students can for example only receive their diploma if they did not fail more than two subjects. By implementing these rules, students who pass grade twelve will be more on the same educational level which makes it easier for all educational centres to sufficiently educate their students.

6.2.3 Skills centres/ Technical Vocational Educational Training (TVET) institutions

Suggestions

1. There should be stricter academic rules for the entry of a certain course at a skills centre, to ensure a coherent level of knowledge in the classes.
2. Skills centres should possess a coherent curriculum and syllabus of the courses involved imposed by NAQAA.
 - YEP is involved, together with NAQAA in improving this, by developing curricula, reviewing and adjusting these, and potentially implement them in as many skills centres as possible.
 - Improving the tailoring curriculum in terms of practicing more on electric sewing machines and including more advanced use of techniques.
3. Skills centres should have an entrepreneurship course incorporated in the curriculum of the skill centres for all professions.
 - a. GIEPA, EMPRETEC is recently developing a policy report in which it is suggested that a general entrepreneurship workshop will be implemented on all schools.
4. Organize regular meetings with the different representatives, as well as lecturers and tutors of the different skill centres both private and public skills centres, to exchange ideas, plans and the content of the provided courses.
5. Create a list of all the graduates of the skills centres, involving their current job and contact details.

Observations

During our stay in the Gambia we visited three skills centres. PGVS, PIA and Insight Training Centre. PGVS was visited for a total of four days, while PIA and Insight were visited for a total of three days. All gave us a very open and warm welcome. The enthusiasm and motivated teachers and students were remarkable. In total there are sixteen skills centres in the Gambia that are officially registered at NAQAA providing a tailoring program in their curriculum (appendix 3). Interviews were taken with the principal, several teachers, and several students of the different directions and years of education. Through these perspectives and interviews we did notice certain hurdles the skills centres need to face, and which could be improved upon.

The skills centres in the Gambia focus on conveying basic hard skills to their students. This involves professions such as carpentry, secretary or tailoring. Besides the teaching of the skills, the students are also taught in English and mathematics. This provides them with the required skills of being able to communicate and calculate prices for their added value while being employed. The skills centres are either part of the private or public sector. This implies several differences between the different institutions. The public institutions get a part of the sponsoring of the school provided by the government. The majority of the skills centres however are private. This means they are responsible themselves for gathering sufficient funding. This is often regarded as a problem since there are not many sponsors available and the fees do not suffice for covering the costs. The fees of the skills centres are often attempted to be held low to make it possible for students from large families and low incomes to be able to enrol. The fees together with external sponsoring will fund the private skills centres. Nevertheless, the fees are regarded by potential students as an obstacle, due to their financial background.

Stricter entry requirements

Most skills centres require their students to have graduated grade twelve of secondary school, before they can enter a course at the school. Nevertheless, there are also many skills centres that

accept students who have not finished senior secondary school or did not have any previous education. The students that did finish senior secondary school also differ a lot on the educational levels, as discussed in the section basic and secondary education. To make sure that students have a coherent level of knowledge, it is advisable to adjust the entry requirements of the skills centres. Adding an entry test at the beginning of the year could be a good solution. If students fail this test, they first have to go to a “pre-skills centre level”. On this level the students will obtain the knowledge they need to pass the entry test. NAQAA already has a similar initiative, but it is not yet implemented in all the skills centres. Hereby everyone who starts with their first year of a skills centre will have the same level of education, which makes it easier for the skills centre to sufficiently educate their students.

Coherent Curriculum and syllabus

Although many skills centres focus on conveying the same skills to their students, the syllabuses and curriculums are different for every skills centre. This leads to a discrepancy between the skills and level of education of the different skills centres. Some might have a higher level and better skills than the graduates of other schools. To ensure a coherency in the level of skills and education of the different skills centres, there should be curriculums developed that will not only focus on the Gambian market, but will also meet international standards. Information should be added regarding the required knowledge the students should have and which skills the students ought to have at the end of their studies. Herby it will become easier to host and organize exchange programs with foreign countries. It will in addition establish a minimum standard of quality of the graduates of the different skills centres and will hereby add value to being enrolled in a skills education. As noted during the interviews there are already several plans ongoing in this department aiming to improve the curriculums of the skills centres. Important is however if these plans will be put into practice. A strict monitoring program of NAQAA would be a valuable addition to this.

Tailor curriculum

What was observed in the different tailoring classes was the focus on the practice of the profession. It was unfortunate however not all students are always able to make use of the sewing machines due to a lack of machines. In addition, the students are mainly taught to sew on a hand-sewing machine, and spent only a minimum amount of time on the electric sewing machine. The more complicated clothing ought to be sewed on the electric sewing machine due to its advanced character and extra abilities. Therefore, it is important for the students to be taught in this department more thoroughly.

More advanced techniques and sewing with different fabrics should be included in the curriculum in order to encourage development in the textile industry. This would also involve the teaching of specialized techniques. Students get taught solely the techniques the teachers have knowledge about, there is no set level or requirements. The quality of the tailor lesson will therefore be dependent on the skills of the teacher. By bringing the teacher to a higher standard, involving different industrial techniques of sewing, the education of the students will also be improved. Next, what is noteworthy, is the lack of attention paid to the detailed finishing of the clothing. Often zippers and threads will not be finished with care. As a teacher one should be more strict and not accept rushed inaccurate work. Lastly, the students do not get taught in standard measurements, models and sizes. They solely know how to customize clothing. To be able to compete, and expand businesses it is of importance this knowledge is incorporated in the curriculum of the tailoring class.

Possessing these skills would make it possible for tailor students to be part of or start or work in a larger enterprise. It will also make the tailoring education more attractive compared to apprenticeship for potential students.

Entrepreneurship course

During the visits to the different skills centres it was also noted that often the schools want to have an entrepreneurship course integrated in the curriculum. There are not sufficient employment possibilities for the graduates of all the skills centres. Therefore, new employment should and could be created through entrepreneurship. This is why the skills centres mentioned the importance of having an entrepreneurship course.

The main problems however with achieving this, as mentioned by the teachers and principals of the different schools, are the lack of qualified entrepreneurship teachers, as well as the high salary they demand. Therefore, although wanted, not many skills centres have an entrepreneurship course. They have to rely on volunteers, or look for funding. To stimulate the Gambian economy, it would therefore be useful to pay attention to this and try to incorporate an entrepreneurship course in the different skills centres, as well as funding entrepreneurship trainings of existing teachers. The skills centre visited in Senegal possessed a government imposed training of several teachers in entrepreneurship. The training licensed the teachers to teach entrepreneurship. A similar policy could be imposed on the Gambian skills centres and teachers by the Gambian government. In addition, there are several projects that focus on conveying information by entrepreneurship specialists. An example of this is the Dutch program PUM of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By sponsoring these projects, a start of spreading entrepreneurship would be encouraged.

Communication between skills centres

Many teachers have mentioned a lack of communication between the skills centres. Teachers and lecturers feel like sharing ideas, plans and experiences about their courses and other school-related concepts could be beneficial for all involved parties. By sharing and comparing the advantages and disadvantages of a certain method, it will be possible to alter the curriculum and courses in the most optimal way. Currently the teachers will only meet other teachers while accidentally attending the same workshop at NAQAA, or if they have personal contacts with teachers from other schools. Therefore a yearly or quarterly meeting is suggested by either NAQAA or another organization such as YEP in which the teachers and lecturers of the skills centres get the opportunity to share and exchange their ideas and opinions.

Graduate-list

At the different skills centres records were requested concerning the graduates of the schools. Not many were able to provide a comprehensive list including the current occupation or the contact details of the graduates. It was mentioned they only knew about the graduates who they personally know.

It would be of great value to both the school and the students if a graduate list would be provided by the skills centres. This would make it possible for the students to contact previous graduates for advice on a future profession, and hereby discuss the experiences, advantages and disadvantages. The school will hereby also obtain information about the employment rate of their students. If it would appear the majority will not be employed, this could be a sign to the school that it should improve or alter the education provided.

6.2.4 Apprenticeships

Suggestions

1. The duration of apprenticeships is ought to be limited to a certain time period by installing a policy.
2. A maximum allowed duration that a tailor can teach an unpaid apprentice to increase the level of teaching and generate an income for apprentices.
3. Qualify and license tailors to a certain level to teach apprenticeships.

