Outcome Statement:
Skills development improves employability of workers, productivity of enterprises and inclusiveness of economic growth.
Skills component of Decent Work


- Education, training and lifelong learning are fundamental, but by themselves insufficient to help individuals gain decent jobs.

- Training and skills development must form an integral part of broad economic, social and labour market policies in order to sustain economic and job growth and social development.

- Training and skills development policies should promote equal opportunities for women and men and help eradicate poverty.
ILO framework: Conclusions from International Labour Conference 2008

How can skills development help increase both productivity and employment in order to attain development goals?
Skills as part of a Virtuous Circle

More and better skills makes it easier to:
  • Innovate
  • Adopt new technologies
  • Attract investment
  • Compete in new markets, and
  • Diversify the economy

Which boosts job growth while at the same time improves productivity
To sustain a “virtuous circle,” skills development policies serve 3 objectives:

1. Match demand and supply of skills
2. Maintain employability of workers and sustainability of enterprises
3. Sustain a dynamic development process
Dynamic development process: Prepare for future jobs

Integrate skills into national and sector development strategies

Include skills in responses to global drivers of change:
- technology
- trade
- climate change
Coordination is critical for success

To tackle the gaps between...

... basic education, vocational training, the job market, and lifelong learning

... skills providers and employers

... skills development and industrial, investment, trade, technology and environmental policies
Coordination is critical for success through institutions such as:

• Inter-ministerial mechanisms – linked to national development frameworks
• Social dialogue
• Deliver as One – with UN agencies at country level
• Skills forecasting and labour market information systems
• Value chains
• Industrial clusters
Outcome Statement: Skills development improves employability of workers, productivity of enterprises & inclusiveness of economic growth

- Skills development policies
- Skills for poverty reduction
- Skills for youth employment
- Include Disability

5. Employment Services
Means of action linked in Service Cycles

New KNOWLEDGE
Research, Needs assessments

Findings

SERVICE
Policy advice, Demonstration projects, Advocacy

PARTNERSHIPS: UN agencies, academia…

OUTPUTS

TOOL
Development: for policy advice & Technical cooperation

$$$ $$ $$

IMPACT ASSESSMENT, DOCUMENTING EXPERIENCE and LESSONS

RESOURCE MOBILISATION

NEW RESEARCH QUESTIONS

TOOL IMPROVEMENT

KNOWLEDGE SHARING:
PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, WEB SITES

Means of action linked in Service Cycles

New KNOWLEDGE Research, Needs assessments

Findings

SERVICE Policy advice, Demonstration projects, Advocacy

PARTNERSHIPS: UN agencies, academia…

OUTPUTS

TOOL Development: for policy advice & Technical cooperation

$$$ $$ $$

IMPACT ASSESSMENT, DOCUMENTING EXPERIENCE and LESSONS

RESOURCE MOBILISATION

NEW RESEARCH QUESTIONS

TOOL IMPROVEMENT

KNOWLEDGE SHARING:
PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, WEB SITES
Skills’ Research Agenda

The 2008 ILC skills conclusions:

1. The Office should not just identify “good practices” but help constituents understand why they work
   – under what conditions,
   – in combination with what other policies,
   – with what financial and human resources

2. The Office should help member States develop appropriate policies
   – avoid “policy borrowing,”
   – resist “policy selling,” and instead
   – design policies based on understanding their own needs and the policy options available to them,
   – apply the principles in ILO standards and policy guidance and adapt policies and approaches to their own circumstances and goals, and
   – integrate monitoring and impact assessment.
Skills’ research agenda

1. Forward-looking skills development – skills for new technologies, reducing skills mismatch
2. Improving informal apprenticeship systems (Africa)
3. Qualifications Frameworks implementation and impact: experience in developing countries
4. Meeting skill gaps for green jobs
5. Expanding employment services in the informal economy
Empirical analysis of QF implementation and impact:
- How QF have been designed
- How are they working
- How effective are they – how do countries track impact
- Are they helping employers and trainers communicate?
- What are the conditions for success: for QF to contribute to labour market and employment objectives

The main research questions are:
- To what extent are qualifications frameworks a way of achieving the various desired policy objectives associated with them?
- What models and implementation strategies and approaches are most appropriate in which contexts?
Qualifications Framework research: approach and methodology

Literature review including a map of NQFs internationally.

Case studies of 18 countries:
- Focus on country context, labour market issues, nature of education and training system, and on why countries have chosen to go this route.
- Phase one: assess the design of the NQF objectives, scope, role of key players, implementation processes, role of donors.
- Phase two: analyse the labour market impact - ownership and use of the NQF, monitoring methods and practice, evidence of labour market outcomes, views of stakeholders on how NQF contributes to skills objectives.
Qualifications Framework research: Case Studies

- 5 Early starters: England, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa

- 13 Recent starters:
  - Africa: Botswana, Mauritius, Tunisia
  - Europe: Germany, Lithuania, Russia, Turkey
  - Asia: Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka
  - Americas: Chile, Colombia, Mexico

The European Training Foundation is a research partner for the project.
Qualifications Framework research framework

- Political and economic context
- Policy objectives, expectations
- Structure and design
- Implementation strategies and practice
- Experience of practitioners
- Experience of users: employers, trainers
- Evidence of positive & negative outcomes
- Conditions for success
Qualifications Framework research – Progress, Status

- Early Starter countries – Reviews completed
- Late Starters
  - Drafts of first section, on objectives, design, processes
  - Researchers’ workshop end-June
  - Experience of QF users now being documented
    - Studies to be completed by 30 September

- Report by end November
- International workshop – other donors, agencies – February 2009
Qualifications Framework research – findings from Early Starters

Achievements are important but limited in relation to original aims:

**New Zealand**: increased numbers of providers through accreditation and state linked subsidies.

**Scotland**: positive developments in access, progression, and transfer, a more transparent and flexible system, and has retained support of all sectors of education and training – developed incrementally over decades.

**Australia**: a national VET system in which industry representatives play a strong role.

**England and Wales**: National Vocational Qualifications have had some successes in some niche areas.

**South Africa**: not meeting key objective of recognizing prior learning of persons disadvantaged in education and labour markets.
Qualifications Framework research: findings from early starters

Lessons across countries:

- Qualifications frameworks are not static. All 5 have changed considerably over time.
- A loose comprehensive framework can be useful in creating pathways to higher learning.
- Increased (although mixed) involvement of employers to help define qualifications, although employers do not always want to be involved.
- BUT little indication of whether employers trust and use the NQF qualifications more than the old ones.
- A problem across all frameworks where new qualifications and competences have been designed is lack of uptake, with many not being used at all.
- Ministries/Departments of education still dominate, with limited formal roles for Ministries of Labour.
- Many countries not tracking labour market results.
4. Qualifications Framework research: envisaged publications

- 2 Working Papers will share interim learning from the project:
  - 1. Thinking About NQFs.
  - 2. Learning from the early NQFs.

- The 3 final publications envisaged include:
  - 3. The project synthesis report.

*Learning from Latin America will inform these global products!*

*And the analysis of experience elsewhere will inform ILO work with constituents in Latin America.*
Christine Evans-Klock
Director
Skills and Employability Department
ILO
evans-klock@ilo.org

“Skills for improved productivity, employment growth and development” at