



Member of Qatar Foundation

QATAR COUNTRY PAPER

on

The Role of Career Guidance in the Preparation, Placement and
Development of Qatar National Workforce

Prepared by
Qatar Career Fair

Submitted at the ICCDPP 2015 Symposium
Des Moines, Iowa, USA



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INTRODUCTION

This research paper was based on the 2015 theme of the international symposium organized, on 14th - 17th July 2015, by the International Center for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP) and Kuder, Inc., in Des Moines, Iowa, USA. Based on the symposium's theme, **"Building the Talent Pipeline and Providing Youth with Hope for the Future"**, the paper addressed four career guidance issues central to youth empowerment. These issues included emerging technologies, return on investment, engaging employers and integrated policies.

Through collecting and analyzing qualitative data related to the above mentioned issues, the paper identified and addressed major challenges for establishing an effective career development system in Qatar. Such challenges pertain not only to developing career guidance as an isolated system, but more importantly as a sub-system that interacts with education, training and labor market as sub-systems that make up a unified system of workforce preparation, placement and development.

Viewed from this holistic perspective, the paper suggests how best to design, deliver and assess quality career guidance services that can, in various ways, contribute to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the education and labor market sub-systems.





The Major Challenges for Establishing an Effective Career Development System in Qatar

Major challenges for establishing an effective career development system in Qatar center around how best to design, deliver and assess quality career guidance services that can, in various ways, efficiently contribute to the achievement of Qatar National Vision, 2030, in general, and its human capital development dimension, in particular. This requires, among other things, adoption of a well concerted, policy driven effort to handle challenges related to the development of:

- National level entity vested with responsibility for regulating, monitoring and developing career guidance services across various sectors.
- Comprehensive career development framework, which specifies standards, policies, competencies, processes, etc.
- Coordination mechanisms among career guidance providers in schools, colleges, universities and employment organizations in public and private sector organizations.
- Culturally appropriate on-line career guidance products and services delivered through national high quality portal.
- Strong career culture among all key stakeholders including employers, educational institutions, parents, etc.
- Career guidance professionals in general in terms of, for example, qualifications framework, professional development programs, code of practice and ethics, establishment of society for career guidance professionals in Qatar.
- Strong links among educational institutions, labor market and career service providers to fine tune the demand for, and supply of, national human resources.
- Well-integrated and easily accessible labor market, education and career service information systems.

Major Policy Decisions and Its Relevance to Career Development within Qatar

In Qatar national strategic policy decisions are taken at a Ministerial level. Also some career policy decisions are taken at sector level, such as educational sector, while other policy decisions are taken at organizational level, such as energy & industry sectors. Nationalization is a key framework for development of national workforce applying in all existing industries and sectors.

An effective system is considered the one that bridges successfully the results of a country's education system with the needs of the labor market. Key stakeholders in Qatar advise that a personal career development record system, similar to health history records, needs to be established, and each person should incorporate adequate lifelong learning strategy in his own career path.

In this light, further research is required to support building of an advanced lifelong learning strategy, with solid data to identify the needs, as well as the gaps, and guide to the desired outcomes. Only then comprehensive policies and procedures can effectively expand to different levels.



EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

This sub-theme is looking for ideas in how new and well-established information and communications technologies (ICT) are currently being used in career development projects, policies, or research. We want to know the specifics on what has made the technology helpful, how exactly it's being utilized, and how hurdles may have faced. (ICT refers to technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications. It is similar to information technology (IT), but focuses primarily on communication technologies. This includes the internet wireless networks, cell phones and other communication mediums).

The Use of Technologies to Support Workforce Preparation, Placement and Development Policies for Young People in Qatar

As per the 2014's ICT Development Index, which measures countries according to their level of ICT access, use and skills, Qatar ranked among the top five Arab countries and within the top sixty globally. Based on such impressive achievement, Qatar has, in various ways, utilized emerging technologies for purposes of developing its national talent in light of policies related to transforming the country into a knowledge-based economy.

At a national policy level, and in as far as human capital development is concerned, the government of Qatar has, through its Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (MICT), invested heavily in e-literacy (including e-government) for the benefit of all sectors of the Qatari economy and all people in Qatar-particularly young ones. This is empowered by the observation that more than 96% of the Qatari households are well connected with the internet and that more than 97% of the households have computer devices. In addition almost all Qataris are not only well connected at home and business, but also have a multitude of devices at their disposal- such as laptops, smartphones & gadgets, which are used for various purposes including e-learning.

