

Addressing the Challenges of the Education/Skills and Jobs Mismatch

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The Example of the MENA Region



- In the MENA region there are 90 million youth and adolescents
- Population growth is at 2% per year
- 1 out of 3 is unemployed
- Female unemployment is 10% higher than male

The Case of Egypt/Education

- Approximately 790000 school and university graduates are competing over 200 000 jobs every year
- 15% of employers state that graduate specializations do not meet the requirements of the labour market
- 30% of graduates believe their specializations are not relevant to the labour market
- More than 60% of employees are not working in their specialization field
- Only 21% of employers say there is a sort of cooperation between their organizations & educational institutions

The Case of Egypt/Training

- 57% of private enterprises indicate that training centres' facilities are not adequate to provide quality training
- 60% believe that training programs do not meet the needs of the labour market
- Training centers are supply-driven rather than demand-driven
- Public and private providers of formal and informal vocational education and training do not use available occupational classifications
- Employers consider the training provided by the VTCs and MTIs as of poor quality
- The mismatch continues



Why is there a Mismatch?

What is “Not” Education?



- Education is not a process that results in a graduate not finding a job.
- If after years of “education”, graduates are destined to unemployment or to non-productive jobs, then they are not “educated.”

What is “Education?”



- Education is possessing the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable you to realize your vision of yourself and to actively participate in realizing the community vision. The person who is provided with that type of education cannot sit by the side unemployed.
- Educators should not sit in ivory towers designing curricula that help no one develop their communities or realize their dreams.

Why Education?

- To improve livelihoods: open opportunities, eradicate poverty, improve health, well-being and life conditions.
- Proper education will produce graduates for the labour market who can develop the economy.
- We have to educate for the labour market.
- **But the question is what is the labour market and what does it need?**

What is the Labour Market?

- Local?
- Regional?
- International?
- Today's labour market?
- Tomorrow's labour market?
- The labour market in 30 years from now?

What Does the Labour Market Need?

- Knowledge: Most up to date and RELEVANT
- Skills: to use the knowledge and to mitigate and manage the challenges of work and life
- Attitude: Positive – to work and develop individually, within groups and communities and probably within the world as a whole.

What Skills?

- Is it really:
- Strong thinking, communication, entrepreneurial skills, adaptability, labour market skills, problem solving, decision making, team work, responsibility and interpersonal skills ?
- Can this be a negative edge in traditional hierarchical work structures? Which skill is needed then? Adaptability? Negotiation?

Educating for a Diverse and Changing Environment

- Our approach so far was: we have answers to all questions and that is what the students should know
- It is a supply driven rather than demand driven education
- This has to be “180 degrees” changed
- We have to start from the end-receiver : Labour Market Needs Analysis

Ensuring that Graduates Match the Particular Labour Market

- Identify and define the targeted labour market
- Assess the labour market needs: short, medium & long term
- Select which phase of labour market development you are educating for
- Design your education approaches, structure and content to meet the needs of this specific phase of the specified labour market
- Provide demand driven education – focusing on competency development: knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Develop a whole person: intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual and professional development

Policy Options to Address the Mismatch

- Up-to-date relevant **curricula** accompanied by co-curricular and practical activities
- College **specializations** that reflect labour market needs in content & in numbers of graduates
- Qualified **instructors**
- Student **evaluation systems** that measure the knowledge & skills needed by the labour market rather than measuring student ability to rote-memorize
- **Decentralization** & discretion for institutions to offer courses in response to student & market demand
- **Partnerships** with employers in surveying needs & designing & evaluating focus & content
- Focus on **co-curricular activities** to graduate students with physical, mental, spiritual, emotional & professional abilities
- Adequate technical & vocational **training** to provide needed skills
- **Citizenship education** to develop positive attitudes
- A system of feedback and **participatory education** including the students & the employers
- Shift from “static” to “**dynamic education**”

Partnerships to Develop & Implement Training Policies that Are Job-Specific/Lessons Learned

- The private sector can:
- Assist in seeking/providing funding for & conducting needs assessment exercises
- Design and conduct training accordingly
- Provide technical assistance to the young through internship, on-site training programs, or funding for degree or non-degree training – grants & awards – loan schemes
- Adhere to corporate social responsibility – “be patient and true with your interns”
- All efforts have to be part of a holistic approach to skills development and not a “bits and pieces disintegrated approach.”

Focus on ICT in a Continuously Changing Technology World



- Focus on ICT in training and in training delivery
- Governments can partner with private efforts to supply e-learning and distance education.
- Partner to provide up-to-date professional and technical training that supports employment.

Successful Initiatives/Stories/Best Practices in Reducing the Mismatch



- The LEAD Program of Egypt
- Kohl/Mubarak Initiative
- The Education for Employment Foundation
- Facebook Internships for High School Students

Reducing Structural Barriers for Young Men & Women in the Labour Market



- Merit rather than Seniority Systems
- The responsibility of the employers to change their recruitment and promotional policies

Vital Role of the UN System



- Encourage the creation of quality jobs, and appropriate education systems at the national and cross-national levels
- Support and encourage governments to develop road maps to close the mismatch between education and the labour market



Thank you