

WORKSHOP REPORT

ENHANCING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT IN THE DESIGN
AND DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE SKILLS SOLUTIONS

8-9 September, 2015
Amman, Jordan

www.britishcouncil.org



INTRODUCTION

The Enhancing Employer Engagement in the Design and Development of Effective Skills Solutions workshop, held 8-9 September brought together 26 professionals from six countries across the Middle East and North Africa. The aim was to share their experiences, to learn from one another and discuss good practice partnership models that enhance skills investment against the backdrop of the global race to develop and deploy the talent needed in an innovation-driven economy.

The workshop was structured around smaller, facilitated workshops and presentations to allow all participants to enter into practical discussion. There were inputs from key speakers from the UK who provided insights into the factors currently driving employer involvement in the delivery and assessment of technical vocational qualifications and the main barriers facing employers, governments and educators alike.

The workshop was a key activity for the British Council as part of its their cultural relations work that aims to empower learning, develop skills and support opportunities for all within the societies within which they work.

Feedback from the workshop was very positive – participants saw great value in working with like-minded people from so many countries, the opportunity to network and to learn from one another, and the chance to explore ideas.

This report provides an overview of the workshop, background information and objectives, a summary of the presentations and discussions, and suggestions for next steps. Copies of presentation slides and other support material can be found on the British Councils Skills and Employability website:
www.britishcouncil.org/education/skills-employability

Melanie Relton

Regional Vocational Education Training Manager,
Middle East and North Africa

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABOUT THE BRITISH COUNCIL



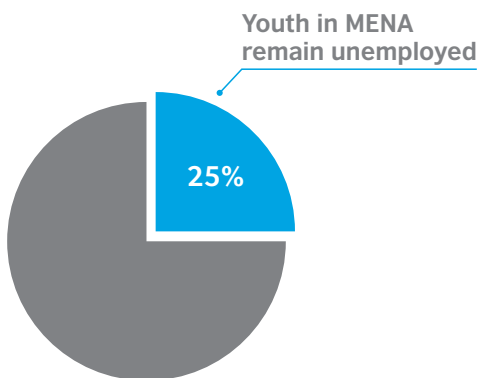
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Improving the quality of Vocational Education and Training (VET) is one of the key reform agendas being addressed by governments throughout the Middle East and North Africa

The youth population in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is the largest in the world, and presents a unique opportunity for today's employers to benefit from young energy and talent. Employment is a crucial aspect of a young person's journey towards adulthood. But successfully achieving this transition is a big challenge facing young people across the region.

The region is currently undergoing a period of significant reform. Governments are looking to their education systems for solutions to the problem of widespread unemployment amongst young people who are leaving full-time education without the relevant, high quality knowledge and skills they need to secure employment.

Employers continue to struggle to fill positions due to lack of suitable talent. The mismatch between the outputs of the education system and the needs of the job market is cited as one of the key reasons behind the persistently high level of unemployment in the region.



Twenty-five per cent of young people in MENA remain unemployed - the highest percentage in the world.¹

Skills shortages in the region remain a constraint on growth opportunities and on investment prospects. Policy-makers and educators recognise that coherent labour market policies and initiative, play a central role in bridging the gap between education and work; with employers in the driving seat, developing standards and ensuring provision is aligned to their needs. Both rigour and responsiveness are clearly essential to a well-functioning system of vocational education, with the direct line of sight to work. Effective approaches to employer engagement are those that move away from asking employers "what do you want?" to asking them "how can you contribute to making this work?"

With a few notable exceptions, skills training is essentially supply-led and is often based on outdated curriculum that does not adequately prepare learners for today's job market or lead to employment. Across the region, with some exceptions, employers have limited involvement in the education sector and consequently modest influence on the training that young people receive. The key question is what can, and needs to be done to empower employers to take responsibility for workforce development. How can we create sector-owned solutions that respond to the evolving needs of industry, while creating high quality vocational and technical qualifications that are valued and fit for purpose? Success rests upon forging strong partnerships that bring employers closer to the planning and delivery of education and learning provision.

There was a recognition that two days was enough time to begin to raise some of the issues in a systematic way.

Discussion focused on five pillars needed to build employer ownership:

- Governance
- Relevance of education and training for employability
- Increased inclusiveness of the TVET system
- Performance measurement
- Sustainable and effective funding

Among the short and achievable measures proposed by delegates were:

- Develop mechanisms to help identify skills needs at company; sector and regional level and support VET providers to map their curricula against employer needs;
- Develop partnership and collaboration models that bring employers together to discuss skills issues, and communicate these to colleges and universities;
- Share of concrete examples of good practice models in employer-led skills investment;
- Introduce highly relevant and high quality work programmes that provide students with 'real' work insight.
- Engage employers in the development

of career guidance services so enable students to become work-ready and effective career planners.

In the longer term:

- Build the capacity of organisations within the system to support VET reform through knowledge sharing, capacity-building and twinning programmes between industry and education across different countries;
- Ensure trainers and teachers have relevant industry knowledge and experience through the promotion and development of high quality Continuing Professional Development opportunities;
- Through a range of mechanism encourage employers to understand the benefits of labour market information and National Occupational Standards
- Ensure qualifications have currency and the endorsement of industry and that they reflect the needs of businesses, sectors, regions and young people;
- Ensure legislation and funding supports the development and delivery of VET programmes by lobbying key stakeholders to work together on skills;

¹ <http://www.weforum.org/best-practices/talent-mobility/building-futures-through-youth-employment-across-middle-east-and-north>



WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the workshop were to bring together regional, UK and international expertise, in order to:

- Share good practice and develop knowledge and understanding of the UK Skills Sector and approaches to Employer Engagement.
- Provide an overview of the formation, governance and funding arrangements that drive industry-relevant education and learning.
- Showcase successful models and approaches that are engaging industry in the development of innovative technical education and encouraging employers to invest in skills development and job creation (from the region and the UK).
- Provoke reflection and critical evaluation of the key strengths and challenges of employer engagement approaches across the region and the UK through exposure to UK practice and expertise and follow-up discussion.
- Inspire and motivate participants to share knowledge, collaborate and develop international networks between individuals from participating countries and with the UK.

