



THINK LABOR

To keep up with everything skilling and employment

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Shaping skills and lifelong learning for the future of work

Introduction

Technological change, globalisation, climate change along with demographic change are transforming the world of work. These dynamic trends open new opportunities and also pose challenges for people and companies in obtaining access to work and in adapting new technologies respectively. Nowadays, Skills mismatches are a growing challenge in labour markets, with many consequences for workers, businesses and the future of work. Furthermore, the outbreak of COVID-19 has added new challenges to education and skills development systems. So, a new generation of skills and a lifelong learning ecosystem needs to be developed jointly.

Key Highlights

Listed below are some of the important observations and findings of the report:



- In many countries, contemporary trends show the skill- biased technological change. So, even though the long-term effects of the technological advancements and digitalization on jobs are positive, the loss of jobs in the short term may cause costly and painful transitions. That creates the need to reskill and upskill the workforce on a massive scale.
- For the countries from where the emigration takes place, the outflow of working-age, high-skilled workers is a matter of concern. It is called 'Brain Drain'. Their challenge is how to retain talent, use their skills upon return and create decent work opportunities.
- About 93% of the world's workforce reside in countries with workplace closures in one way or the other.
- In 2020, losses in working hours were 8.8% compared to the fourth quarter of Financial Year 2019. This loss is equivalent to 255 million full-time jobs.
- Out of 2 billion people who are engaged in the informal economy, 1.6 billion of them face imminent threat to their livelihoods following the 60% drop in their average income in the first month of the pandemic.
- The pandemic has caused the full or partial closure of education and training institutions and centres across the world, with 1.6 billion students in about 200 countries impacted. So, the transition to the labour market is uncertain for those leaving education now.
- The 'Digital Divide' (unequal access to digital devices) risks the gap in academic achievement as low-income households are struggling to provide the equipment, resources, tools and environment required for effective online learning.
- As per UNESCO, female participation in vocational education is reported to have dropped from 45% in 2007 to 43% in 2017 which continues to remain significantly lower than male enrolment rates.
- In a survey conducted in 2019 among 500 executives in 15 countries, 78% of executives indicated that updating the school and education curriculum to match the economy's needs would provide them with the skilled employees they require. Because, a large proportion of businesses in India (66%) and other parts of the world agreed that nowadays businesses are looking for different sets of skills in new recruits than three years ago.
- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the most active supporters of changes in the skills agenda. 84% of small businesses support updating education systems to meet skills needs.
- Recent ILO research in more than 50 low- and middle-income countries shows that under-qualification is a much bigger issue in developing countries. Surprisingly, Over-qualification is an issue for sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.
- The report observed that the training of employees, apprentices and interns has been interrupted in 90%, 86% and 83% of the surveyed enterprises, respectively.

- As per ILO, even the advanced economies are unprepared for digitalization, with 40% of EU citizens lacking basic digital skills. Furthermore, only less than 40% of the teachers and trainers have received training on educational technologies during their initial teacher education.
- “Inclusion needs to be recognized as an explicit policy goal in skills and lifelong learning policies, strategies and frameworks, taking into account the diverse physical and non-physical barriers that lead to discrimination and exclusion” observes ILO in its report named “Making TVET and Skills Systems Inclusive”.

Read more: [Shaping skills and lifelong learning for the future of work](#)

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