



عضو في مؤسسة قطر
Member of Qatar Foundation

Career Guidance Stakeholders Platform 2018 Report

“Moving Operationally to
Strategically Enhance Career
Guidance in the State of Qatar”

In partnership with



Doha Office

Acknowledgement

Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC), UNESCO Doha Office and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education extend their profound gratitude to Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), for patronizing the second edition of the “Qatar Career Guidance Stakeholders Platform”.

Deepest appreciation is also expressed to His Excellency Salah bin Ghanem Al-Ali, Minister of Culture and Sports, His Excellency Dr. Issa bin Saad Al Jafali Al Nuaimi, Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs (former Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs), and His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Abdul Wahed Ali Al Hammadi, Minister of Education and Higher Education, for honoring the opening ceremony of the Platform with their presence.

Sincere thanks are extended to Professor Sheikha Abdulla Al-Misnad, Former President of Qatar University, Mr. Saif Al-Kaabi, Public Works Authority Human Resources Department Manager, Mrs. Fawzia Abdulaziz Al-Khater, Ministry of Education and Higher Education Assistant Under-Secretary for Educational Affairs, who participated in a high level panel moderated by Mr. Jaber bin Nasser Al Marri, Al Arab newspaper Managing Editor.

Special recognition goes to the Technical Committee team for planning and implementing the technical dimensions of the Platform including Chairman Dr. Tajalsir Kardaman – QCDC, and members Mr. Hamad Al Hammadi – Qatar Petroleum, Dr. Turki Al-Mahmoud – Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Dr. Raimo Vuorinen – EduCluster Finland, Mr. Mohammed Fakhroo

– QF Community Development, Dr. Faryal Khan – UNESCO Doha Office, Dr. Olga Revina – Qatar Ukraine Business Forum and Mrs. Effrosyni Parampota – QCDC.

QCDC also wishes to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of the Focus Groups’ moderators, Dr. Raimo Vuorinen – EduCluster Finland, Dr. Turki Al-Mahmoud – Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Dr. Tracy Hardister – The Learning Center, Dr. Hussein Alaa – Marafeq Qatar, Ms. Tamader Al Khater – Qatar Petroleum, Dr. Kholode Al Obaidli – Sidra Medicine, Mr. Amar Benaissa – INJAZ Qatar, Mrs. Aysha Al Mudahka & Ms. Aysha Al Romaihi – Qatar Business Incubation Center, Dr. Mahmoud Abdellatif and Dr. Arsalan Safari – Center for Entrepreneurship, College of Business and Economics, Qatar University, Dr. Walid Qoronfleh – World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH), Ms. Heli Piikila – Finnish International School of Tampere, Finland, Dr. Faryal Khan – UNESCO Doha Office, and Mr. Fady Allaham – Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Warm thanks are conveyed to the organizations, who shared their experiences as case studies. The insight in policy-making, education, employment, human resources and national talent development embodied therein was instrumental in the success of this year’s Platform.

Last but not least, QCDC acknowledges all those who provided invaluable support, including the Focus Groups’ coordinators, Maysa Hussein, Khansa Maria, Zohaib Tahir, Lamis Al Agami, Mona Saif, Ngoc Nguyen, Sajjad Hossain and Ibtihal Mohamed who ensured the smooth progression of the Platform’s series of events.

Contents

Introduction	4
Background	4
Theme and objectives	7
Summary of the 2016 platform’s recommendations	8
Summary of post-platform implementation actions	12
Platform’s governance	16
Focus group methodology	18
Summary of recommendations	21
Details of recommendations and actions for effective implementation	30



In partnership with



Doha Office



Introduction

This is a report on the second edition of Qatar’s biennial “Career Guidance Stakeholder Engagement Platform”, which was organized on 3rd April 2018. The report is divided into eight sections. Following this introductory note, section one of the report provides background information about the platform in terms of its 2016 conception, implementation and resultant ways forward.

This year’s platform theme and objectives are presented in section two. While section three provides a synopsis of selected sets of the 2016 platform’s recommendations, section four

presents summaries of implementation actions related to those recommendations. In addition, the 2018 platform’s governance strategy and its focus group methodology are portrayed in sections six and seven, respectively. Section eight is concerned with a summary of the platform’s recommendations. Finally, section nine is devoted not only to provision of details related to the recommendations of the platform, but also to specification of actions required for effective implementation of those recommendations.

(1) Background

As originally envisioned, Qatar Career Guidance Stakeholders Platform, is a

cross-organizational effort geared towards further development of career guidance as an important dimension of human capital development in the State of Qatar. The original concept of the platform was originally developed back in 2015 as a forum, which evolved a year later into a stakeholders engagement platform. The overall purpose of the platform was to actively engage stakeholders in the process of developing “a well-integrated career guidance system in Qatar”, i.e. developing a system which is capable of helping Qatari youth to discover, develop and use their talent to jointly satisfy their future “needs and aspirations” and those of the Qatari economy.

Clearly, developing such a system is only possible in the long-run. This implies that contributions of the platform to developing “a well-integrated career guidance system in Qatar” are expected to be on cumulative basis. Approached from such a perspective, this year’s platform was organized on the basis of the 2016 platform’s recommendations and actions taken to effectively implement those recommendations during the July 2016-June 2017 time-period.

The 2016 platform’s edition was a day-long event organized in May 2016. It brought together more than 150 experts from various

education and labor market institutions, career development centers, youth empowerment organizations and national level planning and development agencies in addition to other international and local institutions that add value to human capital development processes.

Through focus group methodology, platform delegates did, in 2016, concentrate on reviewing and validating empirical evidence on challenges and opportunities related to how best to develop and support career guidance as a powerful means for personal, social, educational, and economic success of young Qataris, in particular, and the Qatari society, in general. Based on such a methodology, specific sets of recommendations were developed and validated. Those sets of recommendations were offered as a means for addressing strategic as well as tactical issues related career guidance development in the State of Qatar.

System improvement actions associated with the above mentioned recommendations were experimented with for implementation during the July 2016-June 2017 time-period. Assessment of such actions revealed the significance of two interrelated issues. The first one indicates that it is critically important to shift focus from engaging “individuals” to engaging “institutions”. This means that

effective utilization of the platform's results does, among other things, require commitment of the institutions concerned, and not just personal commitment of individual experts. On the other hand, the second issue suggests that there is an urgent need to pay equal attention to long-term as well as short-term system improvement actions.

Taken together, those two issues reveal that in addition to ensuring institutional level of commitment and cross sectoral collaboration,

various stakeholders do, for practical reasons, need to entertain the "duality" of experiencing immediate, short-term, benefits while paving the way for strategic, long-term system enhancement. As such, and for purposes of maximizing returns for various stakeholders, this year's platform was consciously designed to mobilize "cross-sectoral collaboration" to address strategic and tactical issues critical to developing Qatar's career guidance system as "a well-integrated system". To that end, all institutions that have stakes in career guidance

were invited as "participant institutions". Representatives of those institutions were divided into three types of breakout sessions including:

(1) Breakout sessions for addressing national level career guidance issues:

These were three focus groups, each one of which was concerned with addressing one of the following issues: (a) creation of national level career guidance framework, standards, policies, education and labor market information (b) stakeholders' engagement in implementing the existing career guidance strategy, which is part of the current 2018-2022 Education and Training Sector Strategy and (c) integrating ICT-into career guidance for purposes of easing access to, and improving the quality of, existing and future career guidance services in Qatar.

(2) Breakout sessions for addressing career guidance issues in the education sector:

These were four focus groups, each one of them was assigned the responsibility of addressing one of the four sets of issues related to : (a) developing career guidance services for public school students (b) improving female participation in technical and vocational education and training institutions through career guidance (c) helping disable/ special skills students to experience successful

education-to-work transitions experiences and (d) developing employability skills program for university students in Qatar.

(3) Breakout sessions addressing career guidance issues at the labor market level:

This was a two-focus group set of breakout sessions devoted to addressing issue related to the process of injecting high quality career guidance services needed to maximize the impact of Qatar's investment in: (a) entrepreneurship development as a means for economic and social development and (c) meeting national workforce development needs through the work of, for example, national talent development committees.

