Brief on Linkage between TVET institutions and industries

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Introduction

Collaboration with the industries and the training institutions is the foremost concern in proving the success in TVET of Bangladesh like many other developing countries. UNESCO emphasizes for the improvement of training systems systematically referred to the need to forge closer links between training and the labor market. Lack of initiative by TVET institutions and poor response from the industries are among the major challenges facing the collaboration of TVET and industry particularly in Bangladesh.

Importance of Industrial linkage for the institutions

The outputs of the TVET institutions are the input of the industries. Therefore technical institutions should have closed linkages with the world of work to facilitate support of industry for the enhancement of practical training through placement of trainees on work experience attachment and exchange programs for the instructional staff.

Process of Industry Linkage

As the information andcommunication technology (ICT) is expanding tremendously, the relationship between the institution and industry may be cemented more online integrating new technologies inTVET. The collaboration improves the relations between theories and practical training which are required for the job to increase the knowledge as well as the skillof the trainees and the instructors and finally, it enhances the employability. There are different models working in this regard in different countries in establishing the relation between the industry and the institutions but some studies revealed that motivation and initiatives are the main factors to create a congenial environment rather than finance.

The components of the industry linkage cooperation may be as follows:

1. Market Scan (Labour market study, Community profiling, Opportunity analysis, Partnership);
2. Curriculum Development (According to market scan findings);
3. Industrial attachment;
4. Enterprise formation;
5. Review and update (To find out effectiveness and to strengthen the above steps);
6. Monitoring the quality of training;

7. Job placement program;
8. Skill competitions;
9. Exchange program;
10. Assessment of Trainees.

<u>The Institutional Management Committee (IMC)</u> with the membership and active participation from the private sector may play an important role in strengthening industry-institute linkage. They should have some decision making power in the promotional activities and the IMC should meetregularly.

An active <u>Job Placement Cell</u>with specific responsibility may be an effective approach towards building good relation with the employing organizations with the institute. The Cell needs to be designed to enthusiastically work in assisting the trainees for job search and also keeping contact with the employers. A regular mechanism may be developed to collect the impression of the employers, their suggestions, recommendations and criticism on the quality of training.

<u>Regular visits</u> of the management and instructional staff to the industry is another effective approach in upgrading the course and equipment with the latest technology.

Industry Skills Councils

Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) support to achieve the target for strengthening the relationship between Industry and Training Institutions by bringing together the major enterprises and industry bodies within an industry sector to discuss skill development issues. Some of the strategic plans of ISCs may be -

1. Monitor and review skill development practices in industry sectors;
2. Support the delivery of industry relevant training and/or professional development programs for instructors and trainers;
3. Improve partnerships between industry and public and private training organizations;

ISCs unite industry along sectoral lines to provide specific advice on occupations and skills in demand, and to identify key skills priorities in sectors. As ISCs continue to develop, they will become the primary point of contact for skill issues within industries in Bangladesh. It is imperative that skills training institutions are aware of the changing skill needs in industry and understand the latest employment and technology trends.ISCs have been established in 12 industry sectors so far. These arei) agro-food processing, ii) transport equipment, iii) leather and leather goods, iv) hospitality and tourism, v) informal, vi) RMG, vii) furniture, viii) ceramics, ix) pharmaceuticals, x) construction, xi) light engineering and xii) information technology. A few Centres of Excellence have been established to facilitate specified skill training. These are in different phases of development.In the National Skills Development Policy, the government is committed to working with industry and development partners to develop the network of ISCs,

make their operation sustainable, and have them established as the primary point of contact for industry skill issues in Bangladesh.

Role of Sector Associations

Some sector associations like Bangladesh Garment Manufacturer and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturer and Exporters Association (BKMEA), Bangladesh Association of Construction Industries (BACI), Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) etc. are organizing training program as per their demand. These facilitate the training to be commensurate with the requirement of the industry. Some projects are also supporting these approaches. More initiatives in similar nature should be encouraged.

Public Private Partnership

Public Private Partnership (PPP) is another effective initiative towards more attachment of the industrial enterprises with training institutions. Such partnerships are the key element of the new skills development system, designed to bridge the gap between technical education and employers, resulting in better skilled workers. Training institutions may arrange collaboration with the industry for training cum production processing. It would be suitable in those cases where the machinery is too expensive to operate for the training purpose and the training material is also costly. The industry will use the end products of the training production and this will facilitate the training on the real job and create a win-win-win situation for the industry, institution and the trainees. Graphic Arts institute under DTE has started such an arrangement with a few industries and is operating successfully with the support from B-SEP project funded by Canada.

Projects

Currently a few investment projects are aligned with Bangladesh's country strategies to support skill development. Among these ILO-TVET Reform Project funded by EC, Skill Development Project (SDP) by GoB, ADB and SDC, Skill and Training Enhancement Project (STEP) funded by World Bank and Canada, Bangladesh Skill for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) funded by Canada, Skills for Employment Investment Program **(**SEIP) funded by ADB and Skill for Employment of Bangladesh (SEP-B) by DFID are remarkable. The objective of these projects are to put in place a demand-led, flexible and responsive TVET system that would deliver skills training to meet the needs of the labor market and to strengthen selected public and private training institutions to improve training quality, and the employability of trainees, including those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds emphasizing and encouraging female participation in TVET. These projects are mostly targeted to strengthen the industry-institution relationship to facilitate the employability of the graduates from the institutions and also aiming to reduce the mis-match of the supply and demand on TVET.

Challenges

Sometimes TVET uses curriculum prepared by academics with little or no understanding of industry requirements or local needs. The adoption of market responsive TVET is still an on-going process in Bangladesh and a very new experience in emerging economies. The social networks and association linkages with the institutions and the employers have very poor effectiveness.

Lack of operational capacity in the industries is another problem in arranging this collaboration with the training institutions. There may be rapid improvement in partnerships between the two parties when they will begin to realize that effective collaboration brings them mutual benefits. Recently, industry organizations and associations have been more actively participating in TVET. They are recognizing that linking industrial production with training is the most effective way to increase productivity. TVET institutions that lack in capacity rely on personal connections with the industry, which limits them in formalizing and expanding their collaboration with enterprises. Sustainability of the collaboration initiatives are mainly depends on the continuity of governance and ensuring commitment in collaborative programs.

Recommendations

- On the job traineeship may be made compulsory for the TVETstudents;
- Some companies may adopt theTVET institutions as a centre of excellence for training their workers;
- To invite better participation from industries, the government should extend support from the human resource development fund to meet the practical training related expenditure;
- Both training institution and industry should have special control unit to ensure the smooth program under the collaboration;
- To promote the Industry-institution linkage, TVET Act should have some provision in regard to expedite the financing modality of the institution with the industry. [In the German Dual System, a partnership between industry and vocational education providers is binding by law].
- Industry-institution linkage can facilitate public private partnership (PPP).
- To ensure better growth of institute-industry relationship more active IMC, Job placement Cell, ISCs and involvement of Sector associations are necessary.
- Exchange of expertise from the industry with the training institutes will facilitate the process of industry linkage.