Observations

An apprenticeship is a common used method in the Gambia to learn a profession. Gambians will learn a profession by observation and practising with a professional, especially in professions involving vocational skills. The apprenticeship is also used as a method to learn the tailoring profession. Tailoring apprenticeships last generally from a time period of a minimum of 4 to approximately 10 years, this is also mentioned by the teachers in the interviews O and S in the appendix 4. An apprenticeship can be taken with or without any previous education and is possible to be taken in the informal and the formal sector. In the formal sector this is provided by NAQAA which can connect an apprentice to a tailor. Currently NAQAA is struggling to monitor the bigger part of the apprenticeship in the informal sector in terms of durations and quality.

During the interviews it appeared many students will, or want to be an apprentice after graduating at a skills centre to gain more practical experience. Teachers encourage their students to be an apprentice, gaining this practical experience is of high importance to both the students, teachers and tailors.

Often the education at a skills centre on itself is not regarded as sufficient for being a qualified tailor. A general belief is spread among existing tailors that without an apprenticeship the education at a skills centre is not valuable. Some of the interviewed tailors even argued apprentices without a skills centre education are more skilled than students of a skills centre. One of the tailors preferred apprentices without an education at a skills centre, since it was supposed to delay the learning process of this apprentices. Instead of being able to observe and learn all day at the tailoring shop of the apprenticeship, the students would arrive late after finishing classes.

Limit the time period of apprenticeships

This first point we will discuss is the duration of the apprenticeship. The practice of tailoring is conveyed very slowly to the apprentices, and the productivity of the apprentices is often low. The apprentices are often not allowed to sew at the start, because the fabrics belong to the customers, and the tailor wants to deliver quality. Therefore, only after gaining trust and a long time of observation, they will be able to sew. However, making mistakes is hereby not accepted, while learning is a process of trial and error. Some of the apprentices have not had any previous education. These apprentices ought to have a maximum amount of years available to learn, and deliver unpaid work. By setting a limit to the time of apprenticeships the tailors are forced to teach their students more in a shorter period of time.

The second group of apprentices are graduates of the tailoring skills centres. Due to their knowledge and experience, a maximum of six to twelve months of apprenticeship ought to be sufficient to gain the practical experience necessary to open a store, or to be employed. By installing a maximum period of graduated students to be an apprentice, the effectivity of the apprenticeship would increase. Through this the learning process can be enhanced, and students can gain an income faster.

A maximum allowed duration for unpaid employees

Furthermore, another reason why the apprenticeship is deficient is because some tailors regard apprentices as free employees. To prevent this from happening a maximum allowed duration for tailors to have free employees such as apprenticeships should be allowed. This could be a maximum of 12 to 18 months for graduated skills centre students and 3 years apprentices without an educational background in tailoring. After this period of time it ought to be obligatory to register your apprentice as a paid employee. He or she will then receive a minimum monthly salary. This offers the students the ability to generate income or savings for further development after finishing their apprenticeship. This will also encourage the tailor to teach his apprentices more effectively and have a productive paid employee. Some students we met already possessed a similar agreement during their apprenticeship. By adding value to the tailor shop through for example embroidery they were taught at the skills centre, they would receive a small income and gain experience.

Qualify and license tailors to teach apprentices.

From our research we have also concluded that the quality of the apprenticeships differs a lot. Tailor shops differ in the quality of clothing they provide, and not all tailors are qualified to have to teach a profession to an apprentice. As an apprentice luck should be on your side to be attached to a skilful and qualified tailor. By reviewing tailors that wish to take on apprentices the differences between apprentices can be limited. The tailors will need to possess basic skills of teaching and tailoring before being able to take on apprentices. Hereby the quality of the education of apprenticeships for apprentices will be ensured.

6.3 Cultural related findings

The following section addresses RQ2: *What are the cultural implications on the effectiveness of entrepreneurship in the Gambia?*

Suggestions

1. The image of TVET-schools should be improved, in order to make communities more aware of its importance and value.
2. The Gambian mindset of business tailors should be more focused on possessing a structural set-up and productivity.
3. Gambian tailors should have a more open attitude towards having tourists as part of their customer segment.
4. Schools should try and educate their students on the possibilities of saving money, instead of relying on others.

TVET-schools

The image of skills centre students inside the local communities is not positive. Students are ought to study on a high academic level to be perceived as a good student. This is one of the reasons why some skills centre students lack self-confidence and also one of the reasons why some skills centres are not that popular yet as they could be. From the interviews we can conclude that a lot of the teachers try to make the students see themselves in a different perspective. Promoting this form of education more on for example high schools and to parents, as well as conveying the importance of skills in the Gambian economy could change this mind-set. This does imply that skill centres should improve their curriculum so they deliver well-educated students. We will talk more about this in the section on TVET-schools.

Tailoring businesses

In the tailoring business it appears that foreign tailor shops, mostly Senegalese people, do better than the local Gambian people themselves. This is partly caused by a lack of trust between the Gambian local people. They trust the Senegalese more to perform their work better; they regard them as higher educated and more skilled. This has to do with the fact that the Gambian people see their own vocationally skilled people as the not well-educated people of the community. Next to the fact that they do not have the trust in the local people, the local people themselves also lack the work attitude. They are not consistent in their opening times, when the competing Senegalese tailor is. Therefore, by improving the mind-set of the Gambian tailors their market share will improve. Youth empowerment organizations can also play a role in this by focussing even more on behavioural trainings during their programs.

Nevertheless, this is not the only initiative that has to be taken. The general opinion is also that Senegalese tailors provide better quality, designs and more options. Therefore this suggestion is in congruence with the suggestions given in the section tailoring businesses.

Tourism Segment

Furthermore, tailors also have a certain mind-set concerning the tourist segment. Tourism is improving in the Gambia and this could potentially be a good customer segment for the tailoring business. Nevertheless, the general opinion of tailors is that they do not necessarily want to sell to tourists. This is due to two reasons. First, the tailors wish to have a long-term relationship with their customers and this is not possible with visiting tourists. Second, they do not want to walk on the streets and approach tourists with their products. They want customers to come to them, not beg them to buy their products at the streets. By the use of Empowerment and Entrepreneurship organizations, as well as skill centres, tailors should become aware of the potential customer segment that the tourist sector has to offer

Financing mindset

During our stay in the Gambia and our visit to Bassé, which will be elaborated upon later in the report, a conclusion was established about the Gambian mind-set concerning finance. The country depends on donations by different sponsors and organizations and the term “saving” is not something most of the children learn to grow up with. They want 0% interest loans or mini grants, which means free money to start with. What they do not understand is that this creates a big dependence on others. Finance is indeed a big problem for young entrepreneurs, but to keep relying on sponsors is not the solution. This attitude towards finance is something that has been in the Gambian culture for ages caused by donations and sponsoring from outside institutions. To change this and make the Gambia more independent from others, a good start would be to educate the new generation on the possibilities of saving and self-funding in all types of education. There is already a good initiative from NACCUG (The National Association of Corporate Credit Union of the Gambia), which is the umbrella of all credit unions. They want to try and implement more financial literacy on basic and secondary education as part of the curriculum. This is a very good initiative, but until now not yet implemented in the entire system.

6.4 Tailoring industry and textile market

The following section addresses RQ3: *What aspects in the textile production would need improvement for it to function in the most optimal way?*

6.4.1 Economic system, Government and export

Suggestions

1. The Gambian government ought to adjust export and import regulations and policies to make the Gambian economy function more optimally.

Observations

In the tailoring industry there is little to no export. Some tailors say that other tailors export to neighbouring West-African countries like Senegal, but this is very rare. To be able to export you need many connections as a tailor (appendix 2). Many tailors we have interviewed would like to export but do not see the possibility.