2) Theme and objectives

Based on the rationale behind the centrality of addressing strategic as well as tactical issues related to system-wide development of career guidance in the State of Qatar, the theme of this year's platform reads as follows: "Moving operationally to strategically enhance career guidance through cross-sectoral collaboration"

Utilizing this theme, the overall objective of this year's platform was formulated on the basis of building on the 2016 platform's results which centered on mobilizing cross-sectoral collaboration in order to:

- Consolidate the platform as a viable



national networking and synergy building mechanism for strategic and operational enhancement of career guidance in Qatar.

- Develop foundational work needed to realistically address operational and strategic issues and concerns related to the process of developing a career guidance system which is responsive to the needs of Qatari youth and those of the Qatari Economy.

- Examine career guidance provision within the education and labor market sectors in terms of specific examples of strategies and practices.

- Engage a selected set of stakeholder institutions that add value to effective implementation of the career guidance component of the “Education and Training Sector Strategy”, which is part of Qatar’s 2018-2022 National Development Plan.

- Present and discuss examples of successful career guidance practices in Qatar for purposes of disseminating them and widening their overall impact.

- Invite international agencies and international career guidance authority figures to contribute to the platform’s discussion groups and outcomes.

- Develop a post-platform action plan based on operational moves to strategic enhancement of career guidance in the State of Qatar.

- Utilize the platform’s outcomes to:
 - Revisit, up-date and disseminate stakeholders’ views on, and insights into, how best to develop a sustainable career guidance system based on the contextual specificities of the State of Qatar.

- Explore ways and means through which this platform could serve an advisory role for career guidance policy makers in the State of Qatar.

3) Summary of selected sets of the 2016 platform’s recommendations

To achieve its above mentioned objectives, this year’s platform was organized on the basis of the recommendations of its 2016 edition and subsequent actions taken to implement them during the July 2016-June 2017 time-period. In this section, a summary of those recommendations is presented and their implementation actions will be addressed in section five.

Based on “focus group methodology”, the 2016 platform edition utilized empirical evidence generated by three research papers



describing and analyzing the existing system of career guidance in Qatar. Utilizing such evidence, five focus groups were formed and engaged in a reflective process to validate various types of opportunities and challenges highlighted by the empirical evidence.

After validating and discussing the evidence provided to them, the focus groups did, each separately, offer various types of recommendations for developing career guidance as a system capable of contributing invaluable to the process of

human capital development in Qatar. Based on their underpinning strategic and tactical connotations, two selected sets of those recommendations are summarized below.

3.1) Recommendations for addressing national level, long-term, issues

The first selected set of the 2016 platform recommendations was a strategic type of recommendations. This refers to proposed ways and means for developing career guidance through addressing national level, long-term, issues and concerns within

the context of Qatar. Examples of such recommendations included the following:

- To address difficulties associated with unavailability of national level career guidance regulatory body in Qatar, there is a need to develop a national career guidance system based on an approved set of, for example, national career guidance framework, policies, legislations, standards, curricula and procedures. The purpose is to regulate, monitor and develop career guidance as a subsystem that interacts with, and adds value to, Qatar's education, training and labor market systems
- In the absence of comprehensive labor market and education information system, it is recommended that Qatar should establish a reliable system for gathering, processing and disseminating information on careers, education, occupations and the world of work. Based on this system, a locally adapted and technology driven career advising system should be developed.
- Currently, career guidance in the education sector is at its early stages of development, and it is weak, disintegrated and wanting in many important ways. To strategically compensate for such deficiencies, it is recommended to:

- » Involve all career guidance centers in Qatar in the design and implementation of Qatar's 2018-2022 Education and Training Strategy. This should be in terms of translating the findings of this year's platform into strategic objectives to be added to this strategy and to involve career centers in its implementation through assigning them responsibility for achieving specific objectives as per specific KPIs, measures and timelines.
- » Establish an administrative unit for career guidance and counselling at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education responsible for streamlining and developing the currently disintegrated career guidance services provided through the ministry's scholarship and teacher professional development offices. Also, this unit should be responsible for introducing career guidance in all schools including primary, preparatory and secondary levels.
- » Form a cross-sector career guidance committee responsible for coordinating the implementation of available annual career guidance plans, collection of implementation data, and development

of annual improvement actions. In addition, the committee should be responsible for proposing career guidance research agenda needed to further develop career guidance in Qatar

3.2) The second selected set of the 2016 recommendations related to proposed ways and means for advancing career guidance on tactical or operational basis. Obviously, such recommendations deal with short-term issues and three examples of them are presented below.

- Despite the fact that there is no adequate system of education and labor market information, there are, nonetheless, scattered sets of such information which are not readily available for career guidance purposes. To compensate for such a deficiency, it becomes important to develop education and labor market information booklets through coordination with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs. To that end, effort should be devoted to collecting, synthesizing and publishing available education and labor market information-in print as well as electronic formats.
- Unlike in private/international schools, career guidance in public schools is

deficient in many important ways. Examples of such deficiencies include absence of career guidance education, extremely limited number and types of career guidance activities, limited, yet unqualified number of career advisors, lack of school support for career-related programs, disinterested students, and detached parents in addition to unavailability of requisite education and labor market information and lack of career guidance policies, procedures and plans. While strategic measures were recommended to address such inhibiting factors, it was also recommended to take immediate actions capable of alleviating the situation in the short-run. Examples of such actions included not only provision of need-based learning and development programs for school administrators, school counselors, students and their parents, but also helping public sector schools to learn from the experience of private/international schools in terms of, for example, knowledge/practice exchange exercises and counselors' mentoring and coaching programs.

- Types, levels, intensity and quality of career guidance services and resources vary considerably not only between national talent development committees,



on the one hand, and human resource units in public and private sectors, on the other hand, but also among universities and colleges as well as among independent career guidance providers. As a result, and for purposes of practice improvement, at least on piece meal basis, it was recommended to engage such institutions in a collaborative process of knowledge and practice exchange. An important step forward is to document, share, present and discuss examples of best career guidance

practices by some of those institutions in order to benefit others from them and, therefore, to expand their impact.

4) Summary of post-platform implementation actions during June 2016 - July 2017

Throughout the June 2016- July 2017 time-period, a series of post platform meetings were held with various career guidance stakeholders. The purpose was not only to continue to leverage the platform's momentum, but also to practically start building on its results and pave the way

for the next edition of the platform in May 2018. In the following paragraphs, actions taken to implement strategic and operational recommendations of the 2016 platform are outlined.

4.1) Actions taken to implement the Platform's strategic, long-term, recommendations

In order to experiment with implementation of the platform's long-term type of recommendations, a series of meetings were organized to address with relevant stakeholders strategic issues central to developing a well-integrated career guidance system within the framework of Qatar's Education and Training Sector Strategy 2018-2022. Examples of key stakeholders involved were the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Transport and Communication, Qatar Foundation (QF), and QF partner universities in addition to other academic institutions, career guidance centers and other relevant stakeholders.

The meetings culminated in formulation of specific strategic objectives based on the career guidance component of Qatar's Education and Training Sector Strategy 2018-2022. Key among those objectives were the following:

- Develop national level career guidance, employability and skills framework.

- Provide current and accurate information about education, scholarship and employment opportunities available to Qatari students, in particular, and Qatari youth and citizen, in general.

- Provide high quality services of career guidance for all students in all schools and universities in Qatar and for adults on life-long learning basis.

- Improve the career management and employability skills of students, young and adult Qataris in order to increase their effective participation in STEAM related careers.

- Increase career aspirations among Qataris- including career boosting, career breaks and career change measures.

- Professionalize career guidance staff across Qatar through development of specialized programs of career guidance education, certification, standards, etc. Conduct high quality research on career guidance based on well-crafted sets of research agenda.

- Develop and launch technology- based career advising system, services, resources, etc.

It should be noted that initiatives related to each of the above mentioned objectives were also identified. In addition, and as expressed by some stakeholders, it was observed that implementation of the plan should involve key stakeholders in the training sector which includes units within public and private sector organizations in Qatar. Moreover, it was felt important that the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, which is the owner of Qatar's Education and Training Sector Strategy, should be invited to address the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in implementation of the career guidance component of this strategy.