Based on such well-developed ICT infrastructure, and in view of high e-literacy rates among the Qatari population, the following examples illustrate the use of ICT in support of workforce preparation, placement and development policies in Qatar.

- For workforce preparation, the Qatar national e-Learning Portal is an innovative platform providing on-line courses designed specifically for workforce preparation and development. The platform depicts a learning approach that features "a smart blend of virtual interactions alongside self-paced" soft and technical skill courses.
- At a sector level, the Supreme Education Council does, in its pursuit of adequate preparation of students for undergraduate and postgraduate studies, utilize ICT in various ways such as online registration systems for scholarships, sponsorships and internship programs. In addition, MICT and Qatar Assistive Technology Center (MADA) have developed an impressive array of tools and programs intended to equip specific target groups with workplace Arabic communication skills.
- At organizational levels, various work organizations, like Ministry of Labor (MoL), MICT and Supreme Education Council (SEC), have developed e-platforms that connect young people with potential employers, sponsors and educational institutions. Also, universities and colleges use such technology like Black Board course management system and on-line career assessment system in addition integrated library information management system such as the "millennium system".
- Regarding workforce placement, the Ministry of Labor has, on the basis of national level recruitment policy, developed an on-line portal for job placement for nationals. Also, major companies in the energy sector (e.g. Qatar Petroleum) and in the private sector (e.g. Qatar Foundation) utilize advanced e-recruitment system as part of their fine-tuned e-HR systems. Similarly, other employers in various sectors promote their job vacancies through, for example, their websites, social media, and online e-data banks related to applicants' profiles, CVs and other supportive documents.



- In addition, leading employers utilize ICT in managing their workforce development programs, e.g. ERP solutions for career planning and training management.

The Use of Technology to Connect with Existing Structures or Provision of Career Guidance

The use of technology in the provision of career guidance in Qatar is, in some important ways, very notable. A very much appealing example is "Ta3mal" network developed by Silatech. This service provides Arab youth, in general, with free access to a wide range of well secured on-line career guidance resources, tools and services. Examples of these include personalized advice on career related issues; resume building and cover letter writing in addition to career guidance tools and virtual advising to help young people determine the career paths that best match their aspirations.

Also, and through a partnership with ALISON, the world's leading provider of free online courses, Ta3mal users have access to over 500 on-line courses to enhance their professional skills. In addition, for aspiring entrepreneurs, Ta3mal offers useful information and tips for starting businesses and obtaining funding, as well as virtual mentoring and entrepreneurship support services, including advice on how to create business plans and market business ideas.

Another successful example of technology-based career guidance service is provided by Qatar Development Bank and Silatech through the Bedaya Center. This service provides young people with access to a comprehensive range of youth services including career counseling services supported by "Tamheed" system, which is an on-line career assessment, planning and development system. Coupled with this system is a large set of training programs and activities offered to help youth to achieve their career goals, develop their job skills, and/or accelerate their entrepreneurial aptitude and ambitions to start new businesses. An on-line SME Toolkit is, also, used for purposes of consolidating entrepreneurial experience of various target groups

In a complementary manner, the Supreme Education Council has, more recently, developed an on-line assessment tool to be utilized by school students for purposes of educational and career assessment, exploration and decision making. Also, the Ministry of Labor provides a limited, yet important, on-line career service for young Qataris. This pertains to receipt and assessment of the CVs of national candidates, short-listing them and connecting them to private sector employers.

In addition, the banking sector (e.g. Qatar National Bank and Commercial Bank of Qatar) and the energy sector (oil and gas companies like Qatar Petroleum, Ras Gas, Shell and Dolphin Energy) use a good number of on-line tools for career assessment purposes. Examples of these include psychometric tests, employability skills assessment and technical as well as soft skill training and development courses. The various groups targeted by these courses have access to the previously mentioned MICT on-line learning portal. To reiterate, this portal offers extensive sets of accredited employability, technical and career related courses. These courses are offered in a gradual, developmental pattern, which is very much consistent with long-term career development needs of young people.



