



A SKILLS BEYOND SCHOOL REVIEW OF EGYPT

Skills beyond School, the OECD Review of Postsecondary
Vocational Education and Training



Opportunities / Strengths

Diversity in provision

- Post-secondary VET in Egypt offers many programmes in different specialties and through different types of institutions. There are approximately 108 different technical programmes covering 22 disciplines. In total, Egyptian post-secondary VET and its 68 institutions had 127 440 enrolled students in 2009/2010. Although post-secondary VET could be encouraged to offer more services for some specific groups or purposes (up-skilling, adult education, second chance education, and career shifts) the current institutional and curricula mixture reflects the importance of Egyptian VET for both economic prosperity and social cohesion.



Opportunities / Strengths

Aiming at a single body for co-ordination

- The revival of a Supreme Council on Human Resources would represent a major initiative in response to the fragmentation and lack of adequate co-ordination in VET. At the moment, there are multiple public entities involved in the delivery of VET which makes co-ordination difficult and costly. A new body could take overall responsibility for the entire VET system at upper secondary and post-secondary levels, including the relationship with social partners. The OECD team noted a widely shared commitment across different stakeholders to work together to improve co-ordination, address policy reform and to work with partners in industry; a newly established council must take advantage of this environment.



Opportunities / Strengths

Interest in enhancing social partners engagement

- In Egypt, the importance of social partners in VET is well-recognised. For the technical clusters initiative, the involvement of social partners is essential to create those synergies aiming to provide vocational and technical education of high quality and to tackle local labour market needs more effectively. The key point of the cluster is to ensure that the resources are integrated to achieve the highest level of utilisation and set up a clear progression path to higher technical skills for students – that must be also transparent and understandable to employers. The first cluster is already operating in Cairo (Ameeria).



Opportunities / Strengths

Assessment is inspired by policy development

- The OECD team identified in Egypt a good capacity for data and information collection as well as for diagnosis in relation to VET policy making. This allows Egypt to develop a good understanding of the issues which need to be addressed, and often how to do so. One example is the background report prepared by the local team for this review. The Ministry of Higher Education undertook a survey of employers, stakeholders, and VET graduates to provide data for the background report alongside several meetings and discussions with relevant stakeholders. The background report contains a self-assessment of the challenges faced by VET whose main points have been agreed. These data collection practices could usefully be reinforced and take place more systematically for the use and benefit of local institutions, students, and social partners.



Opportunities / Strengths

A reasonable level of international co-operation

- The VET authorities in Egypt are already taking advantage of all kinds of international collaboration opportunities, working with a wide range of partners in other countries and with international organisations. Some relevant examples are: *i)* The Egyptian-German Initiative for Dual System; *ii)* The VET Reform Programme; and *iii)* European Training Foundation Projects in Egypt.



Challenges and Recommendations

The quality of the system. Today, VET in Egypt remains an option that is often perceived as low status, where institutional co-ordination is insufficient, and where quality assurance should improve. The challenge of quality impacts on the social perception and prestige of the education and training provided which, in turn, erodes VET visibility and utilisation.

Recommendation:

- Egyptian post-secondary VET should reinforce efforts to improve its quality in three essential areas: i) improve co-ordination in the system; ii) improve the assessment of learning outcomes; and iii) facilitate a clear and coherent governance structure for quality assurance.



Challenges and Recommendations

Lack of adequate employer engagement. There are cases where programmes and curricula seem to be designed to match labour market needs with a substantial involvement of employers themselves, but this does not take place systematically.

Recommendation:

- Take action to enhance employers' engagement in Egyptian VET: i) to ensure the labour market relevance of VET programmes; and ii) to reinforce those structures and frameworks already in place.



Challenges and Recommendations

Limited use of workplace learning. In the strongest VET systems, workplace learning plays a central role, while in Egypt, it seems to be relatively absent from many post-secondary VET programmes. Workplace learning is a powerful tool for developing both hard and soft skills, for transitioning students into employment, engaging employers and linking the mix of training provision to employers' needs.

Recommendation:

- Develop workplace learning as a systematic, credit-bearing, quality assured and mandatory element in vocational programmes and convince employers of the benefits that can be obtained.



Challenges and Recommendations

Weak basic skills among those entering the system. Many students entering VET in Egypt have weak numeracy and literacy skills – and they need targeted help. This support should be seen as a priority in the educational system as a whole because, as jobs are becoming more technical, basic literacy and numeracy skills are becoming even more crucial.

Recommendation:

- Identify weaknesses and target support to improve numeracy and literacy and encourage course completion, strengthen workforce skills, and support transition from VET to academic education.



Challenges and Recommendations

Lack of sufficient information to support career guidance.

There are insufficient data to support the development of strong career guidance services for students across different institutions. Stronger data and information might help career guidance services to collaborate more effectively in matching VET graduates labour market demand and supply, support the vocational choices of students and avoid dropouts.

Recommendation:

- Improve data and information available to support policy and operational decisions and enhance guidance to support students' educational choices.



Skills beyond School Reviews

- Increasingly countries look beyond secondary school to more advanced qualifications to provide the skills needed in many of the fastest growing technical and professional jobs in OECD economies. The OECD study, *Skills beyond School*, is addressing the range of policy questions arising, including funding and governance, matching supply and demand, quality assurance and equity and access. The study builds on the success of the previous OECD study of vocational education and training *Learning for Jobs* which examined policy through 17 country reviews and a comparative report.



Skills beyond School Reviews

- Full country policy reviews are being conducted in Austria, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Israel, Korea, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (England), and the United States (with case studies of Florida, Maryland and Washington State). Shorter exercises leading to an OECD country commentary will be undertaken in Belgium (Flanders), Canada, Iceland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and in Northern Ireland and Scotland in the United Kingdom. Background reports will be prepared in all these countries, and in France and Hungary. Further information is available on the OECD website: www.oecd.org/education/vet



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