Attempts were also made to experiment with implementation of other strategic types of recommendations such as developing national level career guidance governance structure, frameworks, standards, policies, procedures, qualifications frameworks, etc. However, such attempts revealed that more time, effort, coordination and inclusion of all relevant stakeholders are needed in order to effectively implement them.

Nonetheless, it was observed that the intricate, long-term, process underpinning strategic development of career guidance necessitates the significance of undertaking foundational work needed to pave the

way for effective implementation of such recommendations. This could be perfectly undertaken through engaging, in this year's platform, policy and decision makers in a selected set of institutions-like Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Transport and Communication, etc.

4.2) Actions taken to implement the platform's short-term recommendations

Concrete steps were taken by Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC) in order to implement a selected set of the 2016 platform' short-term recommendations. Examples of these included provision of school career counselors' professional development program, proposed knowledge and practice exchange meetings for universities and colleges, offering a wide range of career guidance activities to school students and their parents, experimentation with identification and assessment of student and parents' career development needs, development of a collaboration framework with QF partner universities to promote a culture of counseling and career guidance among university graduates. Brief notes on each of these implementation actions are provided below.

- Utilizing an already developed set of training need analysis, and in partnership

with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the U.S. Embassy in Doha, a series of training programs were delivered, by QCDC, to government and private school counselors. After completion of such programs, a series of meetings with representatives from QF and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education were held to discuss the alignment of international career guidance practices with Qatari reality, and to provide insights into the review process of the Education and Training Sector Strategy 2018-2022, particularly the career guidance component of this strategy.

- In a complementary manner, QCDC and QF's Division of Pre-University Education (PUE) worked out collaboration frameworks to promote career management skills among school students. The first collaboration framework with PUE was designed to meet the career guidance needs of students across QF schools and to contribute to the implementation of a two-tier Community Transition Program (CTP). The CTP pilot project by The Learning Centre (TLC) and Awsaj Academy caters for students with no access to Awsaj Academy's general

curriculum and aims at preparing youth to join the world of work and employment

- Another collaboration framework with QF partner universities contributed to the design of a post-graduation career-options model that was presented to QF graduates during the last Convocation 2017 ceremony. The model aims to provide a fully-fledged roadmap tailored to the career related needs of alumni from QF universities to help bridge the gap between graduates and employers.
- Attempts at implementing the remaining short-term recommendations resulted in the following:
 - » A number of career related events were offered by various institutions to school students and/or parents and other audiences, e.g. year-long career program, school career day, career village, career talks, internship programs, etc. The overall purpose of such events was to increase students' levels of career awareness and career management skills. Assessment of such events indicated labelling them as examples of successful practices which can be disseminated in order to widen their overall impact.

More effort needs to be invested in order to successfully complete the implementation of the following four important initiatives: (1) development of education and labor market information booklets (2) development and implementation of a collaboration framework for exchange of knowledge and practices among career centers in universities and colleges in Qatar (3) coordination with academic and professional institutions to offer postgraduate degrees and certification courses in career guidance and (4) creation and activation of career clubs and career practitioners' professional society

5) Platform governance and stakeholder engagement

To better achieve its intended purposes, the 2018 platform was organized by QCDC in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the UNESCO Office in Doha. Also, the platform was governed by a technical committee and it was focused on active engagement of key stakeholder institutions through focus group methodology.

Details related to the technical committee, engagement of stakeholder institutions and the focus group methodology are presented below.

5.1) Platform's Technical Committee

For effective governance purposes, a technical committee was formed and mandated to efficiently design, implementation and follow-up on the results of the platform. The rationale behind this lies in the observation that the platform should benefit from expert engagement, strategic advice and impartial 'critical friend' components, which are key to achieving the platform's objectives and delivering tangible outcomes.

To that end, and in as far as the contextual specificities of Qatar are concerned, it was proposed that the technical committee should be composed of experts in career development and other stakeholder-related fields, i.e. experts who operate within the State of Qatar as well as those who work in other countries but have significant experience in Qatar, or the wider region.

The role of this committee was to plan, implement and follow-up on the technical dimension of the platform. This included the following four interrelated sub-roles:

- Review and development of this platform's rationale, theme, objectives, methods and other issues
- Plan and coordinate submission of the platform's best practices papers and round-table discussion papers.

- Work out guidelines and requisite details for effective focus group discussion and outcomes, in addition to coordinating with focus group moderators to agree on objectives, expected outcomes and discussion agenda for each of the groups involved.
- Lead the execution of the platform and follow-up its results. provides information about the role of the technical committee and a list of its members.

5.2) Approach to the engagement of stakeholder institutions

As illustrated in the above sub-section, the 2016 platform's recommendations and post-platform implementation actions strongly indicated that while some achievements have been made, more effort needs to be invested through increasing synergies in order to move forward. As such, and in as much as the platform focuses on the education, training, labor market, information and communication technology components of career guidance,



this year's platform was explicitly designed for active engagement of key Qatari institutions involved in such areas of specialization.

Also, other stakeholders like independent career guidance institutions, researchers, students, parents of school students, regional/international career development oriented organizations like Namaa, Injaz-Qatar, and Silatec were involved as active platform participants. This was in addition to international organizations, like UNESCO, and international career guidance authority figures.

Examples of such stakeholder institutions included Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Family Affairs, Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Communications and Transport, Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth, Qatar University, Qatar Foundation's Education City, Qatar Community College, College of the North Atlantic in Qatar, Private sector's Education and Training Institutions, National Talent Development Committees in institutions like Hamad Medical Corporation, Qatar Petroleum and its subsidiaries, Ooredoo, Sidra, Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy and Qatar Airways.

The above mentioned examples of stakeholder institutions, which operate in

public, private and mixed-sectors of the Qatari economy were invited to participate in the platform through nominating their representatives in light of the relevance of their experience and expertise to the platform's topical areas.

6) Focus group methodology: overview of the method, formation of focus groups, focus group procedures, data analysis, findings and recommendations

Based on their relevant experience and expertise, platform participants were distributed into two types of breakout sessions including four round table discussion groups and six knowledge and practice exchange discussion groups. Each of these two types of groups is briefly presented below.

6.1) Four Round Table Discussion Groups

Four round table discussion groups were formed and each one of them was composed of high level policy and decision-making participants representing various stakeholder institutions. The joint objective of those groups was to develop foundational work needed to operationally move towards development of career guidance in Qatar along four strategic dimensions. Expressed in terms of topical discussion areas, those dimensions related to addressing Qatar' situational givens in order to provide foundational work needed to develop:

(1) national level career guidance framework, standards and policies (2) stakeholder's roles in, and responsibilities for implementing Qatar's career guidance strategy for 2018-2022, (3) technology driven career guidance services and resources, and (4) UNESCO's standards related Career Guidance for Female Participation in TVET

To that end, each round table discussion group concentrated on one of the above mentioned four strategic topical areas. In addition, members of each of those groups were engaged in a reflective process to address strategic, national level, issues pertinent to their group's topic of discussion.

6.2) Six Knowledge and Best Practice Exchange and/or Assessment Discussion Groups

To complement the round table discussion of strategic issues, six knowledge and practice exchange and/or assessment groups were formed to deal with a specific set of short-term issues. To that end, each of five of those groups discussed an example of best career guidance practices in Qatar. The five examples included: (1) Maximizing the impact of career guidance on national talent development programs (2) reflecting on the university students' employability skills development experience of INJAZ-Qatar, (3) using career guidance as a means for further

development of entrepreneurship practices in Qatar, (4) towards a career development framework for students with special abilities in Qatar, (5) Integrated career guidance in the secondary education curriculum: learning from the Finnish experience and (6) assessing the "Life skills Curriculum" implemented across the Qatari public secondary schools.

6.3) Appointment of Focus Group Moderators and Reporters

Having decided upon the right number and types of focus groups required for successful engagement of stakeholders, each focus group was assigned a moderator and reporter. In addition, the roles of the moderators and reporters were specified, and suitable persons were appointed.