Regulations and policies

In the tailoring industry there is little to no export. Tailors who want to export encounter several problems. One is the fact that exporting is very expensive, which makes it not attractive and difficult to generate a profit. Besides that, connections are required in the country you want to export from (The Gambia) and the country you are exporting to. Export could be stimulated by the government and institutions by export regulations and policies. When Gambian tailors see possibilities in generating income from export they are more likely to export. Hereby production will increase, and the overall GDP would rise. Therefore, export could create more jobs and generates more income for the Gambians when stimulated in the right way. In addition, it would also generate jobs and work for the Gambian tailors in all seasons. Tailors mainly work on a seasonal basis and lack work during the rainy season. During the rainy season there are less cultural festivities and therefore less demand for the tailoring. The tourism season also decreases during the rainy season. Export could create more jobs in the tailor industry and income during the off-season because of the increased demand.

Many successful businesses in the Gambia, mainly the fabric sale, are being managed by businesses from other countries such as upper African and European countries. This is because it is attractive to import in the Gambia due to its low prices and the high demand. In some cases, it is cheaper to import products instead of producing a product in the Gambia. The economic market offers many opportunities for the Gambians, which are currently taken by foreign labourers. Some reasons for this are mentioned in section 4 about the cultural findings of this research. In addition, the production of cotton and the processed fabrics could be partly substituted. The Gambia is suitable to grow cotton, yet it is barely being produced in the Gambia. This is mainly caused by the cheaper imported Senegalese cotton. By stimulating import regulating and policies, import becomes less attractive and producing becomes more attractive. The Gambia could start their own industries for finished fabrics with patterns to rely less on import. However to make this happen not only the export and import regulations and policies should be adjusted but also the way Gambians produce on a small scale, production efficiency on a larger scale are key.

6.5 Tailor business development and systems

Suggestions

1. Expand existing micro-enterprises in order to stimulate specialization and growth.
2. Communicate the importance of differentiation, innovation and creative promotion between the tailors and the products, hereby increasing heterogeneity.
3. Improve the quality of the detailing and finishing, hereby increasing the value of the clothing.
4. Respond to the demand for Western clothing of the youngsters and demand from the tourists.
5. Increase the productivity and structure within the enterprises and hereby increase the trust of the customers.

Observations

The Gambian textile entrepreneurs are often micro-entrepreneurs having a small business with one or two sewing machines. They rely on the help of apprentices and have a customer segment of local Gambians and occasionally tourists. Especially during certain celebrations such as the naming ceremony locals demand fabricating new clothing. The fabric is bought by the customer him- or herself on for example the Serrekunda market. A great variety of mainly imported cotton fabrics, tie and dye or batik provides the local with options for traditional African clothing. The fabrics are brought to a tailor and will be custom-made to the customer's demand. Hereby the supply value chain is relatively short. Due to a lack of capacity in resources these tailors are often not able to expand. There are some exceptions of entrepreneurs that focus on exporting to foreign markets, and tailors that have contracts to for example produce the uniforms of a primary school. Some tailors are also engaged in buying fabrics in wholesale. This gives these tailors a competitive advantage due to supplying with a lower price.

To be able to start a tailor shop the tailor will need to officially register at the local municipality. Hereby they will need to pay a fee based on the amount of people and sewing machines that are present in the shop. Subsequently the shop will need to pay a yearly tax to the GRA. After informing at Kanifing Municipal Council however it appeared there are still unregistered tailor shops present. In addition, to be able to identify the supply of the tailors in the Gambia, information was requested from KMC. This information appeared to be incomplete and limited to the KMC area. It is therefore hard to determine the exact supply and demand for custom-made tailoring in the Gambia.

An example of a successful medium-sized tailoring business in the Gambia is Facil. It was established in February 2017 by Elizabeth Gomez and her partner. Facil aims to produce high quality comfortable underwear and t-shirts for the Gambian and West African Market. Furthermore, it is planning to export as soon as shipping services become cheaper to foreign countries. The use of standard formats and industrial sewing machines is rare in the Gambia since often the clothes are tailor-made. By touching upon this new area of manufacturing clothes they were able to expand in a short time and respond to the demand. The selected employees were intensively trained for several months by UK experts. Some of the employees are graduates of PIA. These students, as well as the other employees, required extra training, since the production techniques used for producing on a larger scale are not conveyed during the education at PIA.

Expand Micro-enterprises

While interviewing five different small tailoring businesses it appeared often they are struggling to have enough customers. Since there are many tailor businesses present, they are competing for the same customers. It was however noticed there is a lack of specialization within the businesses as well as a lack of expansion of the businesses. One of the interviewed businesses did possess specialization to a certain extent, and was also considered to be more successful. To be able to expand businesses should change from solely producing custom-made clothing to for example producing standard sizes,

which is recently done by Facil. In addition, industrial techniques should be introduced in the curriculum of the skills centres.

By expanding the small enterprises, bigger market segments could be utilized by for example producing ready-made clothing. Market opportunities are available, it is however necessary for businesses to expand to be able to make use of these opportunities. One of these opportunities could for example be focusing on creating uniforms for different purposes, such as school. Since for all primary and secondary, and vocational institutions it is obligatory to wear a uniform. Therefore, organizations that are focusing on strengthening businesses in the Gambia should pay attention to not only start-ups, but expansion of existing businesses as well.

An initiative has been started by tailors in Tanji. In a meeting with several tailors located in Tanji it was discussed they would possibly fuse and cooperate on a higher level. Other communities could take this as an example. These initiatives should be stimulated if possible.

Differentiation, innovation and creative promotion

It was observed a majority of the small enterprises produce the same clothing, make use of the same techniques, and limit themselves to the same customer segment. Although the quality of the tailors might be different they do not try to distinguish in any other way. This contributes to the untouched market opportunities in the Gambia. Innovation is in addition a low priority. Furthermore, there is a lack of customer oriented services which would make the store potentially more attractive for the tourist customer segment. Stores are not focused on providing a customer friendly ambiance. While observing the tailors in the different cities in the Kombo area it is not always clear where or in which place a tailor is located. Promotion of the tailor shop and products is seen as less important than other aspects of the shop. Since a large proportion of the Gambians is illiterate the promotion should be very creative involving drawings and images of designs of the clothing. This again should be a focus area of organizations supporting businesses to develop such as NEDI, YEP, EMPRETEC etc.

Improving quality of clothing

During the observations, and experience of working with the tailors in the Gambia, it was also noticed a majority of the Gambian tailors produce clothing in which no attention was paid to the endings of the zippers, threads and sewing. The finishing and detailing of the clothing is not regarded as important. Herby the quality of the clothing is valued less by the customers. This provides other, often foreign tailors with a competitive advantage. Therefore, skills centres should convey these skills to their tailoring students, and should be stricter with their students about the sewing assignment during the classes. Organizations such as YEP and NAQAA ought to involve this in the curriculum development focused on tailors.

Respond to demand of western clothing and demand from the tourists

As observed during social events as well as informing with young students there is also an increasing demand for western clothing. This demand originates from the youth of the Gambia who wear this during night- and other social events. A large proportion of this demand is being supplied by second-hand clothing donated or sold by western countries. These can for example be bought at the market in Serrekunda. This however would be a business opportunity for the tailors. Using other fabrics than solely cotton would enable tailors to replicate western clothing models and hereby supply to this growing demand. This will also imply more competition for the donated and imported western clothing which currently overflow the textile market of the Gambia.

Another market that has positive customer opportunities for the tailors of the Gambia are the tourists. Tourists are often interested in the use of African fabrics. Providing the tourists with the possibilities of creating clothing or accessories that will be fashionable in their country of origin will

make custom-made tailor clothing more attractive to them. Tailors should conduct a market research with tourists to identify these clothing techniques. An idea would for example the creation of colourful grocery bags.

Increase productivity and structure

Many tailors in the Gambia possess a very relaxed, non-productive attitude. Shops open late in the morning and apprentices in employment often do not have a useful purpose for a large part of the day. Due to a lack of demand for their products tailors do not spend their time efficiently. The time that is spent on being unproductive could be used to develop the business or put off more work. Increasing the productivity and structure is therefore advised. This could be conveyed during entrepreneurship workshops, trainings and courses organized by either skills centres or youth entrepreneurship organizations.

6.6 Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship organizations

The following section attempts to answer RQ4: *In what way could the gap between the textile education (students) and the economic market (industry) in practice be narrowed down in an entrepreneurial way?*

6.6.1 Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship organizations suggestions

Suggestions

1. The organizations should improve communication between each other.
2. Organizations ought to collaborate more in terms of funding projects and trainings.
3. The organizations should focus more on the promotion of their activities.