The Challenges That Qatar Faces in Relation to Emerging Technologies

According to the International Telecommunication Union Report 2014, Qatar ranked 3rd among the top 5 Arab countries and within the top 60 globally in the ICT development index. Such high ranking poses an overarching challenge related to how best can Qatar maximize utilization of emerging technologies in its workforce development and career guidance practices. This is based on the observation that while the ICT structure in Qatar is well developed, the actual range of ICT-based products and services utilized in education, employment and career guidance is limited. As a result, the following challenges need to be adequately dealt with.

- Despite the existence of a general, national level, policy framework, which is well enforced for regulating the ICT sector in Qatar, there is nonetheless a felt need for an overarching guidelines and standards to adequately manage ICT for effective use of emerging technologies in education, employment and career guidance sectors. This is important because most of the current systems utilize organization based ICT products/services which vary greatly in their quality.
- Current technologies utilized in education and workforce placement and development are of diverse nature, creating situations of incompatible technologies that hinder smooth flow of information exchange among the organizations involved. As a way forward, the government of Qatar initiated a project to unify all online systems with a SAP platform for all governmental bodies and entities. Important though such initiative is, it needs to be extended to include relevant organizations in the mixed and private sector of the Qatari economy.
- In relation to the above, there appears to be a technological disconnect among academic institutions, career guidance providers and employer organizations in public and private sectors in Qatar. This deprives all such organizations of utilizing effective information exchange related to, for example, scholarship/internship programs, job opportunities, placement and development, as well as effective time management needed to optimize effort, resources and outcomes.
- Emerging technologies currently utilized in educational, employment and career guidance organizations in Qatar relate more to ICT products (like assessment test, and training courses) and not to services, like virtual helplines and e-interviews.
- There is, as currently observed in Qatar, lack of Arabic language developed and/or culturally adapted ICT-based programs and applications related to workforce/career development- a situation which deprives many potential users of utilizing such technologies in their quest for growth and development. As a consequence, and for benefit maximization purposes, there is a profound need to adopt an Arabic, user friendly and culturally relevant approach to ICT products and services that better fit the Qatari context.
- To address the challenge of mobilizing Qatari youth to utilize technology for learning and development purposes, and not merely for entertainment as a priority, it is important to adopt an edutainment approach to advance e-learning among them.
- Distance learning provided by internationally reputed institutions is yet to be efficiently utilized in Qatar. This will benefit a large number of people who seek further skill development while working or in career breaks.





WHY RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) MATTERS

Here you may explore the value and impact career guidance has on an individual's livelihood or the economic development of your country. We want examples of how evidence based policies have been created, implemented, and evaluated. (For example, what the measurement of success was or suggestions in how to evaluate these types of initiatives).

The Value and Impact of Policies for Workforce Preparation, Workforce Placement, and Development of Young people in Qatar

As per the United Nations' Human Development Report 2014, Qatar ranks the highest among all Arab countries and 31st out of 200 countries worldwide. Also, and as per the World Bank's Economic Freedom Score 2014, Qatar's score was 71.2 making its economy the 30th freest in the world. Based on these two scores, it could be stated that Qatar has invested heavily in developing its education, economic and labor market systems.

Drawing on the above, and in as far assessment of the impact of Qatar's human development effort is concerned, it should be noted that various success indicators have been used by various ministerial agencies. For example, the Evaluation Institute of the Supreme Education Council generates an annual evaluation report related to performance on strategic educational targets. Such targets are assessed in light of specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and measures depicted in the 2011-2016 Education and Training strategy. When closely examined, such measures relate to "satisfaction" of key stakeholders. Examples of these include students and parents' satisfaction with school curriculum and school activities, students' achievements and quality of school facilities, resources and education standards. This means that cost-benefit analysis, which is of key importance to measuring ROI, is yet to be explored by such reports.

In a similar vein, the ministry of Administrative Development utilizes its national level strategic plan to report on the impact of training and development on workforce preparation and placement in the public sector. This is largely based on the national level Qatarization policy. In implementing this policy, specific KPIs, ownerships and measures are used for annual assessment purposes. This same process is used by the Ministry of Labor to assess the value of Qatarization effort invested by private sector organizations including the banking and business sector.