In summary, the role of moderators was, firstly, to review and fine tune his/her focus group's objectives, expected outcomes and discussion agenda and, secondly, to lead interactive focus group discussion, summarize and order discussion points and help the group to utilize its findings in order to develop sound recommendations and actions for effective implementation.

In addition, the moderator was required to collaborate with the reporter, who was in turn, required to support the focus group discussions and provide the platform's

technical committee with a final report- based on a specific report template. Moreover, focus group moderators were, if necessary, required to organize pre-platform meetings in order to work out foundational work needed to help the focus group achieve its intended purposes.

On the other hand, the role of the reporter was to act as focal point for the focus group, provide support before, during and after the focus group's meeting- including preparation and distribution of meeting agenda, developing

and disseminating support documents needed, taking and archiving the minutes of each and every focus group meeting and preparing a final report on the outcomes of the discussions of the focus group.

6.4) Focus group planning and reporting

Based on focus group methodology, each of the above mentioned focus groups, was agreed to be steered by a moderator using a specific set of guidelines included in a template explaining the theme, objectives,

expected outcomes and discussion agenda.

Using such a template, each focus group's moderator was required to develop and utilize an opening narrative and discussion points in order to actively engage his/her focus group members to: (1) adequately address the issues involved, (2) formulate sound recommendations and (3) develop a list of next-steps for implementation and follow-up during the up-coming two years.

To effectively perform these three tasks, the moderator was required to collaborate with his/her focus group members before, during and after the platform day. Also, the moderator was required to collaborate with the focus group reporter whose role was to record and summarize the key messages, recommendations and action steps identified and agreed upon by the focus group.

(7) Summary of recommendations

This section presents a summary of the focus groups' recommendations for addressing career guidance issues at national, education sector and labor market levels. Together with actions required for their effective implementation, such recommendations are also dealt with in a tabular presentation format. Details related to each of the recommendations and actions

required for their effective implementation are presented in section eight.

7.1) Recommendations for addressing national level career guidance issues

A summary of the recommendations by the focus groups whose tasks were to address national level career guidance issues and concerns is presented as follows.

7.1.1) In order to effectively address national level issues hindering the development of career guidance in Qatar, it is recommended to develop requisite synergies and foundational work needed to embark on establishing national career guidance framework, standards, policy, strategy and regulations.

7.1.2) In as much as the existing Education and Training Sector Strategy 2018-2022, career guidance strategy in Qatar is confined within the boundaries of public schools, and in view of the observation that career guidance goes beyond the education and training sector, it is recommended to develop a national level career guidance strategy. Such a strategy should be developed as a means for establishing a "coherent and clearly structured career guidance system and it should be considered as part of Qatar's next 5-year national development strategy.



7.1.3) To improve the quality of career guidance services, and to extent and ease access to such services, it is recommended to integrate information and communication technology into career guidance provision. To that end, and for illustrative purposes, effort should be devoted to building a Qatar-specific, on-line, career planning system. Such a system should be based on the experience with the existing career advising system which is utilized in public schools and other education as well as labor market institutions in Qatar.

help students to develop their career management skills.

7.2.3) In as much as school students with disabilities do not receive adequate career guidance services, it is recommended to support those of them who are non-college-track students with a high quality school- to- work transitions program. Core components of such a program should include career assessment, career exploration, skills training, work-based learning and employment support component. Also, the program should be based on support components such as individualized planning, multi-counseling strategies, counselor-teacher collaboration and engagement of parents, employers and other stakeholders.

7.2.4) In as much as improving female participation in TVET programs and employment will add value to Qatar's economic and social development, it is recommended to review, validate and extend the foundational work developed by this year's platform focus group on improving female participation in TVET. Such a process should be consciously designed to develop a tailor-made TVET career guidance framework. Key components of the framework should include career information, career education, career counseling, ICT- driven career services and stakeholders' engagement. For impact maximization purposes, the focus of TVET

should be broadened to include both education-based technical and vocational programs in schools, colleges and universities, and work-based learning programs including apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, etc.

7.2.5) In view of Qatar's tightening labor market conditions, Qatari higher education institutions need to make their graduates more employable. As such, it is recommended that career guidance centers within those institutions should: (a) work collaboratively and closely within their universities/ colleges and relevant industries in order to (b) help students develop their career readiness skills (c) enhance their employment opportunities (d) experience successful education-to-work transitions and (3) contribute to the process of engaging various stakeholders to leverage higher education to achieve career and economic success.

7.3) Recommendations for addressing labor market-related career guidance issues.

Recommendations by the focus groups whose tasks were to address labor market level career guidance issues and concerns are summarized as follows.

7.3.1) Career guidance for entrepreneurship development
To enhance the supply of effective entrepreneurs in Qatar, it is recommended that Qatar's business incubation and entrepreneurship centers, should

inject career guidance as part of their existing system of business support and services. Together with provision of adequate entrepreneurship education and training programs, injection of career guidance services should concentrate on raising awareness of entrepreneurship as career option, mobilizing people to discover their entrepreneurship interests, cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets, developing individuals' entrepreneurial qualities and skills, and, therefore, boosting entrepreneurial activity in the State of Qatar.

7.3.2) Career guidance for national talent development

To scale-up their contributions to human capital development in Qatar, National Talent Development Committees should not only adopt a demand driven approach to meet their national workforce development needs, but they should also develop and implement a full-fledge career guidance system to ensure that national recruits are well prepared for entrance into, and success in, colleges and careers. To effectively manage the processes involved, effort should be devoted to strengthening partnerships with education, labor market and career guidance institutions- a situation which should help to ensure that adequate programs are developed and potential national recruits are well prepared for success in their education and career pathways.

7.4) Tabular Presentation of the platform's recommendations and their respective implementation actions

Platform's recommendations and actions required for effective Implementation

Career Guidance National Level Issues	Recommendations	Actions	Responsibilities	
			Lead	Partners
1.1 Development of Qatar's career guidance system suffers from lack of national level career guidance framework, standards, policy and strategy. This is further exacerbated by unavailability of a central agency responsible for regulating; monitoring and developing Qatar's career guidance industry.	1.1.1 Provide foundational work needed to embark on developing national level career guidance framework, standards, policy, and regulations.	1.1.1.1 Develop and present, to national-level policy makers, a concept paper explaining the value of embedding career guidance deeply within Qatar's socio-economic culture and highlight the impact of this on achieving QNV 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center Ministry of Education & Higher Education EduCluster Finland UNESCO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor & Social Affairs Ministry of Finance Ministry of Development Planning & Statistics Ministry of Transportation & Communication Ministry of Youth Hamad Bin Khalifa University Qatar University College of North Atlantic Qatar Community College Qatar Chamber of Commerce Oil & Gas Steering Committee Banking sector Qatar Development Bank Representative committees of students and parents EduCluster Finland
		1.1.1.2 Form a high level inter-agency committee mandated as a technical team responsible for managing the process of developing national career guidance framework, standards, policy and regulations.		
		1.1.1.3 Arrange with internal and external partners to embark on developing national career guidance framework for the State of Qatar.		
		1.1.1.4 Continue to organize Qatar's career guidance stakeholder engagement platforms and seek to maximize its impact, in general, and its contributions to addressing national level career guidance issues, in particular.		
1.2 Qatar' 2018-2022 Education and Training Sector Strategy does not specify clear vision, priorities, objectives and measures needed to provide adequate career services capable of linking education and labor market systems in Qatar.	1.2.1 Provide empirical evidence needed to develop a national career guidance strategy as part of Qatar's next 5-year national development strategy.	1.2.1.1 Document and assess strategic performance related to the implementation of the 2018-2022 career guidance plan in public schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center Ministry of Education & Higher Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center The Learning Center Shafallah MADA Ministry of Education & Higher Education Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor & Social Affairs
		1.2.1.2 Develop an assessment report on the implementation of various career guidance programs/projects implemented by various centers within the education and labor market sectors.		
		1.2.1.3 Undertake operation-related actions to support effective implementation of the existing 5-year career guidance strategy (e.g. provide career guidance learning and training opportunities to school counselors, students and parents, provide career counseling services to primary and intermediate schools and develop and disseminate high quality labor market, education, scholarship and employment information).		
1.3 Despite the fact that the State of Qatar has, thus far, invested greatly in utilization of new and well-established information and communications technologies (ICT) in various walks of life, such technologies are yet to be integrated into career services, programs and projects within Qatar.	1.3.1 Mobilize resources needed to build an on-line career planning system based on Qatar's needs and situational givens.	1.3.1.1 Firstly, utilize the results of the 2018 platform's ICT focus group as an important input for developing a comprehensive assessment report on how best to upgrade CAS and/or migrate to another system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center Ministry of Education & Higher Education Ministry of Transportation & Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Finance Ministry of Development Planning & Statistics Ministry of Transportation & Communication Ministry of Youth Qatar University Oil & Gas Steering Committee Banking sector Qatar Development Bank Representative committees of students and parents EduCluster Finland Qatar Social & Cultural Center for Blind The Qatari Center of Social Culture for the Deaf Qatar Society for Rehabilitation of Special Needs Best Buddies Qatar World Innovation Summit for Health Supreme Committee fir Delivery & Legacy Hamad Bin Khalifa University Qatar University College of North Atlantic Qatar Community College Qatar World Bank Others
		1.3.1.2 Secondly, translate the above mentioned assessment report into a "system specifications document". This document should specifying the features and requirements needed to develop a tailor-made system (e.g. develop a user friendly on-line career, subject/major and education planning system, adopt a customized assessment methodology and utilize Qatar-specific		

