Outline Issues for a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Strategy for UNESCO

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A SUMMARY

- Context and history of this paper and of Skills/TVET in UNESCO
- Phase of conceptual development towards a global strategic vision
- Phase of policy, review and advice to member states in selected skills domains
- UNESCO’s current and planned portfolio for skills development, from 2010
HISTORY AND METHOD OF DEVELOPING THIS PAPER – 1 YEAR

- Germany and many Member States propose TVET Strategy, April 08
- Permanent Delegations discuss TVET Proposal, September 08
- IIO, ETF, World Bank, UNICEF and Bilateral Agencies, Aug-Nov 08
- International Conference on Education + UNESCO Staff, November 08
- International Expert Meeting, 12-13 January 09 Bonn
- Face-to-face and email exchanges
- Executive Board April 2009
CONTEXT AND HISTORY OF UNESCO’S TVE POLICY INSTRUMENTS

• 1962 Recommendation on TVE, and Revisions, 1974, 2001
• International Congress on the Development and Improvement of TVE 1987 (East Berlin)
• Convention on TVE November 1989 - after long gestation
• Launch of International Project on TVE, 1992
• Seoul Congress 1999 and Plans for New Global TVE(T) Strategy
TVE IN UNESCO LOSES MOMENTUM AFTER E. BERLIN 87 AND SEOUL 99

• Impact of World Conference on EFA, March 90
• Loss of Expanded Vision of EFA in 1996 (OECD/DAC Targets)
• Dakar 2000 and refocusing of UNESCO on EFA Programme
• Loss of holistic vision of EFA at Millennium Summit, September 2000
• The power and peril of targets: Seoul, Dakar, New York
• No link between Seoul Recommendations and Dakar Goal 3 on Skills - not making skills one of the EFA building blocks
DRivers of skill, and skills as the drivers of prosperity?

• Very success of EFA and challenge of Post-EFA lead to interest in skills
• Skills for competitiveness and poverty reduction
• Skills within sector-wide approaches
• Politics of skills-for-employment and skills-for-security
• Skills for enterprise productivity and individual prosperity
CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION - UNESCO’S NICHE IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

• UNESCO’s role not TVET financing & investment but knowledge development
• Strategic vision critical for repositioning skills after Jomtien, Dakar and MDGs
• Multiple meanings of skills in/for EFA and Post-EFA planning
• ‘Skills ..we have not figured out properly how to define them and measure them’
• See agenda and papers for this meeting – both TVE and TVET used, and VET
STRATEGIC GLOBAL CONCEPTUAL MAPPING OF SKILLS AND TVE/TVET

- Core, essential or communication skills
- Soft skills or new skills [+ higher order skills]
- Occupationally related technical and vocational skills [work skills]
- Behavioural or attitudinal skills
- Life skills – social, health and interpersonal
- Synergy and complementarity amongst these different sets of skills
DISCOURSES AND DOMAINS OF TVE/TVET & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- TVET or VET still widely used in ministries of education (MoE) and of labour (MoL), North/South
- TVET/VET: school-, college- and institute-based, both public and private
- TVET/VET: also non-formal, life-long and community-based
- Skills development: institution- and enterprise-based, formal/non-formal, public/private, multiple sectors
- Compromise: Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD)
UNESCO’S NICHE IN TVSD

• Formal skills development thru MoE, at basic, post-basic and college-levels
• Non-formal skills development thru MoE
• NOT skills development in the informal sector or enterprise-based
• Same true of any SKILLS GMR, since data comes from MoEs and UIS
STRATEGIC CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES IN TVSD

• Rights-based supply-led skills vs demand-led skills
• Skills vs competencies (and CBT)
• Conceptual assumptions about skills in NQFs and RQFs
• Claims about links between skills and growth, work and poverty reduction
• Skills coherence and clarification across UN specialised agencies & in One UN
TOWARDS A COMISSION ON SKILLS?

• The challenge of the language and translation of skills
• ‘Skills’ within the Six languages of the UN, and beyond
• A series of regional consultations on the language and discourse of skills
• From ‘Learning to Do’ towards a new Commission on Skills
POLICY REVIEW AND ADVICE IN SELECTIVE SKILLS DOMAINS

- From conceptual development to policy advice at the country level
- First country priority – strategic expansion of secondary education
- Massive demand for advice on articulation of general and technical secondary
- One modality would be the OECD-style [or ETF] country policy review
- Later priorities - college-based higher technical education & non-formal TVSD
- Key focus – NOT policy borrowing, but policy learning, South-South, and North-south
STATISTICAL CHALLENGE OF POLICY REVIEWS AND ADVICE

• Currently minimal reporting on skills/TVSD thru the GMR process
• Make better use of existing data sources at the country level
• Targeted improvement, via UIS, of technical secondary and post-secondary data
• Indicators to monitor non-formal skills provision thru NFE MIS
• Time for a new UNEVOC/UIS TVSD Statistical Study and a Skills GMR
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT, CRITICAL MASS AND INSTITUTIONAL COHERENCE

• Currently, UNESCO’s capacity in skills development is fragmented
• Expertise is scattered across centres, institutes, field/regional offices and HQ
• Conceptual work, networking, upstream policy, and micro NGO-style projects
• TVSD capacity development will require major transformative work on UNESCO’s own capacity [cf IOS review of UNESCO]
• Work in phases 1 & 2 will need in shorter term high quality external resources in skills research and policy analysis
UNESCO’S PLANNED PORTFOLIO FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, FROM 2010

• A refocusing on upstream policy work and normative standard-setting
• Skills in from the cold as one of UNESCO’s three ‘EFA Building Blocks’ for 2010-2011
• Skills as a full and legitimate component of EFA, as EFA now covers secondary
• Implications for UNESCO’s support to a Skills GMR
‘PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AROUND TVET’

• Beyond skills coherence in the UN family, scope for UNESCO’s convening around skills
• Learning from ETF’s ‘policy learning in VET’
• Learning from OECD’s ‘Learning for jobs’
• Relating to ILO’s ‘Skills for improved productivity, employment growth and development’
• But UNESCO will need analytical and conceptual investment if it is to bring something to the international table
RETHINKING UNESCO’S SKILLS CAPACITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- A global Commission on Skills
- A series of major regional consultations around Skills
- A new normative instrument around skills, competencies and capacities
- A new UIS/UNEVOC Statistical Study on formal and non-formal TVSD
- A new Global Monitoring Report *On and Beyond Dakar Goal 3*
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