

India- EU Skills Development Project Newsletter

A newsletter published under the India-EU Skills Project funded by the European Union, April 2016



A ToT interactive session underway conducted by the project experts in an open setting

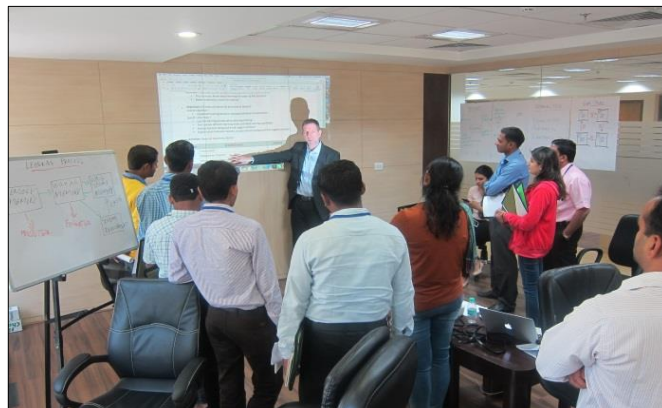
October 2015 with 4 training institutes in Guwahati, Mumbai, Churu and Jaipur. At each institute the visit began with a semi structured interview with the management. Then the management presented the institutes and lessons were observed using an observation sheet. The visit ended with a focus group interview with a group of trainers.

The purpose of the focus group interview was to get further into the used training methods, trainers pre-service and in-service training and general knowledge of pedagogics. All trainers in the institutes were as well invited to take part in an electronic questionnaire. All gathered information was then analyzed and a Training Needs Analysis Report was produced with recommendations. Based on the recommendations from the TNA a 5 days training program was developed. First step was to train 10 co-facilitators who can then participate in the training of the next batches. This approach was used with great success in the training of trainers in Capital Goods Sector.

The first batch of Logistics trainers was trained from 22 to 26 February, with 19 trainers participating from 5 training institutes. Since the Logistics sector is a very young and developing sector participants come with a very diverse background. This contributes to a very engaged and enthusiastic learning atmosphere. The first day of the training participants were introduced to the basics of Competence Based Training and how to analyze trainees in terms of learning process, learning style, motivation and background. On the second day participants worked on Qualification Packs and CBT curriculum, QP's for VET trainers and Communities of Practice. The third day focused on participants' presentation technique as well as their own Continuing Professional Development. The fourth day focused on assessment and trainer roles. On the last day participants worked on Collegial Supervision and introduced to different teaching methods. The training ended with work on how participants can multiply the training and a thorough evaluation.

Training of Trainers in the Logistics Sector

The India-EU Skills Development Project contributes to the implementation of the Skill Development Policy of the Government of India in order to improve the quality and relevance of the number of certified skilled labour in various sectors of employment. An important part of every attempt to increase quality of TVET is to improve the quality of the delivered training. Keeping this in mind, one of the three components of the project deals with Capacity Building. Within this component the project prepared and delivered a Training of Trainers session (ToT) for two selected sectors Capital Goods and Logistics. The training in Capital Goods was conducted from October to December 2015. The training in Logistics sector began with a Training Needs Analysis of the trainers in logistics. 3 experts from the project conducted the analysis in September and



Senior Expert Alexander Siboni holding a presentation



The Second Assessment Body Workshop, February 2016

Timing is everything, as they say, and the decision to bring together the same group of Assessment Bodies that had met in October last year was a perfect example of this. The NSDA had begun consultation on the NQAF Manual No 3 - Accreditation of Assessment Bodies on 15th February and so what could be better than having a group of key Assessment Bodies in the same room at the same time to give their initial feedback to what's being proposed.

Sri Pandey, PS to the NSDA Chairman, opened the Workshop as before, expressing appreciation of their attendance and reinforcing the centrality of high quality assessment to the successful implementation of the NSQF. With his endorsement of their important contribution to the TVET ecosystem and encouraging them to have their say on a range of key assessment-related issues, the delegates got down to yet another hard day's work.



