



Skill Development in the Time of COVID-19

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Introduction

In the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, International Labour Organization, World Bank and UNESCO report titled “**Skills development in the time of COVID-19**” earnestly covers how COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted technical and vocational education and training (TVET). The report is based on the findings of the survey developed from 1353 respondents representing 126 countries from all over the world with an intention to help countries address the impact of current and future crises in the delivery of TVET and to manage learning and training process more effectively to achieve the desired outcomes. Poor and low- income countries



challenge to deliver TVET programmes as compared to high- income countries have increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report clearly mentions the disparity in the delivery of TVET programmes with one section of the report analysing the training provided by the countries and gaps in access to learning opportunities according to the income level.

Key Highlights

- COVID-19 forced many countries to completely close TVET centres in their countries, resulting in the serious disruption of the continuity of the TVET.
- COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the challenges already faced by TVET systems like lack of infrastructure, lack of effective distance learning platforms, lack of staff capacity to support distance learning and financial resource constraints.
- Advanced technologies needed to clone workplace experiences are out of reach for TVET institutions in low and middle-income countries.
- Different countries adopted different approaches to provide practical skills training and conduct assessments in the pandemic. For example, **Congo and Pakistan used television channels whereas countries like Ecuador and Finland used virtual platforms for training and assessments.**
- There are significant gaps in access to learning opportunities between and within countries according to the income level. In the survey conducted, **72 percent of the high-income countries reported majority of the TVET providers are providing training fully remotely whereas the share was only 12 percent for the low-income countries.**
- **Less than 20 percent of surveyed TVET providers** deployed new materials or technologies like developing innovative training programmes, new training materials, support services, training subsidies etc. for the affected sectors to address skills shortages in occupations affected by the pandemic.
- Very little support was provided to employers in lockdown to support their staff as more than three quarters of the respondents in the survey were totally unaware of any such support.
- Three lessons learned from the pandemic- **Importance of remote learning, socio-emotional skills and future crisis preparedness.**
- **Increase crisis-response readiness, enhance access to education and training and deliver relevant training and skills to build back better**, are some of the policy recommendations given in the report to strengthen preparedness for future crisis.

Read more: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_776788.pdf

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