education and occupational data).

1.3.1.3 Thirdly, form a specialized inter-agency committee with a clear mandate to approve the above mentioned "system Specifications" document, hire an internationally reputed provider of ICT solutions to build the specified system, and oversee its inception and future development.

Career Guidance Education Sector Issues	Recommendations	Actions	Responsibilities	
			Lead	Partners
2.1 The existing K-12 career guidance strategic plan for 2018-2022 is extremely limited in the sense that it is confined within the boundaries of public schools, it lacks emphasis on preparedness of students to education and career pathways and it ignores provision of career guidance services for TVET and disable/special skills students.	2.1.1 Developing Career Guidance for School Students	2.1.1.1 Coordinate with the strategic planning department of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in order to: (a) determine the need for, and methods of, developing a well-articulated K-12 career guidance strategy as part of the next 5-year planning cycle (b) establish a strategic planning team and (c) work as per the Ministry's approved strategic planning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center Ministry of Education & Higher Education Injaz Qatar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Finance Ministry of Development Planning & Statistics Ministry of Transportation & Communication Ministry of Youth Qatar Foundation UNESCO Oil & Gas Steering Committee Banking sector Qatar Development Bank Representative committees of students and parents EduCluster Finland Sidra Qatar Social & Cultural Center for Blind The Qatari Center of Social Culture for the Deaf Qatar Society for Rehabilitation of Special Needs Best Buddies Qatar World Innovation Summit for Health Supreme Committee fir Delivery & Legacy Hamad Bin Khalifa University Qatar University College of North Atlantic Qatar Community College Qatar World Bank Others
		2.1.1.2 Strengthen the existing life-skills program through: (a) integrating it with the academic and career advising programs currently offered to school students, and (b) injecting a selected set of career guidance services needed to help students to develop their career management skills.		
2.2 While Qatar's higher education students receive various types of career and academic advising services, they do, nonetheless, need to be provided with opportunities to help them acquire the valuable employability/soft skills which employers in Qatar are looking for.	2.1.2 Developing School-to-Work Transition Program for Students with Disabilities	2.1.2.1 Core components: These are the building blocks of the program and they include: (a) career assessment and exploration component, which refers to, firstly, assessment of students' interests, skills, aptitudes and values, and, secondly, helping students to explore specific sets of career options that are a good fit for them (b) education and career preparation (or skills training) component, which centers on vocational/technical, life, and employability skills required for future careers, (c) work-based learning component which combines classroom knowledge and skills with crucial job, social and interpersonal skills through internships, job shadowing and extracurricular activities and (d) employment support component which relates to helping students not only to secure employment, but also to retain their employment, boost their careers and have a sense of worth and accomplishment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center The Learning Center Shafallah MADA Ministry of Education & Higher Education Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor & Social Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Finance Ministry of Development Planning & Statistics Ministry of Transportation & Communication Ministry of Youth Qatar Foundation UNESCO Oil & Gas Steering Committee Banking sector Qatar Development Bank Representative committees of students and parents EduCluster Finland Sidra Qatar Social & Cultural Center for Blind The Qatari Center of Social Culture for the Deaf Qatar Society for Rehabilitation of Special Needs Best Buddies Qatar World Innovation Summit for Health Supreme Committee fir Delivery & Legacy Hamad Bin Khalifa University Qatar University College of North Atlantic Qatar Community College Qatar World Bank Others
		2.1.2.2 Support components: These are a set of interrelated elements needed to effectively design and implement the above mentioned core program components. They include: (a) individualized planning, which calls for specifying and planning tailor-made sets of activities that help special skills students to graduate with the practical sets of knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to build their future careers. (b) multi-counseling strategies which are needed to enhance the academic and career advancement of special skill students. (c) counselor-teacher collaboration which helps in connecting the education of the students involved with their future work and (4) engagement of parents as strategic partners contributing to the education and career preparation of their children.		

2.1.3 Developing career guidance for improving female participation in TVET	2.1.2.3	To develop the program along the above mentioned core and support components, it is recommended to form an inter-agency work group responsible for reviewing and validating the report drafted by this platform's focus group on "Qatar school-to-work transition program for students with special needs, develop the program's framework, its resultant components and its implementation and assessment plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center Ministry of Education & Higher Education Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor & Social Affairs UNESCO
	2.1.3.1.	Develop TVET-based career information, career education, career counseling, ICT-based career services, stakeholders' engagement and impact assessment.	
2.1.4 Developing University Students Employability Skills Program	2.1.3.2.	Offer career services to a wide range of learners before their entry to TVET programs and during, as well as on their exist from, such programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center Ministry of Education & Higher Education Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor & Social Affairs UNESCO
	2.1.3.3.	Broaden the focus of TVET to include both education-based technical and vocational programs in schools, colleges and universities, and work-based learning programs including apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, etc.	
	2.1.3.4.	To implementing the above mentioned recommendation, form an inter-agency work group composed of representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations across relevant sectors in Qatar. This group should seek to:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and assess the current status of Qatar's TVET system, analyze female participation in this system, address barriers involved and chart ways forward. Enhance relationships with various TVET stakeholders (e.g. students, parents, relevant industries and high level authorities) and generate their views and perspectives on how best to increase the prominence of TVET, in general, and women's participation, in particular. Utilize the results of the above mentioned two points as necessary input for developing and implementing a TVET-based career guidance plan along the six elements addressed earlier. 		
2.1.4.1	Develop a competency-based student employability skills program including various components such as:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career 	

