

Report on India UK Roundtable on Skills Development

India UK Round table on Skills Development was jointly organized by Ministry of HRD and UKIERI to bring together key stakeholders working on the agenda of Skills Development in India and the UK to discuss opportunities for collaboration and partnership through UKIERI.

Both sides endorsed that under the aegis of the UKIERI programme both India and the UK should collaborate on strategic areas of importance as there are a lot of opportunities for both the countries to engage and build capacity.

Honourable Minister Kapil Sibal, Minister of Human Resource Development made a few very pertinent points in his inaugural address. He mentioned that even if in the formal education system the gross enrolment ratio is increased to 30% by 2020; it will provide for only 50 million children. 160 million children who will not enter the college system will still need skills training. He also stated that India faces the challenge of numbers but has a benefit with a positive demographic dividend. The training providers therefore need to look at vocationalisation of education through ICT. In the 21st century, ICT can help bridge the gap between the two countries and also address the issue of scalability.

Some of the key recommendations made at the roundtable were

- Developing a Further Education Leadership Development Programme
- Support training of trainers
 - through ICT and online training
 - Training arrangements through UK companies & Indian schools
- Focus on Assessment & certification , Quality Assurance, Vocationalisation of education specifically school education
- Develop learning pathways to integrate school, vocational and higher education through National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) with multiple entry and exit points
- Develop a qualification frame work designed to provide flexibility to students for multiple entry and exit options.
- Identify sectors with high employment potential and build capacities around those sectors
- Help develop centres of excellence
- Develop and support Skill Clusters
- Support international mobility through portability of qualifications
- Develop qualification framework in consultation and engagement with industry leading to employer engagement and employer ownership

Both UK and India is looking forward to develop flexible learning pathways with multiple entry exit and entry points and this is one key area where two countries can collaborate for developing a mutually beneficial model.

There is a need for concentrated action in several key areas in order to ensure that skill formation takes place in a demand driven manner. Further education leadership development programme is yet another opportunity to explore between the two countries. Challenges and existing opportunity around making a robust quality assurance and apprenticeship training system were also discussed at the roundtable.

Skills Development is one of the most important and critical area for the economic growth of both the countries. UKIERI programme has provided a platform for both the countries to collaborate on various aspects of Skills Development and grow together through mutually beneficial collaborations.