



The Reform of the Indian VET System from the Point of View of Internationalisation

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Thessalonica, 27th of November 2015

A Vision

“Skill development is critical for achieving faster, sustainable and inclusive growth on the one hand and for providing decent employment opportunities to the growing young population on the other. The demographic window of opportunity available to India would make India the skill capital of world. India would be in position to meet the requirement of technically trained manpower not only for its growing economy but also of the aging advanced economies of the world.” (Twelfth Five Year Plan, p.139)

Objectives

- Expanding the outreach by adopting established and innovative approaches to ensure equitable access to training to all irrespective of any gender, regional, social and sectoral divide.
- Promoting greater and active involvement of all stakeholders including social partners and forging a strong, symbiotic, private-public partnership in skill development.
- Develop a high-quality demand driven skilled workforce/entrepreneur relevant to current and emerging employment market needs.
- Enable the establishment of flexible delivery mechanisms that respond to the characteristics of a wide range of needs of stakeholders.
- Enable effective coordination between different ministries, the Centre and the States and public and private providers.
- Creating institutional mechanism for research, development, quality assurance, examination and certification, affiliation and accreditation and coordination of skill development across the country.(Twelfth Five Year Plan, p.143)

Priority Areas

- “Since *over 90 per cent of India’s labour force is engaged in the non-formal sector*, the most important challenge would be to reach out to this sector...
- Putting in place a *National Skills Qualification Framework* which lays down different level of skills required by industry, which allows *multiple points of entry and exit*, which recognises *prior learning*, and which allows for *mobility across different levels*, as well as between *vocational and technical training* on the one hand, and *general education* on the other...
- To put in place a *permanent institutional framework*, entrusted with the requisite authority and resources, and which is *responsible solely for skill development in the country...*” (Twelfth Five Year Plan, p. 146)

An Umbrella Concept: The National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF)

- It is a 10 level framework, using 5 domains as descriptor categories.
- All the domains are related to *job requirements*:
 - *Professional knowledge* is “what a learner should know and understand with reference to the subject”,
 - *Professional skills* are “what a learner should be able to do”
 - *Core skills* “refer to basic skills ... used for performing the job”,
 - *Responsibility* “determines ... nature of working relationships, level of responsibility for self and others , managing change, accountability for actions”
 - *Process required* is understood as the “general summary of the other four domains corresponding to level” (NSQF Notification, p. 8f)

Institutional Approaches

- Creation of *State Skill Development Missions* (started 2009)
- Set-up of *Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship* (2014) Under this ministry:
 - *National Skill Development Agency (NSDA)*: Responsible for the implementation of the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF)
 - *National Skill Development Committee (NSDC)*: Umbrella organisation of Sectoral Skill Councils (SSCs), working as PPPs
- Set up of *National Skill Development Mission (NSDM)* (2015)

State Skill Development Missions (SSDMs)

Being nodal bodies to anchor state level skill development agendas, the SSDMs have to face the following *challenges*:

- Missing interaction with state government
- Lack of information
- Lack of funding
- Absence of a state level labour market information system
- Lack of trained personnel

National Skill Development Mission (NSDM)

- “To rapidly scale up skill development efforts in India, by creating an end-to-end, outcome-focused implementation framework, which aligns demands of the employers for a well-trained skilled workforce with aspirations of Indian citizens for sustainable livelihoods.” (NSDM Document, p.2)

National Skill Development Agency (NSDA)

NSDA will focus on two verticals of *quality assurance* and *policy research* in the skills space.

Other functions will include:

- Operationalise and implement *National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF)*
- To establish and operationalise a *QA framework* embedded in NSQF to improve consistency of outcomes in the skills landscape, which will include laying down a *framework for training, assessment and certification processes and agencies in the country.*
- To operationalise *National Skills Qualification Committee(NSQC)* to meet its
- objectives
- Design and implement the *National Labour Market Information System*
- Develop national protocols for *registration and accreditation of private training providers.*
- The *National Skills Research Division (NSRD)* under NSDA will be established to serve as the apex body for providing technical and research support to the Mission. This institution will act as a think-tank for Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and be the core skill development hub, which will connect implementation of the Mission with academic research and data. (See NSDM document, p.5)

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) will support the Mission through capacity building initiatives and support private training partners. Other functions of NSDC include:

- Catalyse the creation of market-based, scalable business by providing funding through a combination of debt, equity and grants
- Implementing skills voucher programme
- Driving engagement with industry and businesses
- Promote centres of excellence for training of trainers in coordination with States and SSCs
- Initiating and incubating Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)

Sector Skill Councils (SSCs)

- *Sector Skill Councils (SSCs)* are industry-led bodies, who are responsible for the defining the *skilling needs, concept, processes, certification, and accreditation* of their respective industry sectors. The SSCs shall prescribe the NOSs and QPs for the job roles relevant to their industry.

Capacity Building Activities

Capacity building activities are carried out by *donors* (as European Union, Asian Development Bank) via national (Indian) and international experts.

These activities encompass e.g.

- Training of consultants working on behalf of NSDA
- Assisting relevant organisations to make qualifications NSQF compliant
- Developing forms for qualification registration
- Suggesting approaches for setting up institutions of vocational research

International Collaboration

- *International recognition of Indian qualifications* is one of the *objectives of the reform* (as mentioned in the NSQM document)
- It shall mainly be achieved by activities like *linking the Indian NSQF* (which was partially inspired by the EQF) *to the EQF*. A formal memorandum of understanding has not yet been signed.
- There are various *bilateral initiatives* which take in account the structure of VET in other countries (as the activities of the Indian-German VET working group or the Memorandum of Understanding between the NSDA and the French CNCP).

Status of International Influence

- *British educational tradition* favours all kinds of modularised approaches (as the QP/NOS approach of the SSCs)
- Influence of *international experts* can be felt through their *capacity building activities*, intended to make Indian stakeholders familiar with VET approaches from Europe, Australia, etc.
- Foreign approaches are also supported by the work of globally working enterprises whose human resource development is influenced by the experience in their home countries.

Challenges of the Reform

- No skills policy strategy in terms of *required human and financial resources*
- No widespread *stakeholders' awareness of skills policy issues*
- Changes of responsibilities are mostly inspired by *bureaucratic convenience*, not taking in account strategic reflections.
- Industry often misunderstands its contribution to reform activities as *creating opportunities for quick business*, not for establishing a sustainable quality based regulatory policy.

The Future?

- It is planned to make all Indian qualifications comparable in India, but also all over the world via *compliance to the NSQF*. This shall be achieved up to the end of 2018.
- This has implications for the whole range of *elements of the skilling process* as
 - Identification of training needs
 - Design of curricula
 - Performance of training
 - Assessment
 - Training of trainers and assessors
 - Quality assurance
 - Relationships of training to industry
- If these elements can be based on a *common standard of high quality*, it will be possible to integrate currently existing different VET approaches into a common system. Otherwise the general situation of VET will not basically change: Big international enterprises will further cultivate their *island solutions*, and other qualifications will achieve international recognition from case to case.

Thank you for your attention!