Career Guidance Labor Market Institutions Issues	Recommendations	Actions	Responsibilities	
			Lead	Partners
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work experience through, for example, internship/temporary employment mechanisms to equip students with relevant job/workplace skills. <p>2.1.4.2 Coordinate with university/college administration to generate the support needed for effective program implementation. For example, effort may need to be invested to generate support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of soft skills, career management skills and work experience as compulsory graduation requirements. Paving the way for adequate integration of the student employability program into degree courses in the long-run. Building the capacity of career centers in terms of, for example, hiring more professional career counselors and implementing a sound professional development program for the counselors. <p>2.1.4.3 To effectively design, develop and implement the employability skills program, it is further recommended that career centers within higher education need to form and effectively operate a coordination and cooperation committee. This committee should be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing preparatory work needed to mobilize all career centers in Qatar's higher education and employability skills training providers in order to design, develop and implement the program concerned and its requisite support system. Establishing a coordination/communication mechanism for effective engagement with policy makers in Qatar's education and labor market sectors. Here, the purpose is to, for example, ensure building of synergies, development of relevant and up-to-date labor market and education information system, improvement of private sector's employment of graduates and encouragement of career guidance education at early schooling years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QF Branch campuses Qatar University College of North Atlantic Qatar Community College Qatar 	
3.1a Efforts invested by Qatar's national talent development committees to link education programs with their national workforce development needs are constrained by insufficient career guidance interventions.	3.1.1 Developing Career Guidance for Entrepreneurship Development by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on youth, particularly school and higher education students, as a source of promising future entrepreneurs, i.e. as a potential supply source which can be effectively utilized to address the existing huge shortage of high level 	3.1.1.1 To implement the above mentioned recommendations, the following actions are proposed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a technical committee with representatives from various business incubation and entrepreneurship centers, career guidance centers and education and labor market institutions as well as other stakeholders like students, parents, counselors and some successful entrepreneurs. The above mentioned committee should be responsible for developing a specific set of strategic and operational agenda related to entrepreneurial education, training and career guidance within the peculiarities of the Qatari context. To help the committee achieve its intended purposes, the following tasks/activities are propose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a background paper explaining the value of entrepreneurial education, training and career guidance for enhancing the role of entrepreneurship in Qatar's economic and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center Ministry of Education & Higher Education Qatar Development Bank Qatar Business Incubation Center Qatar Science & Technology Park QU Entrepreneurship Center Bedaya Injaz Qatar Nama'a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Educaion & Higher Education Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor & Social Affairs Ministry of Finance Ministry of Development Planning & Statistics Ministry of Transportation & Communication Ministry of Youth Qatar Foundation Hamad Bin Khalifa University Qatar University

services, which is provided for entrepreneurship development in the State of Qatar.

3.2 Insufficient career guidance interventions by Qatar's national talent development committees will, in various ways, have negative impact on efforts at linking education programs with national workforce development needs.

entrepreneurs in Qatar.

- Concentrate on offering career guidance programs and services which help youth to discover their entrepreneurship interests and help in developing the career management skills of "aspiring and novice entrepreneurs".
- Develop competency-based entrepreneurship education and training programs targeting school and higher education students, in particular, and youth, in general.
- Offer career guidance either as part of the entrepreneurship education and training programs or independent of them.

3.2.1 Developing full-fledge career guidance system for national talent development

social development.

- Describe, analyze and evaluate the existing entrepreneurship education and training programs and indicate how best to strengthen and expand them.
- Identify how best to engage with schools and higher education institutions in order to gain their support and participation in the education, training and guidance programs.
- Collaborate with career guidance centers to generate their perspective on approaches to guidance that can best support entrepreneurship learning, and help in developing the career management skills of entrepreneurs.
- Identify and assess various methods of engaging youth in entrepreneurial activities. Examples of such methods include
 - a. Print/digital information dissemination methods for raising awareness of, and giving information about, entrepreneurship.
 - b. Guidance methods like entrepreneurship ambassador program for students and student led entrepreneurship clubs and networks.
 - c. On-line learning and social networking sites methods for reaching out large numbers of students and other young adults.
 - d. Role models and mentors method for engaging youth with successful entrepreneurs.
 - e. Entrepreneurial publicity campaigns devoted to attraction of mass audiences through radio, television, newspapers and social media.

3.2.1.1 Create and manage a national level talent development forum composed of representatives of national talent development committees, education and labor market institutions, national development agencies and career development centers. The forum should provide a platform for its members to:

- Showcase and acknowledge Qatar's talent, present examples of success stories and seek to maximize their benefits across various organizations and sectors.
- Share insights and views on how best to improve existing talent development programs in major industries and develop relevant mechanisms for collaboration across relevant sectors.
- Address challenges and explore opportunities related to linking education and training programs with national workforce development needs through, for example, need assessment, competency-based education and training programs well

- College of North Atlantic Qatar
- Community College Qatar
- Chamber of Commerce
- UNESCO
- Silatech
- Oil & Gas Steering Committee
- Banking sector
- Qatar Development Bank
- Representative committees of students and parents

- Qatar Foundation - Qatar Career Development Center
- Ministry of Education & Higher Education
- Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor & Social Affairs
- Ministry of Development Planning & Statistics
- Various sector Qatarization Committees

developed career guidance framework career guidance policy and procedures.

- Develop adequate mechanisms for presentation, validation and utilization of the forum's findings and recommendations.

3.2.1.2 Secondly, and depending on the needs of each of the national talent development committees, the following actions are recommended for operation improvement.

- Increase employment of professional career counselors needed to deliver the right mix of career guidance interventions such as career orientation, individual and group counseling, group activities, career classes, internship and workplace experience program, computer information systems, and self-help interventions.
- Develop tailor-made sets of data and technology needed to design and deliver the above mentioned types of career guidance interventions.
- Continue to recruit talented students and help them through sound career assessment methods to consciously decide on their future career pathways, complete their courses of study, develop their employability skills and manage their education-to-employment transitions.
- Deliver an annual program for school students at their early schooling years and for university students to, for example, raise their awareness and understanding of Qatarization, knowledge economy, national workforce development needs and scholarship and employment opportunities available for them.
- Diversify qualifications and career pathways for females and arrange to provide them with flexible work arrangements, child-care and other related facilities.
- Address the challenge of accommodating the large number of young Qataris who are waiting for employment opportunities, but considered as "not fit for purpose".
- Provide career services to incumbent national employees in low, middle and high-level jobs to help them boost their careers and contribute their best.
- Assist senior national employees to effectively and efficiently address a wide range of issues central to them such as career progression, career change, reskilling and retirement planning.

(8) Details of recommendations and actions for addressing career guidance issues at national, education sector and labor market levels

To present this year's platform recommendations, it should be recognized that the platform's focus groups were required to address specific sets of evidence-based issues and concerns hindering effective development of career guidance in Qatar. Such issues and concerns are presented below and they are followed by their respective sets of detailed recommendations at national, education sector and labor market levels of analysis.

8.1) Career guidance development issues and concerns at national, education sector and labor market levels

In light of the three QCDC's empirical research papers, it could be easily understood that development of career guidance in the State of Qatar is negatively affected by a wide range of situational factors. Such factors are summarized below in terms of three sets of issues and concerns at the national, education sector and labor market levels.

Firstly, at the national level, it was evidently indicated that:

- Development of Qatar's career guidance system suffers from lack of national level career guidance framework, standards, policy and strategy. This is further exacerbated by unavailability of a central agency responsible for regulating; monitoring and developing Qatar's career guidance industry.

- Qatar' 2018-2022 Education and Training Sector Strategy does not specify clear vision, priorities, objectives and measures needed to provide adequate career services capable of linking education and labor market systems in Qatar.
- Despite the fact that the State of Qatar has, thus far, invested greatly in utilization of new and well-established information and communications technologies (ICT) in various walks of life, such technologies are yet to be integrated into career services, programs and projects within Qatar.

Secondly, and in a similar vein, career guidance in the education sector is limited in some important ways as indicated below.

- The existing K-12 career guidance strategic plan for 2018-2022 is extremely limited in the sense that it does not pay attention to developing a well-integrated career guidance system, it is confined within the boundaries of public schools, it lacks emphasis on preparedness of students to education and career pathways and it ignores provision of career guidance services for TVET and disable/special skills students.

While Qatar's higher education students receive various types of career and academic advising services, they do, nonetheless, need to be provided with opportunities to help them acquire the

valuable employability/soft skills which employers in Qatar are looking for.

- Taken together, career guidance in public schools and higher education is limited in as much as it suffers from lack of requisite framework, standards, policies, strategic vision, structural and procedural dimensions in addition to lack of professionalization of staff as well as lack of career education programs and counseling services. As a result, students are not engaged in their developing their career management skills.

Thirdly, issues and concerns related to provision of career guidance by labor market institutions are illustrated as follows. Efforts invested by Qatar's national talent development committees to link education programs with their national workforce development needs are constrained by insufficient career guidance interventions.

- Insufficient career guidance interventions by Qatar's national talent development committees will, in various ways, have negative impact on efforts at linking education programs with national workforce development needs.
- The process of enhancing the supply of effective Qatari entrepreneurs is negatively affected by lack of incorporating career guidance as part and parcel of the existing system of business support and services, which is provided for entrepreneurship

development in the State of Qatar.