"Producing skilled people that international companies will employ is our biggest challenge"

Engineer Ali Fayyadh, Iraq.



WORKSHOP SUMMARY

TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER

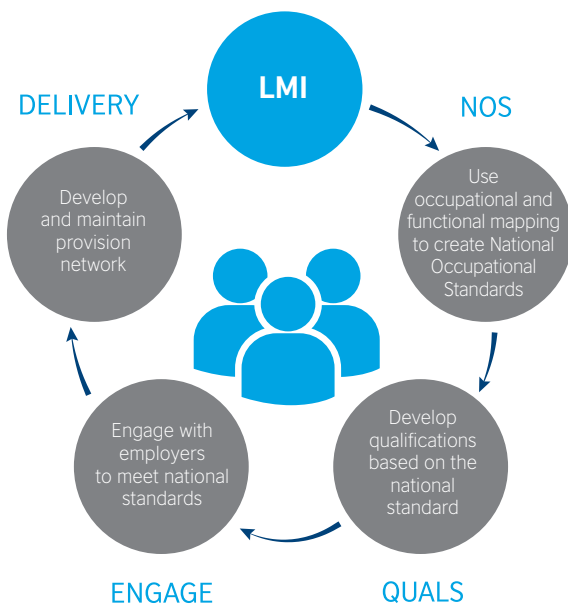
Governance

Global experience has shown that a coherent national strategy that sets out a national framework that guides employers, policy-makers, education providers, employees and potential employees is effective in ensuring productivity and efficiency, particularly when combined with detailed skills needs forecasting.

Richard Beamish outlined the UK's employer-led skills structure to demonstrate the cycle of:

- Good quality labour market information, including future skills needs
- Occupational standards development
- Qualifications, including apprenticeships designed by employers
- Review

Working with Employers²



Most industry sectors are represented through employer-owned Sector Skills Councils or Industry Training Boards which ensure that any qualifications developed are directly related to employer requirements.

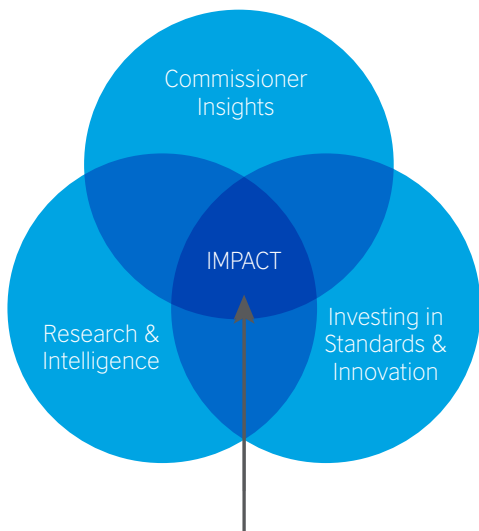
² Slide from Proskills UK Group

Sustainable and effective funding

Katherine Chapman from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) described the role of the Commission within the UK skills environment and particularly to look at some of the financial and other incentives it provides for employers to innovate within the skills agenda. The organisation also carries out detailed research programmes and advises the UK government on skills strategy.

Delegates asked questions about return on investment (ROI) and requested further information on key reports.³

About the UK Commission for Employment and Skills⁴



Our ambition is to transform the United Kingdom's approach to investing in the skills of people as an intrinsic part of securing growth

Relevance of education and training for employability

Walid Draou, Training Programme Manager at Aggreko UK Ltd, highlighted, through the use of case studies, the importance of employer-led skills development to an international company. As an international organisation based in Scotland but with outlets throughout the Middle East, Aggreko is committed to delivering much of its own training using blended learning via on-demand approaches, classroom theory and practical training. The organisation is working with Sector Skills Council Energy & Utility Skills to attract new talent.

The final speaker of day one, Reg D'Souza, Research Manager at Sector Skills Council SEMTA demonstrated the importance of research and understanding, describing the vital role good labour market information plays in determining skills needs, both for today and for the future. He also provided some evidence of the benefits for employers of having a skilled workforce using Leitch Review forecasts.

The day ended with participants sharing their thoughts and country experiences including:

Challenges:

- Finding resources to carry out labour market information and skills development
- Getting employers to work together
- A realisation that the Aggreko model is difficult for smaller companies

Opportunities:

- Universities and employers working together on labour market information
- Encouraging government incentives to innovate with skills development
- An opportunity to set clear goals for skills development nationally