During our research we have visited and interviewed (appendix 4) several Youth Entrepreneurship and Empowerment organizations, namely; YEP, EMPRETEC, NEDI, Start-up Incubator, GYIN, National Youth Council, and the Gambian Youth Chamber of Commerce. These organizations focus on conveying the knowledge about entrepreneurship, and are involved in supporting start-ups and coaching entrepreneurs. The different organizations all have a slightly different perspective and objective on which we will elaborate upon later in this section, however they share the same goal of stimulating entrepreneurship and empowering the youth in the Gambia. The focus groups of the different organizations often consist of youngsters who want to start a business. Youths with different educational and social backgrounds are accepted to the different programs. Some of the organizations are related to the Gambian government, others are supported by different organizations such as the United Nations, and yet again others are completely independent.

Communication between organizations

During the interviews and observations, we noticed that the Empowerment and Entrepreneurship organizations often lack a good communication system with one another. They are not completely aware about the current activities of the other organizations. Networking, sharing information and ideas would be beneficial for all the parties involved, since it could be used for improvements or alterations. To solve this problem a social platform could be created by one of the organizations, take as an example YEP, in which the organizations will be able to regularly meet and exchange information. On the platform it is important that the organizations describe their functions and trainings clearly, so they know from each other on what level they can connect and exchange information. This could be stimulated by annual or monthly meetings and initiatives of the different involved organizations.

Collaboration

The organizations ought not only to work together in terms of communication, but also while funding and organizing projects such as the annual National Youth Conference. In terms of funding, when a common goal is shared, it would be beneficial to think in terms of the collective goal rather than the individual organizations. Students currently make use of the lack of communication between the organizations by exploiting multiple organizations. The organizations do not share information about which student have attended which training. By exchanging information more funding could be appointed for more useful purposes or achieving bigger goals.

Promotion

The organizations lack a widespread image, many students and graduates have not heard about the different organizations and do not know how to get in contact with them. When we asked a group of 51 second-year skills centre students if they knew any of the organizations, only 1 of the student was able to mention one of the organizations. The organizations could create more publicity by visiting schools and informing the schools about themselves. Although various efforts have been conducted, it has not been effective to a great extent. Organizations should spread the message about their activities more widely. The organizations could create more publicity by visiting schools and informing the schools about themselves. This could also be done by leaflets and business cards that could refer to a clear website with a good description. Furthermore, this should be done while working together with the other organizations, to be transparent and clear to each other and their target group.

6.6.2 Funding

Suggestions

1. The financing possibilities for start-ups available to the students and young people should be communicated more effectively
2. Students should become conscious of their own abilities in creating a starting capital, rather than waiting for financial help

Observations

One of the biggest challenges young entrepreneurs have to face is the gathering of a starting capital. There are some opportunities for students to create a starting capital. The most important ones are:

- Receiving sponsoring from a relative/friend
- Take a loan at the bank
- Receive a grant or loan from a youth empowerment or entrepreneurship organization
- Get a job and save money to gather one's own starting capital

The different possibilities all have advantages and disadvantages. Taking a loan from the bank for example involves a high interest rate, often around 30%. In addition, the individual has to provide a valid guarantee, which is often an obstacle for young starters.

Several organizations that are involved in providing funding possibilities such as loans or grants, or which are able to get an individual in contact with financing possibilities are:

- National Association of Corporate Credit Union of the Gambia
 - Mini-grants provided by YEP
- Start-Up Incubator
- EMPRETEC
- NEDI
- GYIN
- Gambian Youth Chamber of Commerce

Other, not consulted possibilities are:

- Saving and Credit Cooperatives
- International organizations:
 - United Nations Capital Development Fund
 - Child Youth Finance International
 - Youth Business International

Improving communication about financing possibilities

While inquiring with the students it is clear not many are conscious about the financing opportunities organizations have to offer. Students from different regions of the country have been asked about which organizations they know, and the ability to identify these organizations was surprisingly low. To be able to reach as many young people and students as possible it is therefore important for the previously mentioned entrepreneurship and financing organizations to focus on promotion of their activities. By collaborating and creating a document about all the possibilities that are present this could be spread around at social events and schools. The scope of the reach of the organizations could and should be extended.

The possibility of saving

Students and other young people often have an attitude in which they expect, and wait for someone to come to them and help. This attitude is widely spread and embedded in both the education and daily life. The focus of the students is often on the problems rather than the opportunities life has to offer. This intervenes with effectively starting a business. Students ought to become more aware about the possibilities of getting employed and save money, or start a small business such as selling food and set aside money to save for a starting capital. These ideas should be spread by both skills centres, and entrepreneurship and empowerment organizations.

6.6.3 Contacted Entrepreneurial and Empowerment Organizations

YEP

The Youth Empowerment Program is a project executed by the International Trade Centre (ITC) of the United Nations. The ITC focuses on improving international trade. By offering support to Employment and Entrepreneurship YEP wishes to address the economic root causes of the problem of irregular migration. The YEP program receives funding from the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. This money is partly allocated to support other existing entrepreneurship organizations in the Gambia such as EMPRETEC and NEDI.

YEP possesses 21 key partners and has close contact with MoYS (Ministry of Youth and Sports) and MOT (Ministry of Trade). YEP works together with both public and private institutions in order to achieve their goals and is taking a market-led approach to contribute to: improving employability of the youth, improving self-employment and increased employment along selected value chains. The target is to create 4000 new jobs in total, hereby using income as a proxy. Technical assistance, trainings, workshops and financial sponsoring of existing organizations are the means to achieve this. Recently YEP has launched its new mini-grants program, executed by NACCUG. Individuals can pitch their business plan and potentially receive a mini grant up to 1000 Dollars to start their business.

In the future, YEP could address several of the previously mentioned suggestions, and for example operate as the host to enhance communication between all Entrepreneurship and Empowerment Organizations in the Gambia, which they are already trying to put into practice.

EMPRETEC

EMPRETEC is a program implemented by GIEPA (Gambian Investment and Export Promotion Agency). GIEPA is a public institution under the umbrella of MOT. The EMPRETEC program is financially supported by the UNDP (United Nations Development Plan), the government of the Gambia and recently by the YEP program. GIEPA focuses on four different mandates:

- Investment promotion and facilitation
- Export development
- Enterprise support
- Advocacy

EMPRETEC is part of the enterprise support department, herby EMPRETEC aims to support businesses and the start-up of businesses. A six-day entrepreneurship workshop is provided which is followed by intensive monitoring and coaching of start-ups. The model for the workshop is developed by the United Nations Trade and Development. The teachers require two years of intensive training before being qualified to teach the entrepreneurship workshop. The workshop is available for all individuals that are interested, despite their academic background or area of interest. There are different levels of the workshop which are provided. Illiterate individuals will be taught in the local language and will make use of the Business Model Canvas methods in which necessary writing is limited.

EMPRETEC in total has educated a total of 736 individuals. A new attribution is the focus on innovation within the program, aiming to stimulate creativeness among the entrepreneurs. In addition, advocacy is an important aspect of the EMPRETEC program. By being part of GIEPA policy suggestions can be proposed to the ministries. As mentioned by the enterprise support manager of GIEPA and training manager of EMPRETEC a current project for example is the development of an entrepreneurship policy together with UNTAD in which an entrepreneurship curriculum will be implemented in the schools. This seems like a very interesting policy since it would achieve one of the previously mentioned suggestions in this paper.

NEDI

NEDI is established by MoYS. The organization is supervised by the vice president and is hereby related to the youth and female sector. Their main goal is to empower the Gambian youth by organising trainings in business entrepreneurship, providing funding to individuals if possible, and giving advice to businesses hereby attempting to ensure the sustainability and expansion of the businesses. NEDI is currently also working with YEP-Gambia to create more publicity, trying to make NEDI accessible for everyone.

The main activities NEDI provides are:

1. Trainings in entrepreneurship
2. Provide micro-loans targeting start-ups
3. Business development/support service

The target group of their activities are young people that want to start a business, as well as existing businesses that want to expand.