The above two examples illustrate adoption of Qatarization as policy for workforce preparation, placement and development. A quota system, with its specific emphasis on quantitative measures, is used to assess the impact of the Qatarization policy. In contrast to such emphasis on quantitative emphasis, the energy industry provides a different example. Under a Qatarization Steering Committee, 42 companies representing the oil and gas sector in Qatar, assess the impact of their workforce Qatarization effort against quantitative and qualitative criteria. The quality element injected by this sector relates to assessing the impact of its Qatarization policy in light of organizational need analysis, scholarship program and coordination with educational institutions and youth and their parents.

In light of the above mentioned examples, it should be noted that the quota system is officially used to quantitatively measure the impact of Qatarization policy on annual basis. Also, annual comparative data are often used to measure progress towards specific targets related to overall percentage of Qatari workforce to expatriate workforce at ministry/organizational level as well as national level. Important though this measure may look like, it does, nonetheless encapsulate the assessment of national workforce preparation, placement and development within limited premises, i.e. within the limits of sheer numbers of positions occupied by nationals without analyzing the quality of the positions involved. The challenge is therefore to compensate for such deficiencies in order to achieve high levels of quality Qatarization, and to assess its value for a knowledge-based economy as prescribed by Qatar National Vision 2030.



Measuring the Value of Career Guidance Provision in Supporting such Policies

In as much as career guidance in Qatar is provided by various entities at national, sector and organizational levels, its impact are, generally speaking, assessed through various soft measures". At a national level, the Qatar Career Fair Center, which organizes an annual, national level, career fair event, assesses the impact of this event through an annual "Achieved Results Report". This report corroborates impact evidence in terms of, firstly, counting the number of employment, education, training and development opportunities provided by exhibitors and, secondly, comparing those numbers with the actual number of such opportunities utilized by visitors of the fair. This is in addition to assessment of the fair's workshops, seminars, lectures and other career related activities in terms of, for example, participants' satisfaction with such activities.

At a sector level, the Evaluation Institute of the Supreme Education Council undertakes a regular assessment of the career guidance service it offers to the independent schools. Again, assessment of soft outcomes is utilized. Examples of these include annual changes in number of students enrolled in science versus arts specializations, students' success rates, number of dismissals and drop outs and number of students enrolled in post-secondary education. In a complementary manner, the private/international schools add other soft outcome measures like number of students applied for and enrolled in internationally reputed universities. Such measures are reported without addressing issues related to, for example, difficulties associated with establishing cause-effect relationships between career guidance services and the outcomes involved.

At the organizational level, and in relationship to the education sector, leading universities and colleges assess the impact of their career services through assessment of their strategic planning performance, e.g. through specific KPIs and measures such as number and percentage of students receiving career guidance, student retention rates attributed to improved career/academic advising, number of internship and outreach programs, number of job fairs organized annually, number of employer organizations participating in university/college-based job fairs and number of jobs offered to students through such job fairs.

In addition, employer organizations, particularly in the energy sector, adopt different types of soft outcome measures to judge the value of their career guidance effort as part of their workforce preparation and placement effort. Examples of these include number of individuals who successfully complete trainee/employee preparation and employee development programs, which are closely related to various levels and types of succession plans intended to achieve specific Qatarization targets as per specific timelines.

Moreover, and in as far as assessment of social inclusion and economic impact of career advising is concerned, the national level Job Qualifying Center and the Social Development Center assess the value of their career guidance services in terms of, for example, number of school leavers and young people who are annually advised, recruited and enrolled in a wide range of preparation and job placement programs, which are usually job-focused preparation programs.



The Challenges That Qatar Faces in Relation to Measuring ROI

There are two types of challenges related to measuring return on investment. The first one centers around how best to move from the currently adopted “soft measures” to “hard measures” of the “cost and benefits” of career guidance as well as workforce preparation, placement and development. Such a move requires development of tailor-made constructs, methods and measures capable of generating relevant and accurate “cost-benefit” data needed for evaluation purposes.

The second type of challenges pertains to the observation that career guidance in Qatar is, by and large, not adequately considered in processes of workforce preparation, placement and development. There is, therefore, a need to improve the value or return of investment in such processes. To do so, it is important to develop policies and processes required for integrating career guidance as a powerful means for maximizing the value, of Qatar’s education and labor market systems, and minimizing the cost involved. Another advantage of such integration is the possibility of assessing the value of career guidance for preparing highly skilled Qatari youth and placing them in responsible employment positions. This will add a quality dimension to the “quantitative measures” adopted by the existing Qatarization quota system.