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills>

⁴ http://www.delni.gov.uk/leitch_finalreport051206111-2.pdf

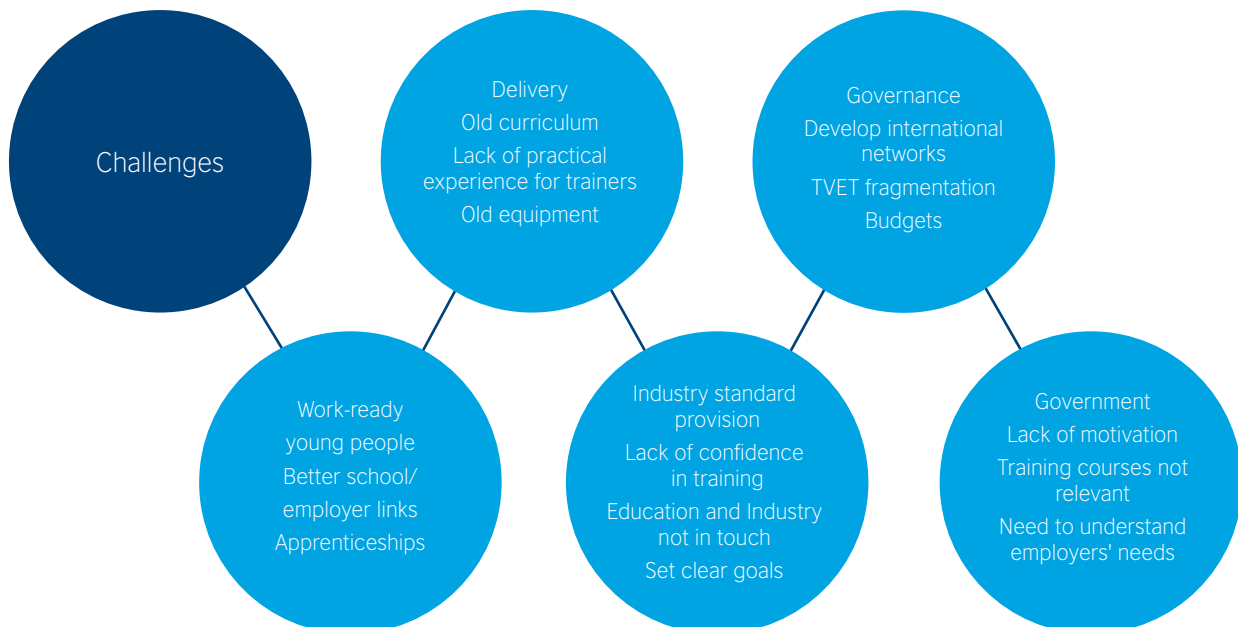
WEDNESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

Relevance of education and training for employability

Building on the experience and knowledge of the delegates, Day 2 provided a platform for more detailed knowledge-sharing and action-planning. The main focus was on helping delegates devise their own short and longer-term skills development solutions relevant to their own situations, while other sessions were structured around providing examples of skills development in the UK for various types and sizes of company, and additional background.

Participants first explored the challenges, as the diagram below illustrates (a fuller list is in the Appendix):

Key challenges to driving forward change:



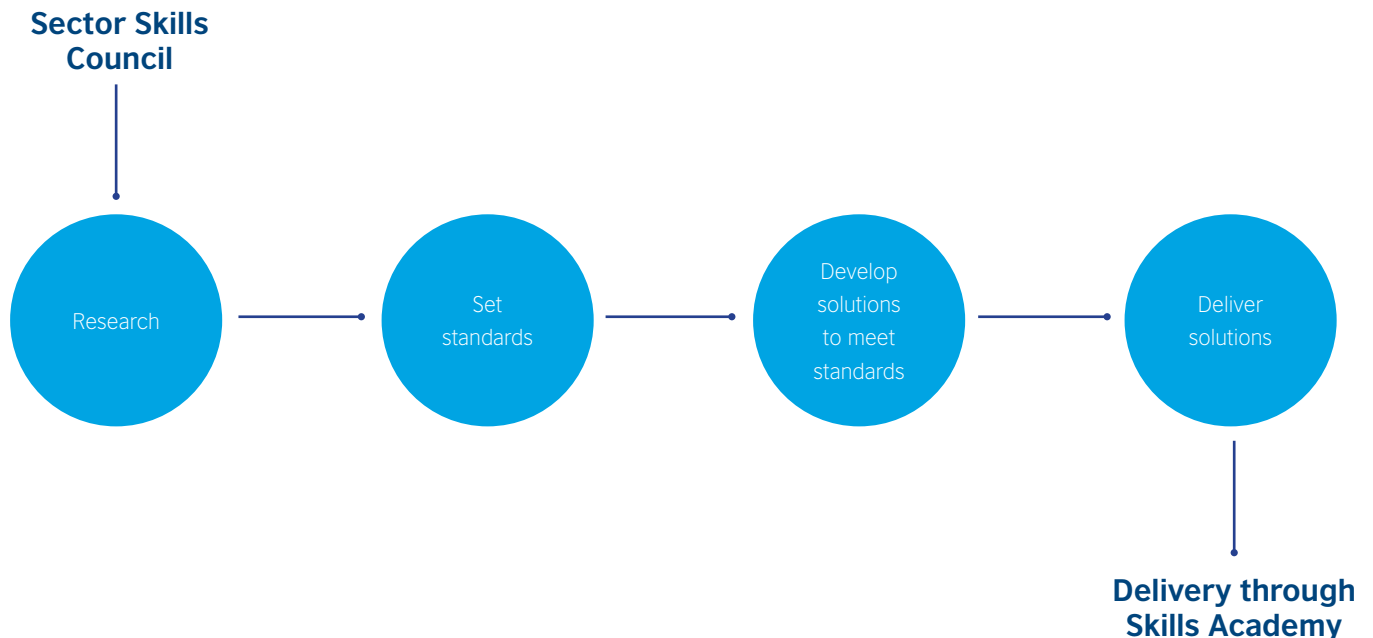
Richard Beamish introduced a second case studies session to provide examples of skills development within a variety of types of organisation. These included:

- A larger company promoting better skills through its supply chain (Robert Woodhead Ltd)
- Groups of small companies in a region sharing training resources (Black Country Skills Factory, the Construction Group Training Association and the Ceramic Skills Academy);
- A large organisation developing its own skills centre for a major project (Crossrail).

Jane Rexworthy, Executive Director of Sector Skills Council People 1st, spoke about the work of her Sector Skills Council and of the value for employers of working together to improve skills levels – Performance through People. Re-emphasising the process from research and standards-setting to delivering solutions that meet standards and delivery via skills academies, Jane provided examples from the retail sector in the UK and of People 1st's work elsewhere, including in Jordan.