Isabel Sutcliffe, Project Expert in Assessment & Certification presiding over the discussions at the Workshop

The Workshop fell into three distinct components:

- » A morning's round-table canter through the key features of the Quality Criteria;
- » An afternoon session working in small groups and getting down to some of the detail including, critically, the implications for Assessment Bodies;
- » And finally, a whole group plenary comprising feedback and thoughts of Next Steps.



Ongoing session of the Second Assessment Bodies workshop at the NSDA office, New Delhi

While, in general, the group considered the criteria broadly acceptable as they stand, delegates made sound suggestions for improvement, identified gaps and sought assurances that sufficient time would be given for them to prepare

their applications for Accreditation. The group agreed that self-evaluation would be an area requiring attention and training. The proposal to have a second tier of Accreditation - Skill India Centers of Excellence & Innovation in Assessment - was favorably received, although delegates stressed the importance of the Assessment Body sector taking ownership of the Criteria and working to exemplify the requirements. It is hoped that this will be taken on board by NSDA via the establishment of a formal Working Group. As with the first Workshop held in October, delegates welcomed the opportunity to come together and collectively address critical developments in their sector. Delegates remain committed to improving the status, esteem and recognition of assessment in the TVET ecosystem and are eager to continue working to this end.

Training for Assessment Professionals, March 2016

Following in the footsteps of ToT experts and their hugely successful training sessions for Lead Trainers & Trainers, March saw the launch of the first round of training for Assessment Professionals.

Three training sessions were held in the NSDA offices: a three-day session for Lead Assessors & Assessment Coordinators and two-day sessions for Assessors. While the timing of the training was difficult for those Assessment Bodies making nominations- given the imminent year end- they saw the value in what was on offer and did their very best to ensure their organisations were represented. The training was exhausting, but the feedback was unanimously positive. Indeed delegates want more! The trainer, Isabel, is now re-charging her batteries in readiness for the remaining training sessions in November.

It became evident from these sessions that huge amount of work was needed before NSQF qualifications could genuinely be regarded as competence-based.



India-EU Project exhibits Skills Education at ETMA's "Science of Human Learning Conference"

How can we get children to love school and learning? How can we make the most of new technology to reach learners across the whole of India? How can we improve the employability skills of graduates? And how can we make skills education valuable and aspirational? These are some of the questions which were discussed at the Science of Human Learning Conference held at India International Centre in New Delhi on 4th to 6th February.

Organized by the Educational Technology and Management Academy (ETMA), the 3-day conference attracted delegates and speakers from around India and from abroad. The conference focused on innovative approaches to making learning more effective at all levels. It covered issues as diverse as the development of school leaders and moving the focus from teaching to learning in the use of ICT.

Karen Adams, Joint Key Expert on the India EU Skills Project, was one of the international speakers who took part. Karen spoke about the importance of educational quality in skills education, and how to make skills learning an attractive option for students and for their parents. Speaking about the need to make skills education aspirational rather than a second choice for people who don't do well at school, Karen questioned why a lack of parity of esteem between the vocational and the academic persists: 'All too often, vocational learning is seen as being somehow less valuable to individuals and society than academic study.

However, *we need to remember that education – the gaining of knowledge – sits at the heart of both vocational and academic learning.*



India-EU Skills Joint Key Expert Karen Adams meets students from the Salwan Public School during the ETMA Conference

The main difference is that, to develop a skill, you need to learn that knowledge then apply it to practical situations. This applies to all fields of work. It doesn't matter whether you are a doctor or a plumber, an engineer or a weaver.

You need to learn the knowledge which underpins your craft, and you need to be able to apply that knowledge effectively, to build on it and refine it.' Karen highlighted the importance of embedding educational quality in skills learning, which is the focus of the Skill India initiative.

The developments now taking place can help ensure that skills programmes are underpinned by quality systems, and that the qualifications they lead to are robust and valuable. Through this focus on quality, it's possible to see how we can raise the profile and increase the value of vocational learning. It's important that vocational qualifications are seen as a viable, and equally valuable, study route when young people and their parents are making decisions about future study and work. Employers- and their employees- need to see that vocational education enhances both the business and individual's career chances. And the way to do this is through ensuring quality at all stages in the system.