NEDI also conducts outreach services as part of their trainings. They organise field trips to for example the rural areas. Here they will try and identify the problems the businesses face. The businesses will be provided with professional guidelines to help and solve the problems.

Furthermore, NEDI has also produced a general entrepreneurial manual for their trainings which is currently being tested in the rural areas. This manual is based on previous experiences and involves

the relevant stakeholders they are working with. The manual is focused on the young people of the Gambia.

The main challenge NEDI faces is the funding of their programs. Currently NEDI attempts to solve these problems by cooperating with other organizations such as YEP. It will only be possible to finance start-ups for NEDI when these funds are available.

NEDI is connected to several institutions with overlapping goals:

- YEP-Gambia
- Start-up incubator
- EMPRETEC
- GYIN

They give recommendations to NAQAA about the improvement of the curriculum, NAQAA also advises this to the ministry but cannot enforce anything. Through their close connection to MoYS they also give recommendations, but the eventual decision-making is done by the ministry. NEDI is not very active in the public domain, but they try to advertise on TV, the internet (Facebook) and the radio.

Start-up Incubator

Start-up Incubator is an organization that was founded in 2015. Their main goal is to support young entrepreneurs. In contrary to the other organisations, their focus lies not on training but on incubating. They incubate 20 young entrepreneurs every year for a total of six months. Their main activities in the program are:

- Monthly coaching sessions
- Practical assignments: write business plans, craft business models, making activity time lines and so on
- Small workshops: invite experts and entrepreneurs to teach the young entrepreneurs on different fields
- Mentorship Sessions: peering with a successful entrepreneur
- Networking events
- Possibilities for access to finance

The youth they train either come from recommendations of other organizations or through forms that the organization hands out on schools. They train university students, college students, but also skills centre students. At the beginning of a new batch they always bench mark the individual challenges and level of education to adjust the program to the new batch. During the summer they also organized a three-week entrepreneurship summer camp for high school students, to also include them as a target group. The organization focuses on practical and coaching. After the program of six months all of their youths will be part of a start-ups.

Their trainers initially came from their own network, but recently also graduates of the program come back to provide coaching to the new batch. They provide access to finance in two ways. The first way is a loan through the sponsor money they receive from the US embassy. The second way is through collaboration with YEP-Gambia and the NEMA-project, which will help them to incubate another 30 students.

Besides incubating the youth, the organization also focuses on gathering all empowerment organizations. This year they organized a press conference to gather them all together and discuss their activities. They also organize a pitching contest at the next young entrepreneurship summit

organized by the young entrepreneurship organisation. This contest is open for all young entrepreneurs of all organizations and the price is 50.000 dalasi.

GYIN

GYIN has been established in 2012. Their key partners are the IFAT in Rome and the NEMA project. Since their main implementing partner, the NEMA project is focused on agriculture GYIN has a specific focus on agriculture as well.

The main activities of GYIN are:

1. National Youth Summer Camp
2. Rural trainings
3. Mentorship Training
4. Rural award

The entrepreneurship trainings they provide are based on a manual, developed by the Columbia Business College, which is affiliated to the Columbia business university. This module consists of 10 parts of entrepreneurship and business management. The module is a 12-day training for each of the three modules. The trainings however rely on having sufficient funding and therefore at this moment solely module 1 has been executed. They integrate financial discipline in their programs with a focus on savings and legally registration. Currently they have already trained 192 people across the whole country in one year, 40 of them have really established a business. Out of these 40, 10 were provided an award by the rural award competition. At this moment they cannot train any more people because finance is part of their trainings and currently they face financial restrains. They are also partnering with YEP-Gambia to provide participants finance by the YEP mini-grants. Their main activities are:

- Arrange finance
- Translate the entrepreneurship manuals in local languages
- Mentor participants by the mentorship training

The target group of GYIN are young people from 15-35 years that want or already have a business. The rural award is focused on people with already a business that want to expand their business.

Gambian Youth Chamber of Commerce

The Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce (GYCC) is under the umbrella of NEDI and is membership based. They started one year ago. The GYCC provides a platform that promotes businesses to young people in the country.

Their main activities are:

1. Trainings, entrepreneurship and business plan development
2. Provide exhibitions
3. Provide networking for young people in terms of business
4. Mentoring programs
5. Advocacy

The trainings are given in English and local languages, especially in the rural areas. Their main goal is to create employability, except for financing they also want to create market space by networking, access to information and branding. GYCC argues the branding of a business is very important, since many businesses in the Gambia sell the same products. They are currently developing a website for more access to information between the entrepreneurs. It will map down what businesses there are and where, so these people can get connected and exchange knowledge.

They manage their finance yearly membership fees and fundraising activities. Furthermore, they also intend to do online advertisement to generate income. GYCC also possesses fundraising activities to support the organization. At the moment, they also offer free trainings which are financially supported by YEP-Gambia, their implementing partner. Because most of the trainings are supported by YEP-Gambia and they are an implementing partner. By the end of 2018 they aim to be structured throughout all regions and have regional offices.

6.6.4 NAYCONF

Suggestions

1. Students should be given more time to present their outcomes to the audience, because this ought to be the most important outcome of the NAYCONF.
2. MoYS ought to form a committee that ensures the outcomes of the NAYCONF conference will be implemented.

Observations

NAYCONF is the national youth conference organized by the National Youth Council in combination with other youth empowerment organizations on a yearly basis. It is a big event in which almost 2000 youths come together from every region in the Gambia. It possesses both a conference aspect and several cultural/sportive events. This year the NAYCONF was organized in Bassé and we attended this event for five days.

During these five days we joined the conference. The conference was divided in different thematic work groups such as agriculture, gender based violence and youth employment & entrepreneurship. We chose to attend the thematic workshop youth employment & entrepreneurship, because this was the most applicable workshop to our research. During this thematic workshop, a focus group discussion was held including several members of the different stakeholder groups. Present were representatives of GYIN, Youth Chamber of Commerce, young Gambian entrepreneurs, students and us. The group was divided into three smaller groups which all were focusing on providing their opinion about one particular objective. These observations had to include the key objectives, the activities, the target group, time frame, performance indicators and the implementation partners. The three main objectives that came out of the group discussion where;

- More communication between all organizations involved in youth empowerment.
- Guiding rules concerning the curriculum of TVET-schools.
- Improved access to finance.

Particularly the last objective caught our attention. The Gambian mind-set concerning finance, discussed in the section cultural findings, became very clear.

Time to present

At the end of the conference, all thematic workshops where allowed to present their main objectives in a gathered meeting. Unfortunately, a majority of the presenters of the different workgroups did not receive enough time to present the outcomes and objectives established during the workgroup. This is why it would be better to provide the students with more time for their presentations to be able to communicate the findings of the NAYCONF.

Implementing results

During the gathering we handed out 100 questionnaires to observe the general opinion of the audience concerning entrepreneurship organizations and to see what they were planning on doing with the information gained at NAYCONF. To the general questions we also added an open question hereby providing the possibility to write their own opinion, solution or problem concerning entrepreneurship.

We gathered 69 questionnaires comprising the following information:

Most participants of the NAYCONF conference were between the ages of 15 to 43. There were secondary school students, skills centre students, college students, university students and starting entrepreneurs. Most of them were region representatives. The motivation to attend NAYCONF was mostly triggered by a tendency to make the youth contribute to the development of the Gambia. After attending the NAYCONF most participants are planning to spread their obtained knowledge in their own regions and almost all of them want to become an entrepreneur.

From the added open question we learned two main things. First, a lot of participants regard entrepreneurship as a good opportunity for youth employment. Second, the conclusions of NAYCONF are not well implemented.

This last conclusion is very important for the achievement of the goals of NAYCONF. This is why, we would like to suggest that the MoYS forms a committee to make sure that the outcomes of the NAYCONF conference are implemented.

7. Conclusion

The proposed suggestions have been discussed with the consulate of the Netherlands, the CEO of NAQAA and the project manager of YEP-Gambia. The feedback and opinions of the different parties have been integrated in the finalization process of the suggestions. Several suggestions were known among the stakeholders. Policies have already been developed addressing these problems. GIEPA for example has developed a policy recommendation in cooperation with UNTAD in which entrepreneurship would become an obligatory course for all educational centres. Another example is the development and improvements of YEP on the curriculum of different sectors in skills centres, including the development of a textile curriculum and manual in collaboration with NAQAA. The curriculum will be validated and tested during the upcoming months. The curriculum will be firstly implemented with the PIA textile students. During this implementation potential improvements will come to light. If successful, the curriculum, and the curriculum of other subjects, could be distributed among other skills centres. The most important aspect however at this moment is thus the actual implementation of the suggested policies.