To adequately address the above mentioned two types of challenges, there is a need to address issues and concerns emanating from processes required for collecting quality data from various stakeholders and programs. There is, for example, a need to assess the value of career guidance for young Qataris in exploring and utilizing the scholarship opportunities provided for them to develop their skills and to capitalize on their aspirations and interests. Here, there is a further need for developing administrative data and tracking systems capable of, firstly, measuring the cost and benefit of scholarship opportunities and, secondly, measuring the impact of such opportunities on programs aiming at creation of diversified and knowledge-based national workforce.

Viewed from a sector/organizational level, a similar challenge stems from attempting to; for example, assess the value of career guidance for the substantial investments by Qatar in planning to modernize its entire educational system, i.e. to achieve “world class educational standards”. To do so, one would have to deal with other challenges such as how to accurately measure the value of career guidance for Qatari students in terms of, for example, their educational performance linked to quantity of education inputs, quality of education provision and quality of school/university graduates –particularly in science, technology and other specializations required for building a knowledge-based economy as emphasized by Qatar National Vision, 2030.

In order to effectively handle the above mentioned illustrative examples of challenges, one needs to also address a series of planning and coordination issues related to developing quantitative and qualitative measures of a wide range of outcomes related to effective management of stakeholders’ expectations from career services.





ENGAGING EMPLOYERS

In this sub-theme, we want to explore how employers can be engaged to help create effective talent pipelines. What research, programs, or policies have been implemented in your country to support the talent pipeline? What obstacles did you have to overcome and how are you measuring the success of these initiatives?

The Formal and Informal Roles and Mechanisms That Employers Play/Participate in to Support Workforce Placement and Development of young people in Qatar

Based on Qatar National Vision 2030 and Qatar National Strategy 2011-2016, special attention was paid by the State of Qatar to its national human capital development. As a result, employers are, formally engaged in a strategic process of streamlining their talent management practices in order to bridge the gap between the demand for, and supply of, national workforce at all levels- including talented employees as well as other categories. In support of this formal mechanism, extensive Qatarization policies pertaining to workforce preparation, placement and development have been in place for a long time. Also, Qatarization Steering Committees, vested with strategic planning and reporting mandates have been formed within public and private sectors.

Some examples of the mechanisms that employers in Qatar use in support of workforce preparation and development include the following. In support of their talent pipelines, major employers have developed close collaboration mechanisms with schools, universities and colleges in order to select some talented young Qataris, provide them with scholarships and hire them directly after completing their studies. For motivational purposes, the study time-period of those selected is credited as working experience, supported by continuous assessment and evaluation of their academic achievement. Upon graduation, they are immediately employed as trainees and provided with necessary coaching, mentoring and tailored career development plans.

In harmony with the above, almost all major employers pay adequate attention to a variety of talent development mechanisms. In addition to scholarship opportunities, most employers provides nationals with internship, job shadowing and job experience opportunities, pay regular school visits, participate in career fairs, run and/or participate in career related activities s such as career camps, competitions and career awareness in addition to mentoring/couching programs for new recruits.

In an attempt to maximize the value of the above mentioned placement and development mechanisms, talented national employees are, formally speaking, selected and provided by their employers with further development opportunities , such as participation in nationally recognized Leadership Development Program. They are also granted a number of merits on the basis of a national recognition scheme. Such merits include career ladder, representation in national and regional level committees and organizations, role models and alike.

In addition, and for talent pipelines purposes, major employers opt for offering talented employees highly competitive financial packages, flexible working arrangements to balance work and family / societal obligations, education advancement, exceptional retirement plan, highly competitive medical and life insurance scheme, long service awards, national retention allowance as well as other types of allowances and excellence awards.



The Existing Policies That Support Employer Engagement

The pervasive Qatarization policies provide an overall umbrella under which major employers in various sectors are interactively engaged in an all-inclusive process of national talent development. In addition, the Qatar HR Strategy 2011-2016, which is consistent with Qatarization policies in terms of employer engagement, outlines the targets and the tools required to mobilize employers to contribute to Qatar's transition into a knowledge based economy. A more or less similar policy support for employers is Qatar Labor Law, which was revised and modified for various purposes- including provision of legal support for public sector employers to invest in Qatarization.