Karen's presentation highlighted the India EU Skills Project's role in supporting NSDA to develop support for quality in all aspects of the skills ecosystem linked to the NSQF. This ranges from learning needs analysis and support for curriculum and trainer development, through to resources to support robust competency- based assessment and effective quality assurance.

She also had the chance to find out about different aspects of education projects taking place in other areas of the education sector. One project which grabbed her interest was the work which ETMA is doing in supporting education in rural areas. 'Their village school project is amazing,' she said. 'They have achieved a zero drop-out rate in village primary schools by making learning fun and engaging. The teachers from those schools are truly inspirational.'



The Sixth Project Steering Committee Meeting

The sixth plenary opened with Ms. Jyotsna Sitling, Director General of the NSDA and Mr. Johann Hesse, Head of Cooperation, Delegation of the European Union to India. They introduced the purpose of the meeting and welcomed the presence of Shri Rohit Nandan, Secretary of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and all the other participants.

Beginning as per the agenda, Mr. Vaclav Klenha, the Project Team Leader, presented the project progress and planning report, together with eight Project Experts participating in the meeting. The Progress Report 8 was made available to the participants at the meeting. Going through the progress report Vaclav pointed out achievements of the project from the implementation period of September 2015 to February 2016 which was met with a to-and-fro discussion.



Participants interact post the Steering Committee meeting

» Component 1: Enhanced capacity of beneficiary institutions:

During the presentations, Mr. Nandan suggested availability of NQF Handbook in other languages as well as a concise version of handbook in form of an FAQ. He advised a one-day workshop on Training of Trainers for all SSCs. NSQF roll-out workshops for the States and National Ministries were also proposed. It was echoed to get every assessment body to have at least two trained assessors, for which training must be rolled out. Pointing out the overseas study visits, it was advised for all officials to submit a report and deliver presentation to colleagues on what they have learned, helping to institutionalize the knowledge. It was stated that the project could facilitate collaboration with concerned agencies from other countries such as CNCP in France, with UK agencies during the study visit to UK, and Australian agencies.

» Component 2: Progress in national qualifications framework implementation:

There was acknowledgement that the NSQF roll-out shall require a systematic and sustainable solution. Ms. Sitling raised concerns of qualifications being unsuitable for rural areas and for different categories and locales. She remarked qualifications were too narrowly focused and hampered multi-skilling, which is particularly needed in rural areas. It was also suggested to get the NQAF manuals approved by end of March. There was a strong interest expressed in the NSQF being referenced against the EQF and qualifications of Indian workers being recognized in Europe.

» Component 3: Labour market information systems and analysis practices enhanced:

During discussions on LMIS, it was acknowledged that not all employers were prepared to share their LMI data but were more likely to do so via a personal approach by the SSC. Mr. Nandan advised that the SSCs must support the LMA activities financially. It was specified that the experiences from the pilot enterprise surveys (for labour market analysis and logistics) must be shared.

» Component 4: Overarching activities:

There were deliberations on ensuring effective communications and visibility to seek clarity on making understanding of basic concepts of skills framework across skills eco-system. To replicate the successes of state workshops at the SSDM level, the same format was suggested to be repeated across SSCs. There was a stated disappointment at the equity portion of the project omitting people with disabilities. Project's assistance was advised on setting up the National Skills Certification Body and to review the draft Skill India Act. A post project sustainability plan will be prepared for retention, adoption and rolling out of material and knowledge generated as outcome of the project. A formal request for extension of the project from the Ministry will be sent to the EU Delegation.

» Closing remarks:

Shri Rohit Nandan and Ms. Jyotsna Sitling closed the session congratulating the India-EU Project. They stated the developments to be relevant to the Indian social and economic conditions, pointed out the importance of knowledge retention, application and dissemination and taking up actions that will yield quick results for the ever-increasing volumes. The EU supported the points discussed and shall consider contractual arrangements within the budget to increase project capacity. Mr. Johann Hesse shared plans of a high-level skills conference in summers of 2016 possibly before July.