8.2) Recommendations and actions for effective implementation

This sub-section is devoted to presentation of details related to the recommendations offered by the platform's focus groups in their attempts to address the previously mentioned career guidance issues in the State of Qatar. Actions required for effective implementation of those recommendations are also presented.

8.2.1) Recommendations for addressing strategic national level issues

The following paragraphs present three sets of recommendations and implementation actions needed to address national level career guidance issues in the State of Qatar.

- 8.2.1.1) Provide foundational work needed to embark on developing national level career guidance framework, standards, policy, and regulations.**

In order to effectively address national level issues hindering the development of career guidance in Qatar, it is recommended to develop foundational work needed to embark on establishing national career guidance framework, standards, policy, strategy and regulations.

Actions that should be taken to implement the above mentioned recommendation include the following.

Develop and present, to national-level

policy makers, a concept paper explaining the value of embedding career guidance deeply within Qatar's socio-economic culture and highlight the impact of this on achieving QNV 2030.

Form a high level inter-agency committee mandated as a technical team responsible for managing the process of developing national career guidance framework, standards, policy and regulations. Arrange with internal and external partners

to embark on developing national career guidance framework for the State of Qatar. Continue to organize Qatar's career guidance stakeholder engagement platforms and seek to maximize its impact, in general, and its contributions to addressing national level career guidance issues, in particular.

8.2.1.2) Provide empirical evidence needed to develop a national career guidance strategy as part of Qatar's next 5-year national development strategy.

In as much as the existing Education and Training Sector Strategy 2018-2022, career guidance strategy in Qatar is confined within the boundaries of public schools, and in view of the observation that career guidance goes beyond the education and training sector, it is recommended to provide empirical evidence needed to develop a national level career guidance strategy. Such a strategy should be developed as a means for establishing a "coherent and clearly structured career guidance system and it should be considered as part of Qatar's next 5-year national development strategy.

To implement this recommendation, it is, strategically speaking, important to coordinate with the owner of the education and training sector strategy in order to take the following actions:

- Document and assess strategic performance related to the implementation of the 2018-2022 career guidance plan in public schools.
- Develop an assessment report on the implementation of various career guidance programs/projects implemented by various centers within the education and labor market sectors.

- Undertake operation-related actions to support effective implementation of the existing 5-year career guidance strategy (e.g. provide career guidance learning and training opportunities to school counselors, students and parents, provide career counseling services to primary and intermediate schools and develop and disseminate high quality labor market, education, scholarship and employment information).
- Utilize the results of the above mentioned three points in order to compile a comprehensive feedback report as strong empirical evidence needed to effectively design, implement and assess a career guidance strategy at the national/inter-sectoral level.

The above mentioned actions should be complemented with immediate, operation-related, actions to support effective implementation of the existing 2018-2022 career guidance strategy.

- Offer learning and development programs to career counselors, student parents and school administrators in addition to offering life and employability skills courses to students.



- Develop and disseminate high quality labor market, education, scholarship and employment information, e.g. information about current and projected education and career opportunities as well as scholarship programs and employment strategies in Qatar's public and private sectors.
- Provide career counseling services to primary and intermediate schools, e.g. career awareness/orientation courses to familiarize students with various careers and education options.

8.2.1.3) Mobilize resources needed to build an on-line career planning system based on Qatar's needs and situational givens.

- To ease access to service, it is recommended to build a Qatar-specific, on-line, career planning system. Such a system should be based on current experience with the existing Career Advising System (CAS), which is utilized in public schools and other education and labor market institutions in Qatar.
- The following actions are recommended for effective implementation of the above mentioned recommendation.
- For immediate, short-term, purposes,

strengthen the existing Arabic and English versions of CAS through, for example, further improving the validity and reliability of its content, enhancing the design of its website, training the advisors involved and enriching its information and learning resource components.

- For strategic purposes, and in as far as building a Qatar-specific, on-line, career planning system is concerned, it is important to undertake the following actions:

» Firstly, utilize the results of the 2018 platform's ICT focus group as an important input for developing a comprehensive assessment report on how best to up-grade CAS and/or migrate to another system.

» Secondly, translate the above mentioned assessment report into a "system specifications document". This document should specify the features and requirements needed to develop a tailor-made system (e.g. develop a user friendly on-line career, subject/major and education planning system, adopt a customized assessment methodology and utilize Qatar-specific education and occupational data).

» Thirdly, form a specialized inter-agency committee with a clear mandate to approve

the above mentioned "system Specifications" document, hire an internationally reputed provider of ICT solutions to build the specified system, and oversee its inception and future development.

8.2.2) Recommendations for addressing a selected set of strategic career guidance issues within the education sector

In order to strategically develop career guidance in Qatar's education sector, a specific set of recommendations is offered which helps in: (1) developing career guidance for public school students (2) building a sound school-to-Work transition program for students with disabilities (3) promoting career guidance for female participation in TVET and (4) developing a university student's employability skills program. These recommendations are detailed as follows.

8.2.2.1) Developing Career Guidance for School Students

To help school students to better manage their education and career choices, maximize their potentials and contribute to Qatar's prosperity, it is recommended to develop and implement an outcome-based K-12 career guidance strategy for all public and private schools. Such a strategy should focus on developing a K-12 career guidance framework, standards, strategy, policy, procedures and

programs to be delivered in a more professional way throughout all schooling stages. While attempting to develop such a strategy, it is, for short-term purposes, recommended to further develop the existing "life-skills" program and to maximize its impact.

The following actions will help in implementing the above mentioned recommendations.

- Coordinate with the strategic planning department of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in order to: (a) determine the need for, and methods of, developing a well-articulated K-12 career guidance strategy as part of the next 5-year planning cycle (b) establish a strategic planning team and (c) work as per the Ministry's approved strategic planning process.
- Strengthen the existing life-skills program through such actions like: (a) integrating it with the academic and career advising programs currently offered to school students, and (b) injecting a selected set of career guidance services needed to help students to develop their career management skills.

8.2.2.2) Developing School-to-Work Transition Program for Students with Disabilities

Based on lack of sound career guidance services for school students with special skills/disabilities in Qatar, it is important to help those of them who are non-college-track students to experience successful school- to- work transitions. To that end, it is recommended to utilize the invaluable foundational work developed by this year's focus group on career guidance for students with special skills in order to develop a tailor-made program. The program should depict the following core and support components:

- Core components: These are the building blocks of the program and they include: (a) career assessment and exploration component, which refers to, firstly, assessment of students' interests, skills, aptitudes and values, and, secondly, helping students to explore specific sets of career options that are a good fit for them (b) education and career preparation (or skills training) component, which centers on vocational/technical, life, and employability skills required for future careers, (c) work-based learning component which combines class-room knowledge and skills with crucial job, social and interpersonal skills through internships, job shadowing and extracurricular activities and (d) employment support component which relates to helping students not only to secure employment, but also to retain their employment, boost their careers and have a sense of worth and accomplishment.

- Support components: These are a set of interrelated elements needed to effectively design and implement the above mentioned core program components. They include: (a) individualized planning, which calls for specifying and planning tailor-made sets of activities that help special skills students to graduate with the practical sets of knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to build their future careers. (b) multi-counseling strategies which are needed to enhance the academic and career advancement of special skill students. (c) counselor-teacher collaboration which helps in connecting the education of the students involved with their future work and (4) engagement of parents as strategic partners contributing to the education and career preparation of their children.

- To develop the program along the above mentioned core and support components, it is recommended to form an inter-agency work group responsible for reviewing and validating the report drafted by this platform's focus group on "Qatar school-to-work transition program for students with special needs, develop the program's framework, its resultant components and its implementation and assessment plan.

8.2.2.3) Developing career guidance for improving female participation in TVET

- In as much as improving female participation



in TVET programs and employment will add value to Qatar's economic and social development, it is recommended to review, validate and extend the foundational work developed by this year's platform focus group on improving female participation in TVET. The purpose of this should center on addressing issues related to how best to:

- » Develop TVET-based career information, career education, career counseling, ICT-based career services, stakeholders' engagement and impact assessment.