Other suggestions have not been addressed yet by the involved organizations. The suggestions could be a trigger to start and think about initiatives that could be executed to improve the development of the connection between skills centres and the job market. The focus has also been on entrepreneurship as a possible solution to the limited amount of employment opportunities in the Gambia. By improving the existing entrepreneurship and empowerment organizations students could become aware of the possibilities and will no longer feel the pressing need to make use of the backway.

This report has attempted to provide suggestions in the different fields concerning the connection between skills centres and the job market in the Gambia. Only a fragment of all the information available has been addressed, and still much more could be researched and elaborated upon. The report is limited to skills centres and has not researched the connection between colleges and universities with the job market. In addition, a special focus was put on the textile and apparel industry, hereby excluding other influential industries in the Gambia, as well as excluding the research of export and import possibilities. This thus provides many opportunities for future research. Other students of the Delft University of Technology could potentially execute this. Another future contribution could be requesting support from foreign programs in improving entrepreneurship. One of these programs is PUM. PUM is an initiative of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It sponsors experts to pay a visit to a foreign country to spread their knowledge about a specific subject. Lastly, this report could be spread among different external parties and organizations in the Gambia to enhance knowledge about potential opportunities for improvement.

We, the research team of the Mala project, would like to thank all the different interviewed individuals and organizations for their participation in our research and their valuable contribution. By collaborating, all the different stakeholders could enhance and stimulate the further development of the Gambia.

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9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix 1 - Semi-structured questions

Rules followed during the interviews

- The interviews are recorded using the recorded system on our Iphones.
- The interviews have been transcribed, the appendix contains summaries of all the transcripts.
- During the interviews it is of importance to respond accordingly to the level of English.
- The interviewees were made aware of the purpose of the interviews, and are addressed, if requested, anonymously.

9.1.2 Interviews Set-up Skills centres

Short introduction who we are and what we will use the interview for.

Questions for **the teachers**:

1. Could you provide us with a short introduction of yourself?
2. What role do you play in this skills centre? (personal and professional?)
3. How many students do you have?
4. What are their backgrounds? (educational and social)
5. What do you think about the motivation/mind-set of the students?
6. What courses are provided in the skills centre?
7. Could the curriculum/courses be improved?
 - a. *If yes*, how could this be improved?
 - b. *If no*, what are the best courses you offer and why do you think this is good for the students?
8. Do you think there are other courses that could be provided that would be useful for the students (considering the students' future jobs)?
9. Do you think the students are well-prepared for the job market?
 - a. If not – how could this be improved according to you?
10. How are they prepared for the job market?
11. Are there extra courses/preparations/introduction/workshops?
12. Do you help the students by introducing them to possible internships/apprentices hereby gaining practical experiences?
13. Do students start a business for themselves sometime after graduation? And how do they achieve this?
14. Are there any possibilities for the students to receive financial means/micro-finance/loans to start for themselves?
15. What is your opinion about entrepreneurship?
16. Do you think there are enough jobs available for all the students that attend the school?
17. How can students enter the textile industry/business? Do they need a network for this and do you provide them with help to get this?
18. By for example introducing them to existing companies/businesses/(internships)?
19. What do you think are the good things/qualities of your skills centre/institution?
20. If you would be able to change one thing in the skills centre, what would it be? And how would you achieve this?
21. If we would provide you with a manual for entrepreneurship for students that graduate, how would you integrate this in your existing curriculum?

Thank you very much for your time

Questions for **the students**:

1. Could you introduce yourself to us? (social and academic)
2. What do you think of the skill-centre?
3. Do you think the courses are of good quality?
4. Why did you choose to go to this skill-centre? Why didn't you try and go to an apprentice?
Learn from somebody who has the job already?
5. Could something be improved in the skills centre?
6. Do you feel prepared for a job after graduation?
7. How does the skill-centre support you after graduation to find a job?
8. Do you feel this is enough or could this be improved?
9. Do you, or friends of you desire to start your own business after graduating?
10. Why would or why wouldn't you be interested to do this?

9.2 Appendix 2 – Other skills centres

Other skills centres related to tailoring. Information was received after requesting NAQAA.

1. Brufut Learning Centre – (Home Economics)
 - a. West Coast Region, Brufut Village
2. Chigambas Skills Training Centre – (home economics)
 - a. Upper River Region, Basse Manneh Kunda
3. Club Foire Skills Training Centre – (tailoring)
 - a. KMC, Kairuba Avenue
4. Fajara Skills Development Centre – (fashion design)
 - a. KMC, 5 Atlantic Boulevard, Fajara
5. Gambia Home Economics Skills Centre – (tailoring)
 - a. KMC, Old Jeshwang
6. Gaye Njoro Hair Plus Farafenni Annex – (tailoring)
 - a. North Bank Region, Farafenni
7. John Pickering Skills Training Centre – (tailoring)
 - a. West Coast Region, Brikama Nyambai
8. Malick Mendy Tailoring Skills Training Centre – (tailoring)
 - a. KMC, Berthil
9. Marie Bennette Skills Training Centre – (home economics)
 - a. West Coast Region, Wellingara
10. SOS Regional Mother and Adult training Centre – (Sewing & craft)
 - a. KMC, Hermann Gmeiner Drive, Bakoteh
11. St. Martha's YWCA Skills Training Centre – (Home economics)
 - a. KMC, Fajikunda, KSMD
12. Sunrise Centre – (tailoring)
 - a. KMC, Bakoteh Housing Estate
13. Taku Legaye Skills Centre – (Home economics)
 - a. KMC, Bundung Serrekunda

9.3 Appendix 3 – Summaries of the interviews

9.3.1 Presentation Girls Vocational School

A) Principal PGVS

PGVS is an all girls catholic school located behind the national assembly in the capital Banjul. The school has 210 students, from which some have never been to school, others dropped out at 9th grade and others finished 12th grade with good grades. The school is fully self-funded from the fees of students and sometimes donations. Most of the students think that working in the industry will help them, but they all have different dreams. The school focuses on counselling with the students, to make sure that they become self-confident and sure of what they want to do later. The relation between students and teachers could be described as a sister relation. The school offers hairdressing, home management (embroidery, cooking, tailoring) and secretary. All courses take three years and include classes like English, Math, French and IT. The fees are approximately D6000 per year. Curriculum improvement is done by feedback from three-month attachments that the third years have and the market. They have the initiative to start an entrepreneurship workshop, but it is not yet implemented.

B) Tailoring teacher PGVS

A short introduction was given to the school and the personal experiences of becoming a teacher. Students ought to form their own opinions, and the teacher explains she is open to critique or ideas. Emphasized is the fact the school lacks certain materials such as sewing machines to use for the students. Students are prepared for entrepreneurship by sharing personal knowledge and providing extra classes when necessary. Almost 50% of her students would want to start an entrepreneurship, but only 15 will succeed in doing this. Sponsoring for these initiatives can be gathered by informing at large companies. They might help students to gather a starting capital. All the costs involved in starting a tailor shop are discussed. This information has been integrated in the course manual used for the entrepreneurship workshop. Employability of the students is regarded as a continuing problem.

C) Experienced teacher PSVG and Family planning teacher

As an experienced teacher she has been working at PSVG for 34 years and currently teaching home management and assisting teacher at PSVG. As an assisting teacher she helps the illiterate and uneducated students to catch up on the level of the other students. Throughout the years she has learned a lot and also participated in many programs from learning from other teachers to educational programs from UNICEF. Her role as a teacher also consists of a lot of counselling. She also sees the importance in entrepreneurship classes and has also followed a program with the school named Junior Achievement program about entrepreneurship.

D) Students PGVS: two 2nd year students, one 1st year student, home management.