Other examples of support for employer engagement relate to a series of job and career fairs organized at different times by different Qatari institutions. A key objective of such events is to provide opportunities for employers to directly engage with students, job seekers, and education and training institutions. The first Qatar career fair (QCF) was organized in November, 2007 and due to its impressive results, the QCF Center was established in 2008. After organizing six highly successful editions of national level career fair event, today QCF is transitioning into a full-fledge career development center.

Also, the Ministry of Labor does, on yearly basis, organize a number of job fair events within Qatar. Similarly, Qatar University, and most recently, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, which coordinates all international universities operating within the Education City, organizes career fairs in collaboration with a wide range of corporations in the public and private sectors. In addition, schools involve major organizations in Qatar to participate in mini-fairs organized for career orientation purposes as well as internships, scholarships and sponsorships opportunities. Moreover, major corporations like Hamad Medical Corporations, Qatar Petroleum and its subsidiaries, Ooredoo, the national telecommunication provider and Qatar Airways organize career events on regular bases as part of their national talent development strategies.

Intervention by some major employers in education is a very notable phenomenon in Qatar. For example, major employers are represented in the board of trustees of Qatar University and Community College Qatar. Also, other universities, as well as technical/vocational schools, engage major employers in many important ways- such as involving them as board members and in the design of selected sets of post graduate programs. The overall purpose of such engagement is to ensure adequate supply of requisite national talent to help in achieving QNV 2030.

Furthermore, most secondary schools in Qatar engage employers in a variety of activities, such as student visits to local businesses, mentoring of students by local employers, work experience for students and organization of career related competitions- such as Mubadara competition by Injaz Qatar for high schools and university students, and Enterprise competition by Shell in collaboration with Bedaya Center that encourage and inspire the entrepreneurial spirit among young people in Qatar, and enhance their business knowledge and equip them with valuable skills like team work and strategic thinking.

Another successful example is the Social Development Center, which is supported by a large of private and public sector organizations, namely Exxon Mobil, Qatar Islamic Bank, Al Rayyan Media, Al Asmakh Enterprises etc., to provide training and development programs, entrepreneurship programs and tailor made programs for ladies, like Tajmeel.



The Challenges that Qatar Faces in Relation to Engaging Employers

Employer organizations in Qatar are, in various ways, greatly engaged in education, training and career guidance as part of their corporate social responsibility for national workforce preparation, placement and development. The need to meet their staffing requirements is, of course, a major driving force behind such engagement. Coupled with this is the employers' drive for meeting specific Qatarization targets as per a specific "quota system", which is applied across all public and private sector organizations.

It is on the basis of this quota system that most employers have, by and large, put much emphasis on the quantity, and not the quality, dimension of Qatarization. To compensate for such deficiency, the challenge is how best to utilize the currently pervasive levels and types of employer engagement in order to achieve high quality Qatarization. To that end, it is important to, for example, develop and implement an outcome-based employer engagement strategy geared towards targeting specific sets of "high-and- mid-level responsible jobs" that should be occupied by "talented national workforce". Also, a similar employer engagement strategy should be developed and implemented to further improve the "employability" of young Qataris, in general, and "out-of-school" Qatari youth, in particular. This will help in improving the quantity and quality of national workforce at "entry" as well as lower organizational levels.

Development and implementation of the above mentioned types of employer engagement strategies require, among other things, adequate addressing of such challenges like developing collaborative and networking relationships among key stakeholders, e.g. ministerial development agencies, Qatarization committees, public and private sector employers, education and training institutions and other programs and centers devoted to talent development like Qatar Foundation's "Leadership Development Program", "Executive MBA Program" and "Social Development Center" in addition to the "Job Qualifying Center".

To effectively utilize such relationships, it is also challenging to adequately address incompatibility issues related to the "priorities" and "business needs" of employers and those of other stakeholders. For example, it is important for leading education providers like Qatar University and Supreme Education Council to research the organizational and training needs of major employers in Qatar, and to design and deliver training and educational programs that meet employers' needs. But in so doing, it is, for example, challenging for such providers to adapt their program design and delivery modes to employers' requirements. This may be particularly challenging in science and technology areas of specializations, which are of paramount importance to Qatar's human capital development and economic diversification policies.