» Offer career services to a wide range of learners before their entry to TVET programs and during, as well as on their exist from, such programs.

» Broaden the focus of TVET to include both education-based technical and vocational programs in schools, colleges and universities, and work-based learning programs including apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, etc.

- To implementing the above mentioned recommendation, form an inter-agency

work group composed of representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations across relevant sectors in Qatar. This group should seek to:

- » Review and assess the current status of Qatar's TVET system, analyze female participation in this system, address barriers involved and chart ways forward.
- » Enhance relationships with various TVET stakeholders (e.g. students, parents, relevant industries and high level authorities) and generate their views and perspectives on how best to increase the prominence of TVET, in general, and women's participation, in particular.
- » Utilize the results of the above mentioned two points as necessary input for developing and implementing a TVET-based career guidance plan along the six elements addressed earlier.

stakeholders to leverage higher education to achieve career and economic success.

For implementation purposes, career centers are further recommended to take the following actions:

- Develop a competency-based student employability skills program including various components such as:
 - Soft/transferrable skills, e.g. dependability, self-motivation and Arabic/English language skills.
 - » Career management skills needed by students to help them better understand themselves and the world around them, and to take control of their careers on the basis of life-long learning.
 - » Work experience through, for example, internship/temporary employment mechanisms to equip students with relevant job/workplace skills.
- Coordinate with university/college administration to generate the support needed for effective program implementation. For example, effort may need to be invested to generate support for:
 - » Implementation of soft skills, career management skills and work experience as compulsory graduation requirements.
 - » Paving the way for adequate integration

8.2.2.4) Developing University Students Employability Skills Program

In view of Qatar's tightening labor market conditions, Qatari higher education institutions need to make their graduates more employable. As such, it is recommended that career guidance centers within those institutions should: (a) work collaboratively and closely with their universities/colleges and industry in order to (b) help students develop their career readiness skills (b) enhance their employment and (3) contribute to the process of engaging various

of the student employability program into degree courses in the long-run.

- » Building the capacity of career centers in terms of, for example, hiring more professional career counselors and implementing a sound professional development program for the counselors.
- To effectively design, develop and implement the employability skills program, it is further recommended that career centers within higher education need to form and effectively operate a coordination and cooperation committee. This committee should be responsible for:

Developing preparatory work needed to mobilize all career centers in Qatar's higher education and employability skills training providers in order to design, develop and implement the program concerned and its requisite support system.

- » Establishing a coordination/communication mechanism for effective engagement with policy makers in Qatar's education and labor market sectors. Here, the purpose is to, for example, ensure building of synergies, development of relevant and up-to-date labor market and education information system, improvement of private sector's employment of graduates and

encouragement of career guidance education at early schooling years.

8.2.3) Recommendations for addressing a selected set of labor market related career guidance issues

Improving career guidance for entrepreneurship development and national talent development purposes were selected as illustrative examples for developing the services concerned in Qatar's labor market. The platform's recommendations related to this sector are presented in this sub-section.

8.2.3.1) Enhancement of Career Guidance for Entrepreneurship Development

To enhance the supply of effective entrepreneurs in Qatar, it is recommended that Qatar's business incubation and entrepreneurship centers, should inject career guidance as part of their existing system of business support and services. Together with provision of adequate entrepreneurship education and training programs, injection of career guidance services should concentrate on raising awareness of entrepreneurship as career option, mobilizing people to discover their entrepreneurship interests, cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets, developing individuals' entrepreneurial qualities and skills, and, therefore, boosting entrepreneurial activity in the State of Qatar. To that end, it is recommended to:



- Focus on youth, particularly school and higher education students, as a source of promising future entrepreneurs, i.e. as a potential supply source which can be effectively utilized to address the existing huge shortage of high level entrepreneurs in Qatar.

Concentrate on offering career guidance programs and services which help youth to discover their entrepreneurship interests and help in developing the career management skills of “aspiring and novice entrepreneurs”. Develop competency-based entrepreneurship education and training programs targeting

school and higher education students, in particular, and youth, in general.

- Offer career guidance either as part of the entrepreneurship education and training programs or independent of them.

To implement the above mentioned recommendations, the following actions are proposed.

- Form a technical committee with representatives from various business incubation and entrepreneurship centers,

career guidance centers and education and labor market institutions as well as other stakeholders like students, parents, counselors and some successful entrepreneurs.

- The above mentioned committee should be responsible for developing a specific set of strategic and operational agenda related to entrepreneurial education, training and career guidance within the peculiarities of the Qatari context.
- To help the committee achieve its intended purposes, the following tasks/activities are propose:
 - » Develop a background paper explaining the value of entrepreneurial education, training and career guidance for enhancing the role of entrepreneurship in Qatar’s economic and social development.
 - » Describe, analyze and evaluate the existing entrepreneurship education and training programs and indicate how best to strengthen and expand them.
 - » Identify how best to engage with schools and higher education institutions in order to gain their support and participation in the education, training and guidance programs.

Collaborate with career guidance centers to generate their perspective on approaches to guidance that can best support entrepreneurship learning, and help in developing the career management skills of entrepreneurs.

Identify and assess various methods of engaging youth in entrepreneurial activities. Examples of such methods include

- (a)** Print/digital information dissemination methods for raising awareness of, and giving information about, entrepreneurship.
- (b)** Guidance methods like entrepreneurship ambassador program for students and student led entrepreneurship clubs and networks.
- (c)** Online learning and social networking sites methods for reaching out large numbers of students and other young adults.
- (d)** Role models and mentors method for engaging youth with successful entrepreneurs.
- (e)** Entrepreneurial publicity campaigns devoted to attraction of mass audiences through radio, television, newspapers and social media.

8.2.3.2) Developing full-fledge career guidance system for national talent development

To maximize the impact of their current and potential education and training programs that best meet their workforce development needs, national talent development committees should develop and implement a full-fledge career guidance system. Such a system should be consciously designed and delivered to ensure that the right candidates are effectively recruited and prepared for success in targeted sets of education and career pathways that contribute invaluable to achieving high levels of quality Qatarization.

To implement the above mentioned recommendation, the following two sets of action should be taken.

- Firstly, and for strategic purposes, it is recommended to create and manage a

national level talent development forum composed of representatives of, for example, national talent development committees, education and labor market institutions, national development agencies and career development centers. The forum should provide a platform for its members to:

- » Showcase and acknowledge Qatar's talent, present examples of success stories and seek to maximize their benefits across various organizations and sectors.
- » Share insights and views on how best to improve existing talent development programs in major industries and develop relevant mechanisms for collaboration across relevant sectors.



- » Address challenges and explore opportunities related to linking education and training programs with national workforce development needs through, for example, need assessment, competency-based education and training programs well developed career guidance framework career guidance policy and procedures.
- » Develop adequate mechanisms for presentation, validation and utilization of the forum's findings and recommendations.
- Secondly, and depending on the needs of each of the national talent development committees, the following actions are recommended for operation improvement. Increase employment of professional career counselors needed to deliver the right mix of career guidance interventions such as career orientation, individual and group counseling, group activities, career classes, internship and workplace experience program, computer information systems, and self-help interventions.
 - » Develop tailor-made sets of data and technology needed to design and deliver the above mentioned types of career guidance interventions.
 - » Continue to recruit talented students and help them through sound career assessment methods to consciously decide on their future career pathways,

complete their courses of study, develop their employability skills and manage their education-to-employment transitions.

- » Deliver an annual program for school students at their early schooling years and for university students to, for example, raise their awareness and understanding of Qatarization, knowledge economy, national workforce development needs and scholarship and employment opportunities available for them.
- » Diversify qualifications and career pathways for females and arrange to provide them with flexible work arrangements, child-care and other related facilities.
- » Address the challenge of accommodating the large number of young Qataris who are waiting for employment opportunities, but considered as "not fit for purpose".
- » Provide career services to incumbent national employees in low, middle and high-level jobs to help them boost their careers and contribute their best.
- » Assist senior national employees to effectively and efficiently address a wide range of issues central to them such as career progression, career change, reskilling and retirement planning.