



2nd POLICY LEARNING FORUM:

Defining and writing learning outcomes for VET qualifications

Cedefop, Thessaloniki 13-14 October 2016

Comments and observations from international expert

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Key points:

India's skills challenge and skills ambition

- World's youngest country with 700 million people in the working population over the next 25 years; 1 million people joining the labour force every month! Skill development is a critical need
- India's ambition is to become the skills capital of the world; skilled, young people would be India's 'natural' resource and most important export in the years to come

Three waves in India's skills/VET ecosystem

- 2008/09 when the National Skill Development Mission was launched by the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. Under this mission, the National Skill Development Fund and the National Skill Development Corporation were set up to engage with the private sector and build capacity for skill training in the country
- 2012/13 when the process of creation of sector skills councils (SSCs) was initiated and the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) came into force and the learning outcomes approach came into the mainstream
- 2014/15 when the new Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship was created and the process of consolidation of all skilling initiatives under the new ministry was launched. This was an important step to bring order to a complicated VET ecosystem in the country

Learning outcomes approach is at the heart of India's skills ambition

- Over 90% of the workforce in India works in the unorganized sector and most of these workers acquire their skills via non-formal and informal learning
- This makes the recognition of prior learning a very important goal for India and its achievement depends on how well India can understand and adopt the learning outcomes approach

Like many member states in the EU, India has already made a beginning but a lot remains to be done

- India now has a NQF and over 35 sector skills councils which bring the various social partners together to develop occupational standards which are based on learning outcomes. But overall, the understanding of learning outcomes approach across various levels of education and VET is still low.
- The development of NQF and occupational standards has impacted policy. The central government has recently decided to create a National Board for Skills Assessment and Certification which would be responsible for simplifying/unifying all skill training qualifications in the country with the NQF as the base
- Different institutional settings, policies and incentives could trigger the adoption of learning

outcomes. For instance, in India the private training providers have taken the lead in aligning their training programs with occupational standards (which in turn are based on learning outcomes). One of the reasons for this is that financing made available by the government is now strictly based on this alignment for example project financing by the National Skill Development Corporation requires that all proposed training programs conform to the occupational standards set by SSCs

- In India, training and professional development of trainers and assessors is a major challenge which must be addressed. While a large number of training programs based on learning outcomes have been launched, the trainers and assessors lack the basic understanding and skills. Upskilling of trainers and teachers is necessary so they can translate the learning outcomes into a high quality learning process. Same goes for assessment. There is a critical need for upgrading the skills of assessors especially because the trend in India has been to move towards third party assessment