This programme was of particular interest to a number of delegates, who recognised that People 1st was already tackling some of the skills issues in the Middle East within the industry sectors it covered.

Establishing a sustainable skills model



APPRENTICESHIPS SOME KEY FACTS⁵

Ana Cavilla, Director of Policy at the Federation of Industry Sector Skills and Standards (FISSS) talked about apprenticeship reform in the UK, explaining the process of reform and the increased role of employers in ensuring apprenticeships are directly related to the needs of the workplace. This proved to be of considerable interest, although issues around funding were an inhibitor for some.

Apprenticeship starts in England in May 2010: **over 2 Million.**

Scotland on target for **25,000** modern apprenticeships in **2014/15.**

Return for every pound that government invests in **apprenticeships** **£1** ↓ **£28**

Over 170 industries offer apprenticeships

£1.5bn Amount invested in **apprenticeships** in England last year

96% Employers who take on an **apprentice** say their business benefited.

Wales recorded **27,455** apprentices in 2013/14 with a substantial increase in higher level apprenticeships

New higher apprenticeships in occupations like space engineer and pilot.

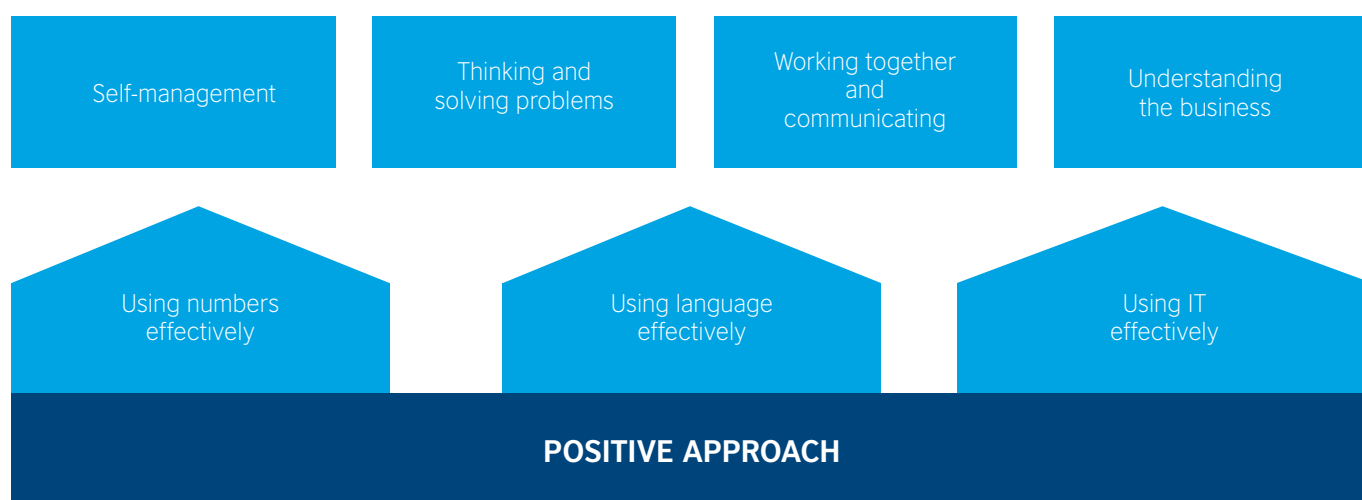


Over **240,000** workplaces in England already offering **apprenticeships**

£117k Extra income earned by someone who completes a Level 3 apprenticeship

96,400 apprenticeships in smaller businesses supported by a **£1,500** Grant for Employers

Delegates considered employability issues, viewing some skills materials produced by Energy & Utility Skills and parts of an employability toolkit produced for all Sector Skills Councils by Asset Skills (now the Building Futures Group). Copies of the toolkit forms were distributed.⁶



The second day included group sessions within which delegates sought to identify solutions to some of the challenges identified earlier. The themes were:

- Industry Standards Provision (education and learning);
- Industry Standards Provision (employer partnerships);
- Government Systems (economic growth);
- Governance (enabling networks);
- Developing work-ready young people.

Delegates were asked to consider what an ideal skills system might look, like as well as considering realistic and deliverable short-term solutions and longer-term challenges. The final main session was to provide feedback from each of the groups.

"Employability skills are the skills that almost everyone needs to do almost any job"

⁵ Slide from the Federation for Industry Sector Skills & Standards

⁶ <http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Document-library/Standards/Skills-for-Life/Network-employability-guide.pdf>

WORKSHOP GROUP ONE: Education and learning - Industry Standards Provision

	Short-term actions	Long-term actions	Who needs to be involved
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	<p>Needs analysis (industry relevant, education and learning)</p> <p>Map potential offers/solutions</p> <p>Check British Council/UK support</p> <p>Meet/engage with partners</p> <p>Consider what is available/what gaps exist</p>	<p>Lobby key stakeholders: Chambers of Commerce/Ministry of Labour/industry groups Private sector – secure “Buy in” – model/ approach and change</p> <p>Recognition/ accreditation locally</p> <p>Development of Training of Trainers model</p>	<p>British Council staff in Saudi Arabia and the UK</p> <p>TVET</p>
Iraq	<p>Feedback to key staff</p> <p>Industry forum to conduct needs analysis</p> <p>UK partner benchmarking</p> <p>Map existing curricula against employer needs</p> <p>Gap analysis to produce action plan</p> <p>Self-assessment – audit UK/ senior management – Action plan (identification of leadership team - counterparts in the UK)</p>	<p>Shadowing/principal exchange</p> <p>Twinning – UK</p> <p>Joint curricula/ internationally</p> <p>Cascade model</p>	<p>Meeting British Council</p> <p>Sector Employers</p> <p>Employees (trained staff)</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Government/ Cabinet</p>
Jordan	<p>Map all non-governmental organisations (NGOs)</p> <p>Check on what is available/identify gaps</p> <p>Donors need to map needs/avoid duplication</p>	<p>Change/review policies “start-up” support “new” enterprise growth</p>	<p>non-governmental organisations (NGO)</p> <p>UK partners</p> <p>Ministry of Planning (MoP)</p>