In addition, and as a result of Qatar's small population size, the limited pool of national human capital over which employers compete, is a serious challenge that all work organizations must deal with in ways that would help achieve the objectives of Qatar's human resource development Strategy. This is further complicated by the observations that job mobility is high among young Qataris, who have what could be called "borderless careers". In consequence, employers need to effectively address the challenge of how to retain their talented workforce after investing in its preparation, placement and development.





INTEGRATED POLICIES

Here we look to explore how career guidance systems integrate with broader education and employment systems. What policies have been implemented in your country? How are service users and local communities engaged in the development and delivery of career guidance services? What policies and processes exist to support this engagement? What obstacles did you face?

How Policies for Workforce Preparation (Including Entrepreneurship) and Workforce Placement are Integrated or Coordinated in Qatar. Who and/or What is Driving the Integration for Coordination? How Are Local Communities and Public Service Users Involved, if at all, in Those Policies?

Qatar's 2011-2016 National Development Plan incorporates, among other things, sub-plans, initiatives and projects related to preparation, placement and development of national workforce. This plan is supported by a national level Qatarization policy, which is composed of sub-policies and processes applicable to sector as well as organizational levels. For purposes of effective coordination and control, the national development plan was intentionally based on specific sets of key performance areas and indicators together with their associated measures, timelines and ownership.

Based on such strategic planning and policy structures, the Council of Ministers oversees, approves, and monitors reporting on development and implementation of these plans and policies. In addition, and from a national level perspective, the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics, which is responsible for effective development and implementation of Qatar's 2011-2016 National Development Plan, reports on strategic planning performance. Such reporting is, among other things, intended to document, analyze and explain how government, semi-government and private sector organizations are performing in as far as workforce development targets are concerned.

In addition, and in relationship to national level coordination and monitoring of effective implementation of Qatarization policy, two ministries are involved. There is, on the one hand, the Ministry of Administrative Development, which is responsible for coordinating and monitoring Qatarization performance by public sector organizations.

On the other hand, similar responsibility areas are vested with the Ministry of Labor in as far as Qatarization in the private sector is concerned. Moreover, and in view of its central importance to the Qatari economy, the oil and gas sector, which is composed of 42 companies led by Qatar Petroleum, has its own strategic planning and coordination Qatarization committee. Based on its national talent pipelines effort, this committee has, thus far, developed and implemented a well-orchestrated set of policies, processes, networking and coordination mechanisms related to its workforce preparation, placement and development.

In light of support for entrepreneurship preparation and development, his highness the new Amir of Qatar has, more recently, endorsed directives related to strengthening the SMEs and private sector within the Qatar. This was intended to improve existing coordination and monitoring processes as a powerful means for helping private sector organizations and SMEs to play a more pro-active role in the Qatari economy. In addition, and based on concerted policy implementation efforts, a large number of programs and nineteen specific projects were initiated to improve the competitiveness of this sector. Another driving force behind such effort was the explicit policy intention to improve the capacity of private sector organizations to invest more in quality programs related to workforce preparation, placement and development.

Moreover, and for entrepreneurship development purposes, Qatar Business Incubation Center was, more recently, established to work in close collaboration with the already existing incubation centers operating under MICT, Qatar University, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Rhoda Center, and Enterprise Qatar. Also, for purposes of improved entrepreneurship policy integration and, therefore, maximization of program benefit, Enterprise Qatar and Qatar Development Bank were merged.



To what extent do these sectors coordinate such policy or program initiatives? To what extent do they include career guidance/advice/information provision? How useful and efficient are these to support the policy initiatives?

In Qatar, integration of career service as an essential element in national workforce preparation and development is, in a very limited manner; evident at various levels. For example, the Supreme Education Council, which is the owner of the 2011-2016 national education and training strategy, has, for purposes of coordination and control, established a formal committee, composed of representatives from various stakeholders. A key responsibility of this committee is to coordinate and control processes of achieving specific and time-bound targets related to, for example, career guidance, labor market trends, vocation education and training, life-long continuing education and undergraduate and graduate programs that contribute to achievement of Qatar's national vision 2030- particularly, its human capital development and socio-economic dimensions.