All students follow the home management track offered at the PGVS. One of them has to get up around 4 in the morning to be able to attend the classes. All three of them are interested in opening their own shop in tailoring. One of them already has the example of her older sister. What is disliked are the punishments at the school, but the students are all positive about the overall skill centre. What is furthermore noteworthy is the good relation all students describe to have with their teachers, as well as the motivation they have to want to start a business, which is to support their relatives.

E) Graduated Student and IT teacher PGVS

Third year students follow an internship in the direction they have been educated in. When the students work hard they could be employed after their internship. The internships are checked by the teachers and school direction. After the internship they will have to write a short article about the experiences during their internship. The students could be linked to an internship by the Skills-centre or have to come up with an internship and propose this to their principal. Often there aren't enough places for the students and the students will be in internship groups of 2-3 students. Most students work in Senegambia where there is more room for employment.

F) Entrepreneurship Teacher PGVS

The teacher works part-time at PGVS and full time at GTTI as an entrepreneurship and marketing teacher. He acknowledges the fact that skills centre students feel second choice and they do not want to be connected to skills. He says that they see skills as an option for the dropouts or mentally retarded students. This is not his opinion though; "No no my friend this is the opinion of the owners of the world today. When we would all go for professional courses how would we have access to skills related areas?". Furthermore, the teacher developed his own entrepreneurship manual which he uses to teach his students at GTTI and hopefully soon at PGVS all the basics about entrepreneurship.

9.3.2 President's international Award

G) Principal PIA

PIA was established as an initiative by the president himself together with the Edenborough program. The name of the school is not necessarily a political affiliation, it is merely a youth development institution and a skills centre. However it is a quasi governmental institution. Some funding is provided by the president's office. To be able to enrol as many students as possible the fees very low which provides another part of the funding. Other funding is received by the provision of the hostel, kitchen services, and the garage. The students that are submitted to the program are not all academically inclined, but need at least grade 9. Mainly drop-outs enrol at PIA. There are several students in tailoring, electrical, and auto mechanic.

H) Tailoring teacher PIA

The tailoring teacher is a graduate from PSVG and is one of the three tailoring teachers at PIA. After two years of apprenticeship she started working as a home management teacher, to enlarge her knowledge she continued her apprenticeship next to teaching. She followed extra courses to enlarge her knowledge and to be able to offer the students more, therefore she also learned the batik and tie and dye techniques. Besides that, she also has close relationships to the students and is a trustworthy teacher for the students. The tailoring program is new at PIA but, because of the success of the graduates it is gaining more popularity. Graduated students work at successful companies such as Facil. The teacher recommends an improvement in the curriculum in terms of entrepreneurship and techniques on working with patterns and standard sizes.

I) Secretary Teacher PIA

The teacher has been part of the educational staff for over twenty years. The improvements during these years are mainly the number of intakes, the introduction of new courses, and facility improvements. Workshops are provided to prepare the students for the job market. Many students would want to start a business if the capital would be available to them. Currently there is a business

course in the curriculum of the students provided by a volunteer, one of the students. Hereby the students are prepared for self-employment.

J) Manager and Metal Work Teacher PIA

The teacher previously was a student from PIA. During the years PIA has changed a lot. It is argued many students will have a job after graduating, however often the income they will get is not sufficient. PIA is partly supported by the government. There is no record of the graduates. A few years ago, there was an opportunity for micro-financing available for the students. This initiative has stopped because of the funding of the project stopped.

K) Former Business Teacher PIA

The previous Edenborough program installed at PIA was the stimulation for having an entrepreneurship workshop at PIA. These business courses were focused on conveying information about the basics of starting a business. Basic strategies were explained. Recently more and more individuals try to flee the Gambia to go through the backway, by the use of entrepreneurship this could be avoided.

L) Business Teacher Volunteer PIA

This interview is with the volunteer business teacher of PIA. He is also one of the students and he chooses to help his fellow students with the business knowledge he has. Since there has not been a business teacher at the school for a while now. It is difficult for the school to find an affordable and licenced business teacher. His goal is to get set an entrepreneurial basis for the students and then it is up to the students if they would like to develop more in this area. For the classes he uses a manual, knowledge from previous studies he has done and literature research. Unfortunately, NAQAA allows him to be a volunteer for a maximum of 6 months at the Skills-centre.

M) Students PIA

Both of the students follow the tailoring course offered at PIA. One of them finished 12th grade and she moved in with her aunt to live closer to the school. She got a sponsorship from her nursery school to pay for her school fees. The other student lives with her sister and got to the school because her other sister studied secretary at the school. They are both really happy about the education they achieve at the school. They feel like their teachers are brothers and sisters who activate them to work hard. Nevertheless, they would like it if the school could provide them more support after graduating. Both girls do an apprenticeship after their morning school, but they prefer the skills centre because they have more time there to sew. After PIA they want to attend another skills centre in a different country to learn more about the profession. Eventually they both want to open their own business.

9.3.3 Insight Training Centre

N) Principal Insight Training Centre

Insight training centre, a private school consists of 550 students and provide skills centre and college education. It offers a combined education of practical and theoretical work. This combination is the main focus of the training centre and their goal is to provide students with certificates and diplomas and the sufficient knowledge to start working after graduating. The Semester starts in January until July and the summer break is used for three-month internships. The tailoring program takes two years, the first year is on skills-centre level and will be completed with a certificate. The second year is on skills centre advanced level and will be completed with a diploma. Entrepreneurship classes are given in the second year of the program. Currently the training centre is also expanding to educate juvenile students in prison whereas also offering the tailoring program.

O) Tailoring Teacher Insight Training Centre

The Tailoring teacher of Insight Training Centre is a graduate of PSVG, after graduating she followed an apprenticeship of 10 years. Besides teaching she also owns a tailor shop. She believes the apprenticeship is of high importance for the students and she followed her apprenticeship for 10 years to gain as much experience as possible. She herself was a graduate of PGVS. The tailoring program has a duration of 12 months of which six months of internship. She tries to teach her students all she knows, but she admits that it would be could to have more teachers that are experienced in other fields for example batik. About the learning environment in her classes, she says that it is always very open. She tries to let her students be creative and create their own personality.

P) Students Insight Training Centre

Insights is a good functioning, and skilful training centre. The journalism part for example has its own radio station. Most current employees are graduates of Insight. The radio station also accepts internships from insight. The subjects discussed during the radio are focused on societal problems such as the democracy. The students all finished high school. The teachers at the school are also very enthusiastic and motivated, and the students experience having a good relationship with them. Different projects are available to stimulate entrepreneurship, but they have not worked. Entrepreneurship is not given to skill levels. Some parts of the different courses and curriculum could however be improved. More attention should be paid to this.

Q) Volunteer business Teacher Insight Training Centre

The teacher was appointed head of academics, which involved creating curriculums, syllabus, appointing the teacher, monitor the skills and materials used. Some trainings are provided by NAQAA to develop the curriculum but not on all courses. There is no real review of the curriculum used, NAQAA sometimes gives suggestions but there is no real standard. The courses are also inspired by ICM, which is an internationally oriented program. It is the institute for commercial management. In the skills sector we use City and Gills. NAQAA only proposes Gambian oriented curriculums, not internationally oriented curriculums. There is an association of skills centres in which the leading parties of skill centres are able to meet, but lecturers and teachers are often not going here. The biggest problem is, because many are private organizations, they always have to look for funds, they do not have time for meetings. We also change the curriculums to how the market is functioning at that moment. Entrepreneurship is very important, but the attitude of the Gambians should change as well. Often Senegalese tailors are seen as better. It is a gradual process to change this. It is also because Gambians think it is better to sit in an office than to practice skills. Future improvements would be upgrading to a university.

9.3.4 Senegalese Ecole Satang Diabang

R) Teachers and managers of the school

The Ecole Satang Diabang is a private school in Senegal focused on tailoring, hairdressing and cooking. The students consist of mainly illiterate girls. Within this institution they are provided a second chance in exchange for a low fee. The funding is provided by both the fees of the students, the small restaurant and shop they have started and external support from funding organisations. Through responding to the market needs the school attempts to convey relevant information and skills to their students. The girls focusing on tailoring for example learn a unique technique of Batik and tie and dye, hereby differentiating themselves from apprentices and other skills centres. Entrepreneurship is of high importance in the Ecole Satang Diabang. Almost all teachers have experience in entrepreneurship, or run a business themselves besides teaching at the school. This

stimulates and inspires the students to start a business themselves. In addition the Senegalese government has recently made the course business required at all skills centres. The teachers receive training and an extensive manual of teaching entrepreneurship. A total of five teachers of the Ecole Satang Diabang have attended this training and can be considered as qualified to teach the business course, which will be provided for two hours every week the upcoming three years. Competitiveness and creativity are highly valued in the skills centres.