WORKSHOP GROUP TWO:**Employer partners -
Industry Standards Provision**

	Short-term actions	Long-term actions
1.	Up scaling of trainers/teachers in industry Industry-led projects assessed by industry (practical) Training centres assessed by industry bodies	Authority to change curricula (Government policy)/ industry sign off
2.	Offer learner-centred provision that brings in funding – links to industry/ individual need	Strategy to ensure all teachers and trainers have industry experience/ qualified training
3.	On job training Trainees, Assessors and Learners (2 weeks every year)	Tax incentives for employers to set up training centres for training providers
4.	Social promotion/ learning and development through digital media	Benefits for understanding National Occupational Standards for employers to encourage (Labour Market Information) engagement
5.	Co-delivered programmes / final year delivered by industry Issues: Curriculum designed by government- no authority to change (10% only)	Mechanism to monitor outcomes of training
6.	Introduction to work programmes, internships programmes that reflect what employers want (skills, level)	In year work placement/ training – needs credit recognition towards qualification (Government system)
7.	Combining English for employment, business capacity-building for Trainers, Learners and Assessors	
8.	Shared space/workshops funded by industries shared by groups of institutions	

WORKSHOP GROUP THREE:

Economic Growth - Government System Working Group

Short-term actions	Long-term actions
Do a market skills analysis	Government offers tax benefits for employers who train and recruit
Develop career guidance counselling services in schools	Government incentives for employers
Change peoples' image/perception of jobs: TV campaigns, media	Private sector - 1% of tax goes to technical training funds
Engage private sector	Regulation from the government to develop technical skills and to reduce the skills gap, to involve all partners
Enhance public and private partnership	Long-term strategy: to identify needs over 10 years

WORKSHOP GROUP FOUR:

Enabling Environments - Governance

	Short-term actions	Long-term actions
Regulation and funding	Capacity-building for management Capture views and information	Awareness-raising Pressure group
Local needs	Mapping picture	Determine priorities Building
Employer support equipment and funding	Role models + promotions	Social responsibility Culture Building tax incentives for small employers
Esteem	Social media to show real work	Raise profile of TVET amongst decision makers Better working conditions
Career guidance	Including in career days an opportunity to try work experience	



The result was a number of ideas and recognition of the challenges across the MENA region. It was clear that there were huge variations between countries and that no one solution would suit all. However, delegates left with ideas for implementation and further discussion.



CONCLUSIONS

The workshop enabled delegates from a variety of countries and backgrounds to understand aspects of how the UK employer led skills systems operate and to consider their effectiveness from a series of case studies.

Perhaps more importantly, delegates had the opportunity to ask questions, discuss the issues with each other and to work in groups to identify achievable and longer-term solutions to skills issues within their own countries.

It was always clear that MENA countries differed substantially in terms of their approaches to skills development but this enhanced debate as delegates were able to explain and share each nation's features.

A range of points emerged from the discussion groups, which can be summarised and where grouped under short and longer term actions: Short-term actions:

a. Develop mechanisms to help identify skills needs at company, sector and regional level

- On a sectorial basis undertake a skills needs analysis programme, via a trade association, skills body or an academic institution. This will enable colleges to map their curricula against employer needs
- Encourage employers to come together to discuss skills issues, then to liaise with colleges and universities regarding their requirements

b. Build the capacity of organisations within the system to support VET reform

- Ensure trainers and teachers in industry are up to date
- Enable industry to assess training centres
- Discuss co-delivered academic programmes with the final year delivered by industry
- Focus on introduction to work programmes so students are more aware of the world of work
- Create industry shared workshops support by groups of employers

c. Develop strategies to promote the benefits of VET and encourage participation.

- Develop career guidance services for schools
- Use social media to show what the world of work is like

d. In the longer term implement mechanisms that can ensure the provision of high quality VET:

- Lobby key stakeholders to work together on skills
- Work with governments (where appropriate) to change curricula and to achieve industry sign-off for vocational programmes
- Improve the profile of Technical and Vocational Education and Training among decision makers
- Encourage employers to understand the benefits of labour market information and National Occupational Standards
- Provide tax incentives for employers to establish training centres
- Tax benefits for employers who train and recruit
- Enable credit recognition for in-year work placements
- Seek regulation from government to develop technical skills

e. Promote and secure the continuing professional development of VET trainers

- Work shadowing
- Exchanges between industry and education institutions

f. Encourage partnership and collaboration between key agencies and organisations

- Twinning companies in MENA with those in the UK that have established skills development and recruitment programmes
- Develop a strategy to ensure all teachers and trainers have industry experience

Next Steps

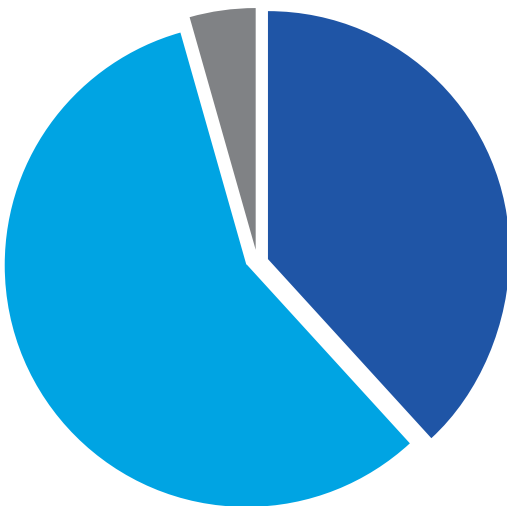
As always, the key is in the follow up programme. A number of practical steps were discussed in order to build on the work started and maintain progress:

- Dissemination of the workshop report;
- Sharing of information and experiences generated during the two days;
- Development of a knowledge-sharing network made up of the professionals who participated in the workshop;
- Follow up with British Council colleagues to capture progress towards short and long-term goals.