Another prominent example of coordination mechanisms related to inclusion of career guidance in workforce preparation and placement policies is the "Strategic Qatarization Plan Steering Committee". For talent pipeline purposes, this committee uses a coherent set of policies pertaining to, for example, organizational and training need analysis, networking with educational institutions and career guidance, succession plans and employee placement and development.

An additional excellent example is Qatar Career Fair Center (QCF) which does, as a policy, seek to integrate career guidance with workforce preparation, placement and development. To illustrate, QCF has established a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of the Fair's organizers, namely Qatar Foundation, Qatar Petroleum, Qatar University, Ministry of Labor and the Amiri Diwan. An essential role of this committee was to ensure that Fair exhibitors provide the fair visitors with adequate number of high quality educational, training, and career opportunities. Actual achievement results related to this role are annually assessed and reported by QCF for improvement purposes.

For further integration of career guidance with workforce placement and development, QCF has, for five successive years, organized two post-fair events with key stakeholders in education and human resource development departments in various public, mixed and private sectors. The purpose was to effectively handle challenges related to integration of career guidance in processes of workforce preparation, placement and development at various levels. Most recently, this initiative has been transformed into a national-level Career Forum, which is envisioned as a platform for key stakeholders like career guidance policy and decision makers, parents, youth, HR leaders and career guidance practitioners. The overall purpose of this forum is to plan, coordinate and further develop career guidance services as a powerful linking pin between the educational/training sector and the labor market.

An example of informal policy and practice coordination mechanism is Qatar's Entrepreneurship Policy Working Group's meetings. Key partners involved in such meetings are major educational institutions, government agencies, private sector companies, and other stakeholders involved in the SMEs and entrepreneurial sectors in Qatar. The main objective is to generate sustained momentum for better policies and coordination among key actors in the Qatari entrepreneurship ecosystem, and to identify initiatives that support the development of an enabling environment for aspiring entrepreneurs.



The Challenges that Qatar faces in Relation to Integrated Policies: Creating Systems that Work

A set of challenges is involved in creating systems that work in Qatar. This pertains to the significance of bringing together career guidance, education, training and labor market as sub-systems that interact with one another to make-up a unified system of workforce preparation, placement and development. In so doing, there is a need to create a national level entity to regulate, monitor and develop career guidance as a powerful link between the education/training and labor market sub-systems. To that end, it is important to; for example, develop national level career guidance leadership structures, policies, processes and coordination mechanisms required for developing career services capable of contributing to the education and labor market outcomes already articulated in Qatar's 2011-2016 nation strategy.

To pave the way for developing career guidance as suggested above, it is important to develop and implement a research as well as outcome-based national career guidance strategy. To do so, there is a felt need to carefully address a series of issues related to how best to integrate this strategy with the existing outcome-based education and labor market strategies, which are essential components of the currently implemented five-year national strategy.

As a prelude to its effective integration with the education and labor market sub-systems, existing career guidance in Qatar, which is largely uncoordinated, needs to be transformed into a coherent sub-system responsive to the needs and aspirations of its various stakeholders. To that end, it is important to document and analyze the results of a series of coordination and integration meetings and forums organized by various career guidance providers in Qatar. The challenge is how best to utilize the positive results of such effort in developing well integrated policies, processes, programs, products, services and follow-up activities needed to achieve desired end results consistent with QNV 2030.

In a similar vein, there is a need to maximize the value of career guidance for all stakeholders involved. To that end, and in line with the strategic needs of human capital development in Qatar, it is important to lay down the foundation for life-long learning, life-long career development and career management skills. In so doing, it is important to utilize the currently increasing recognition of the importance of career guidance in most of Qatari schools, universities, colleges and employer organizations.

Regarding educational institutions, it is important to; for example, start delivering career guidance at early schooling years, and to integrate it with school and university curricula. Also, it is important to professionalize it (e.g. adopting competency frameworks and standards), to enrich it (e.g. through involving students with the world of work and other stakeholders) and to emphasize development of career management skills needed for life-long learning for sustained employability and not, as currently practiced, to help students to transition into the labor market

In addition, and in view of the changing economic and labor market conditions in Qatar, it is also important to offer life-long and professionalized career services to, for example, employees in the workplace, young Qataris who drop out of formal education and/or those who are unemployed and to Qatar people to work after having career breaks.