9.3.5 Five different tailor shops in Tanji

S) General Summary

All of the tailors learned the profession as part of an apprenticeship. It was argued Gambians do not have time or money to attend a skill centre. It was mentioned students from skill centres that also do an apprenticeship are less skilful than the full-time apprentices. It was mentioned students at skill centres should learn more about the measuring and cutting of the garments. All were certified by KMC. The starting capital needed was either raised by taking a loan from an acquaintance or by saving and setting aside money. In addition, all shops are interested in export, but none are engaged in it due to different reasons; either no connection, no capital, did not think about it. Problems encountered in the shop was the seasonal demand and financing of the shop. All mentioned being good and providing good quality as the differentiating factor between each other. One of the tailors had ambition to promote more, by displaying examples of his abilities for his customers. The others did not know how to improve.

9.3.6 African Arts and Dutch Design

T) Interview with co-owner

The Co-owner tells us about the possibilities of export for Gambian tailors. But this is very difficult, there are many rules and it is so pricy that you cannot get a profit from it. You need many connections in your own country but also the country you are exporting to. Right now she is trying to arrange something with the harbor to be able to export her products. During her work she notices that many craftsmen are from other African countries and the Gambians should step up and develop themselves like these other Africans. In general, there are not many African craftsmen that are very precise and put much effort in detailing and good finishing.

9.3.7 Facil

V) Facil

Facil is a textile producing enterprise that was started in 2017 by Elizabeth Gomez and her partner. The goal is to produce high quality comfortable underwear and t-shirts for the Gambian and West African market, as well as exporting to Sweden and the rest of the world. After overcoming certain challenges regarding obtaining the right staff for the enterprise it has now started and is growing rapidly. The employees that produce the clothing are Gambians, however they had to be re-trained to be able to produce in an industrial way. Facil uses the industrial model which is based on producing a set of garments using standard sizes (small to large, etc.). Compared to the bespoke model, this is very easy to scale up and is very efficient way of creating new jobs as the company grows. One of the main goals is to create jobs and make Gambians proud about "Made in Gambia" products. This is important to make Gambia less dependent on imports, but also to make Gambia an exporter of goods according to Elizabeth. Future possibilities would lie in the use of e-commerce, export, and becoming a producer of ethically responsible clothing.

9.3.8 Youth empowering and Entrepreneurial Organizations

W) YEP

The Youth Empowerment Program is a project executed by the International Trade Centre of the United Nations. The ITC focuses on improving international trade. By offering support to Employment and Entrepreneurship YEP wishes to address the economic root causes of the problem of irregular migration. The YEP program receives funding from the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. This money is partly allocated to support other, existing entrepreneurship organizations in the Gambia such as EMPRETEC and NEDI. YEP possesses 21 key partners and close contact with MoYS and MoT. YEP collaborates with both public and private institutions in order to achieve their goals and is taking a market-led approach to contribute to: improving employability of the youth, improving self-employment and increased employment along selected value chains. The target is to create 4000 new jobs in total, hereby using income as a proxy. Technical assistance, trainings, workshops and financial sponsoring of existing organizations are the means to achieve this. Recently it has launched its new mini-grants program, executed by the National Association of Corporate Credit Union of the Gambia (NACCUG). Individuals can pitch their business plan and potentially receive a mini grant up to a 1000 dollars to start their business.

X) EMPRETEC

EMPRETEC is a program implemented by GIEPA. GIEPA is a public institution which is short for Gambian Investment and Export Promotion Agency. The EMPRETEC program is financially supported by the UNDP, the government of the Gambia and recently by the YEP program. It will however receive less from the government and the UNDP in the upcoming years, therefore they are happy with YEP. EMPRETEC is part of the enterprise support department, hereby EMPRETEC aims to support businesses and the start-up of businesses. A six-day entrepreneurship workshop is provided which is followed by intensive monitoring and coaching of start-ups. The model for the workshop is developed by the United Nations Trade and Development. The teachers need two years of intensive training before being qualified to teach the entrepreneurship workshop. The workshop is available for all individuals that are interested, despite their academic background or area of interest. There are different levels of the workshop which are provided. Illiterate individuals will be taught in the local language and will make use of the Business Model Canvas methods in which necessary writing is limited.

EMPRETEC in total has educated a total of 736 individuals. A new attribution is the focus on innovation within the program, aiming to stimulate creativeness among the entrepreneurs. In addition, advocacy is an important aspect of the EMPRETEC program, by being part of GIEPA suggestions can be proposed to the ministries. EMPRETEC is promoted by the use of websites, TV programs, Radio, Bill-boards, community heads as well as whatsapp groups. Export is not one of the objectives of EMPRETEC. In addition bundling funds with the other organizations is not seen as a feasible option since not all have the right funds for it.

Y) NEDI

NEDI is established by MoYS. Their main purpose is to empower the Gambian youth throughout provision of training in business entrepreneurship, funding when possible to operate in the informal sector and business advice to ensure sustainability and expansion. NEDI is currently also working with YEP-Gambia to create more publicity, because NEDI is accessible for everyone. The main challenge they face is the funding of their programs and the capability to help young entrepreneurs with their start-ups. NEDI often has sessions with NAQAA about the entrepreneurial implication in the educational system. They work with several institutions that work for this like, YEP-Gambia, Start-up-

incubator, EMPRETEC and GYIN. NAQAA also advises this to the ministry but cannot enforce anything. They do also recommend this to the MoYS, but in the end the authority comes from the ministry.

Z) Start-up Incubator

Start-up incubator has been established since 2015 and their main focus is to incubate young entrepreneurs. Their program is a six-month incubation, in which they educate and coach their students on entrepreneurship. Eventually the students will be in start-ups after the six months incubation time. The organization focuses on all post-secondary education students and even organized a summer camp for high school students. They always make sure that the content of the program matches with the educational level of the student. Their main sponsor is the US embassy and their partners in access to finance are YEP-Gambia and the NEMA-project. Next to their incubation program the organization organizes network events for the youth and visits various events and schools to give talks. They recently even started to bring all youth empowerment organizations together in a press conference, so the communication between them will improve.

AA) GYIN

GYIN has been established since 2012 and their key partners are the IFAT in Rome and the NEMA project. They provide entrepreneurship trainings on how to run and manage a business. They do this by using a manual, this manual is developed by the Columbia business college. This is an affiliate of the Columbia business university. This module consists of 10 parts of entrepreneurship and business management. The module is a 12-day training for each of the three modules. The trainings can only be given with enough finance, so right now they have only given module 1. They integrate financial discipline in their programs with a focus on savings and legal registration. Their main programs are National youth summer camp, rural trainings, mentorship program. Currently they have already trained 192 people across the whole country in one year, 40 of them have really established a business. Currently they cannot train any more people because of financial restraints. Because it is part of the program to also finance the start-ups after the training, they stopped the trainings until they are able to finance everyone. They are currently also partnering with YEP-Gambia for the mini-grants.

BB) Youth Chamber of Commerce

The Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce (GYCC) is under the umbrella of NEDI and is membership based. They have been existing for a year now. The GYCC provide a platform that promotes business to young people in the country. They do trainings, provide exhibitions and do networking for young people in terms of business. Their main goal is to create employability, except for financing they also want to create market space by networking, access to information and branding. Branding is very important especially when everyone is selling the same products. They are currently developing a website for more access to information between the entrepreneurs. It will map down what businesses there are and where, so these people can get connected and exchange knowledge. They also do some mentoring programs and provide trainings on how to develop business plans. They believe that skills centres have to change their way of teaching. The students should be trained to start for themselves after graduating. They recommend that apprenticeships after the studies should not be more than 6 months, two years is too much. The education system also needs to be improved in terms of educational quality, quality of the teachers and the intensity of the courses.