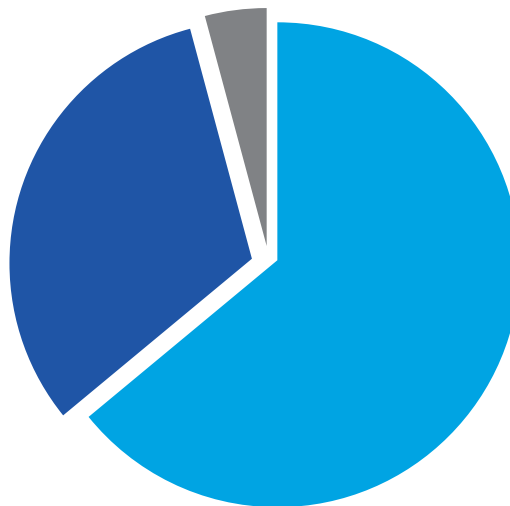
Appendices:

Workshop Evaluation

The workshop met my expectations



Overall this was a high quality event



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree

Direct feedback from delegates provided the following responses:

- This event met my expectations:

Strongly agree	9
Agree	14
Neither agree nor disagree	1
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

- Overall, this was a high quality event:

Strongly agree	16
Agree	8
Neither agree nor disagree	1
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

- How likely are you to recommend the British Council to a colleague or friend?

18 scored 10 (on scale of 1-10 with 10 being the most likely)
7 scored 8
No other scores recorded

Perhaps more significant are the comments received via the feedback forms:

General Comments:

- Translation needed (2 delegates)
- More time for sharing and discussion
- Good program with high quality, but need to include experience of other countries as well
- Continuity of such workshops
- Short workshop, need more time to discuss different themes
- Great workshop
- Involve government agencies
- To organise a follow up session right after the conference for British Council staff
- Such workshop to be done in 4-5 days
- Increase participation of private sector

What was/were the most important information/sessions for you?

- Gap skills
- Employer engagement
- UK Commission for Employment and Skills
- Discussion, conclusion and next steps
- The UK strategy
- Model of employer engagement
- Research and understand the need for evidence
- The UK sector council brief overview of their role and effectiveness
- All (2 participants)
- The groups' assessment, group work and presentations
- UK commission for employment
- Apprenticeship
- Meeting various people from the region
- Develop skills as partnership and the discussion session
- Similarity of the problems of the participating countries
- Developing skills as a partnership
- Employability skills and know more models of solutions
- Apprenticeships and the role of employers in the reformed system
- The group discussion and feedback sessions
- The definition of skill set and group work session
- 2nd day of discussion

What do you think will be the impact of this knowledge in your own job?

- Strategy development
- To develop partnership
- To make UK strategy close to our strategy
- It will help to decrease the gap between the employer
- Share with the Ministry
- Better future planning and targeting employers
- Develop framework on the role of employers in apprenticeship model
- Develop the Skills and Employability programme in Saudi Arabia
- To brainstorm with our colleagues in order to improve our training models and our trainers' skills and to change it according to the employer and company need
- Training to capture more employers to raise this issue
- It has changed my perspective also has made me more enthusiastic about what needs to be done
- It will help in aligning work practices with international standards
- Prepare study tour to United Kingdom
- Networking with the attendees

Is there anything you would like to have more information about in relation to Employer led models and approaches/ apprenticeships/ employer engagement mechanisms?

- Elaboration process of National Occupational Standards
- The approach of UK in training engineers
- Statistical model
- The different mechanisms for work
- How to approach employers and convince them to stay committed to working with us
- Employer engagement
- Employer led models
- Some readiness and skills gaps analysis along with practices and success stories
- Apprenticeships, employer engagement models



WORKSHOP

Workshop Design

The workshop was designed to provide information in the following areas:

- An overview of how the UK Commission of Employment and Skills provides strategic leadership on skills and employment issues in the UK.
- An overview of the role of employers in the governance and strategic direction of UK government policy.
- Exploring ways in which UK employers contribute to vocational education and employability and careers advice.
- Introduction to UK models and approaches that aim to boost investment, skills development and drive up innovation.
- To explore issues and challenges related to the development of high quality, industry relevant vocational education; showcasing good practice models/approaches in addressing these.
- To explore how current and future policy, practice and investment models in the UK could help inform delegates' plans.
- To provide delegates with the opportunity to network and knowledge share with regional and UK colleagues.

Workshop Format


Preliminary work was undertaken with British Council colleagues to ensure a programme that would meet the needs and expectations of delegates attending the workshop.

An outline programme was prepared focusing on the structure of employer-led skills development in the UK that includes consultation with education and government.

Key speakers and organisations were identified and approached to deliver presentations and case study materials that would illustrate the UK approach, both in theory and practice. Time was built into the programme for delegates to review and reflect on different themes and issues, ask questions and clarify points of detail, as well as to exchange ideas and other information about good practice, encouraging networking and collaboration.

Workshop Programme

Tuesday 8 September

- 13:30 Welcome**
May Abuhamdia – Deputy Director, British Council Jordan
- 13:45 Introductions and Context**
An interactive session covering the purpose of the technical workshop and eliciting from delegates what they hope to achieve from the programme.
Richard Beamish – Education and Skills Consultant
- 14:00 Presentations**
UK Sector Skills Councils – background, principles and effectiveness.
Richard Beamish – Education and Skills Consultant
- 14:20 The UK Commission for Employment and Skills – background and initiatives (including Employer Ownership)**
Katherine Chapman – Assistant Director, UK Commission for Employment and Skills - via video link
- 14:50 Refreshment break**
- 15:05 Case Studies Part One**
Skills Challenges and Solutions in the Region.
A Question & Answer session with Walid Draou, Training Programme Manager, Aggreko UK Ltd.
- 16:00 Research and Understanding – the need for evidence of skills gaps and shortages, and empirical evidence that the skills system delivers economic benefits**
Reg D'Souza – Research Manager, SEMTA – via video link
- 16:30 Summary and Close**
- 

Wednesday 9 September

09:30 Review of yesterday's sessions and discussions

Post-it exercise to identify biggest challenges.
Richard Beamish – Education and Skills Consultant

09:45 Case Studies Part Two Employer-Led Innovative Projects

To consider which aspects of case studies are applicable to companies in the MENA region.
Robert Woodhead Ltd, Ceramic Skills Academy, Construction Group Training Association,
Black Country Consortium & Crossrail

10:15 Developing Skills as a Partnership

How employers working together on skills can achieve lasting results.
Jane Rexworthy – Executive Director, People 1st

10:45 Refreshment break

11:00 Discussion 2

Delegates to prepare mini-presentations on the skills challenges within MENA and proposed solutions, followed by presentations and discussion to narrow down the crucial inhibitors and the opportunities

12:00 Apprenticeships – Apprenticeship Reform

Employer-led standards, ensuring quality assessment, managing the system.
Ana Cavilla – Director of Policy, Federation of Industry Sector Skills and Standards – via video link

12:30 Sustainable Delivery Models

A debate to consider how employer-led skills support can be enabled over time
Richard Beamish – Education and Skills Consultant

13:00 Lunch

13:45 Employability Skills

The importance of literacy, numeracy and soft skills. Helping students and employees with poor skills. 14-19 Learning Pathways.
Richard Beamish – Education and Skills Consultant

14:15 Discussion 3

Groups to devise workable approaches to developing employer-led skills models that include recognised skill sets, based on national sectoral standards.

15:00 Refreshment break

15:15 Discussion, Conclusions and Next Steps

Volunteer delegates to summarise conclusions from Discussion 4, including their applicability across educational bodies and sectors. Group to consider how they might take this initiative further and whether there should be opportunities for a further sharing of their experiences as they move forward.
Richard Beamish – Education and Skills Consultant

16:15 Review of Programme

Ensure delegates have the information they need to move the skills agenda forward.

16:30 Close

Delegate List

Engineer	Ali Fayyadh	Iraq	Basrah Oil Training Institute	Director General
Mr	Ali Tarbosh	Iraq	British Council	Assistant Director
Mr	Dlawar Anwer Ababakr	Arbil	Directorate of Training (VTC) MOLSA/ KRG	Assistant of General Director
Mr	Draou Walid	U.A.E.	Aggreko UK Ltd	Training Programme Manager
Mrs	Faten Haidar	Saudi Arabia	British Council	Education Project Manager
Mrs	Omayma Al Asaad	Jordan	Insan "Educative" for Training and Development	General Manager Co – Founder
Mrs	Rand Hannoun	Jordan	Jordan Education for Employment	Corporate Engagement Officer
Dr	Rifat	Iraq		Assistant
	Dakhil		Southern Technical University	President
Ms	Rula Abu-Rayyan	Jordan	LOYAC	Board Member
Ms	Rula Kawar	Jordan	Consolidated Contractors Company	HR Manager
Senior Education Expert	Susanne Grigoleit	Jordan	USAID Workforce Development VTC	Senior Advisor Workforce Development
Mr	Tareq Krayim	Jordan	CEC Customer Experience Consultants	Customer Experience Consultant
Engineer	Gilbert El Zoghby	Lebanon	IPNET	Director
Mr	Oussama Ghneim	Lebanon	CERD- Center for Educational Research and Development	Head of Vocational and Technical Education Department
Ms	Yahoko Asai	Jordan	JICA	Advisor for Disability Affairs
Director	Jean Abi Fadel	Lebanon	National Employment Office	Director General
Mrs	Ines Zaibi	Tunisia	British Council	Projects Manager Skills
Mr	Ahmed Jamal	Tunisia	CENAFIF National Centre for Teacher Training and Training Instruction	Director
Mr	Hichem Boussaid	Tunisia	National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment	Director
Mr	Salah Messaoudi	Tunisia	Tunisian Agency for Vocational Training	Senior Engineering
Mrs	Samira Mejdj	Tunisia	National Centre for Continuous Training and Professional Promotion	Human Resources Manager
Mrs	Nadera Al Bakheet	Jordan	USAID Jordan Workforce Development Project	Team Lead, Training Providers Institutional Development

Ms	Raha Al-Assaf	Jordan	LOYAC	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Ms	Hiba Al-Hamaideh	Jordan	LOYAC	Partnership Officer
Mr	Mohammad Hamad	Jordan	Housing Bank Training & Development Centre/	Training Manager
Ms	Ghadeer Dahdal	Jordan	Consolidated Contractors Company	HR Coordinator
Mr	Rafat Al Sawafin	Jordan	VTC	Project Manager

Challenges Identified by Delegates

Small group discussions throughout the two days delivered many valuable insights, a clear assessment of the main barriers facing employers and identified priority areas for action for employers and government alike. Participants identified a number of internal and external barriers to employer engagement in skills investment, including:

a. Training

- Old curriculum
- Skills development of people with disabilities
- Stakeholders unable to perform training needs analysis
- Safety
- Trainers lack of practical experience (no field experience)
- Traditional education methods
- Lack of commitment
- Outdated equipment
- Having qualified trainers

b. Industry Standards Provision

- Convincing companies to hire our trainers
- Lack of confidence in training
- Lack of partnership between schools and employers
- Education is not in touch with industry at all
- Competencies are not recognised as needed alongside academic teaching
- Lack between learning outcomes and employers' needs
- Setting clear goals
- Tasks inside sectors/across sectors:
 - Coordination
 - Good practice dialogues
 - Research & evaluation
 - Development of standards

- Government role
 - Forum platform
 - Funding
- Short-term goals
 - Awareness-raising on coordinating bodies
 - Presenting good examples
- Government systems
- Absence of motivation from government
 - Low participation of the private sector
 - Training courses do not match the market/employers needs
 - Gap between labour market demand and training system output
 - Gap between National Occupational Standards and International Occupational Standards
 - Reduce the gap between the skills offer and job market needs
 - Under-skilled workers
 - Government training centres do not match market requirements (outdated)
 - Understanding employers' needs
 - Labour market information is produced as a statistical exercise and not used by stakeholders
- Governance
 - Need to develop international networks between participating countries and the UK
 - Fragmentation of the TVET sector
 - Too many rules and regulations
 - Helping employers access good training and development
 - Financial spend, training and attitudes
 - Strengthening the federations' (SSC) engagement on developing skills sectors

Workshop Speakers

Richard Beamish

Programme Director

Richard Beamish is a consultant, most recently advising the Federation of Industry Sector Skills and Standards (formerly the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils) and leading a project concerning apprenticeship certification across England. He was Interim Chief Officer at the Alliance and oversaw the process of appointing a new MD, following eight years as Chief Executive of Asset Skills - the Sector Skills Council for the Cleaning Services, Facilities Management, Property and Housing sectors (now the Building Futures Group).

Katherine Chapman

UK Commission for Employment and Skills

Katherine is an Assistant Director at the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, a publicly-funded, industry-led organisation that provides strategic leadership and advice on skills and employment issues in the UK. UKCES Commissioners are senior leaders of large and small enterprises (including non-profits), trade unions, and further and higher education institutions with a mission to secure greater investment in the skills of people to drive enterprise, jobs and growth.

Reginald D'Souza

Research and CRM Specialist, Senta

Reg is Research and CRM Specialist at Senta. His main areas of expertise are research methodology, sampling, questionnaire design, data collection, data analysis and evaluation. He has extensive experience of conducting research in partnership with a range of stakeholders; government departments, FE and HE institutions, regional bodies, professional institutes, trade associations and employers.

Jane Rexworthy

People 1st Executive Director - Strategic Projects & Head of the National Skills Academy for Retail

Jane has over ten years of experience working at a strategic level within the sector skills council arena; she joined the trailblazer SSC Skillsmart

Retail in 2002, with responsibility for the development of key stakeholder forums in England. She developed regional and national action plans to support the retail sector skill agreement, as required by the Sector Skills Development Agency (replaced by UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES)). Jane's role as Director of Strategic Partnerships has a specific focus on developing strategic stakeholder relationships, identifying and securing partnerships nationally and internationally with experience of working in several countries including the UAE and Egypt.

Ana Cavilla

Director of Policy, Federation of Industry Sector Skills and Standards

Ana joined the civil service in 1999 working at the then Inland Revenue, before moving to the Social Exclusion Unit in the Cabinet Office where she worked on a range of projects including 'A Better Education for Children in Care', 'Young Runaways' and subsequently implemented the government's 'Teenage Pregnancy Report'. This was followed by a period working in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in the Tackling Disadvantage policy group. At the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) from May 2010, Ana took up an Assistant Director post in Further Education and Skills Analysis. Whilst in BIS she joined the independent review team that supported Doug Richard in his review of Apprenticeships in England, published in November 2012. Since then, Ana has been working in the Apprenticeship Unit to implement the government's Apprenticeship reform programme.

She led on the assessment policy that underpins the Apprenticeship reforms and been working as a relationship manager to the Digital Industries Trailblazer.

As Director of Policy at FISSS, the representative body for Sector Skills Councils and similar organisations in the UK, Ana plays a major role in ensuring employers continue to determine the skills they need through apprenticeships and other routes.

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Jane Rexworthy – Executive Director, People 1st

Ana Cavilla – Director of Policy, Federation of Industry Sector Skills and Standards

Robert Woodhead Ltd, Ceramic Skills Academy, Construction Group Training Association

Black Country Consortium

Crossrail

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Melanie Relton, Regional Vocational Education Manager, Middle East and North Africa

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Zina Jinini, Contracts and Partnerships Manager, British Council, Jordan

Nour AlJumaili, Partnerships Officer, British Council, Jordan

ABOUT BRITISH COUNCIL

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. Its purpose is to build engagement and trust for the UK through the exchange of knowledge and ideas between people worldwide. It seeks to achieve its aims by working in education, science, governance, English and the arts. In 2013/14, its programmes, products and services reached a total audience of 600 million people worldwide – including nearly eight million in the Middle East and North Africa. Through our presence in the Middle East and North Africa region, often despite challenging circumstances, we continue to build sustainable relationships and development opportunities between people of the region and the UK.

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- Promote a wider knowledge of the United Kingdom;
- Develop a wider knowledge of the English language;
- Encourage cultural, scientific, technological and other educational co-operation between the United Kingdom and other countries;
- Otherwise promote the advancement of education.

The British Council works in more than 110 countries around the world and employs over 700 staff worldwide. It has its headquarters in the UK, with offices in London, Manchester, Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh.

Further information can be found at www.britishcouncil.org

Richard Beamish was commissioned by the British Council to design and develop the programme as the Programme Director.

