Public Private Partnership (PPP) in the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector in Bangladesh: Challenges and Prospects

M H Tansen

Introduction

Over the last few decades, Bangladesh has made tremendous progress in primary school enrolment. However, nearly 50% of primary school students drop out before they complete grade V to join the workforce. One of the key challenges to the development of Bangladesh is creating employment for new entrants into the labor force. Nearly 51% of Bangladesh’s workers have no education and only a small fraction (0.4%) has received vocational, technical, or skills development training (Bangladesh Labor Force Survey 2008). Without a proper education and skills, the best jobs these children and youth are able to secure are low paid jobs in the informal economy. With effective and appropriate education and training i.e. TVET, these young people have the potential to be skilled and productive. UNESCO refers the TVET as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life (UNESCO website).

In Bangladesh, many Ministries and agencies deliver formal and informal skills training in the context of industry and community development. Many private training organizations, NGOs and donors also deliver skills training, both formal and informal. Skills training also occurs on-and-off the job in enterprises, and as pre-departure training for expatriate workers. A comprehensive National Skills Development Policy has been developed to guide skills development strategies and to facilitate improved coordination of all elements of skills training/TVET and the actors involved in. In the National Skills Development Policy, the TVET/skills development system in Bangladesh was classified into four main segments. Such as:

- public (delivered to varying degrees by numerous ministries);
- private (commercial training institutions including madrashas);
- NGOs (not-for-profit institutions); and
- Industry based (institutions managed by industry and training delivered in the workplace, including apprenticeships).

Many of the key challenges facing skills development in Bangladesh derive from the current structure and management of the skill development system. Principal amongst these are limited inter-agency coordination, poor linkages with industry and the labor market, insufficient capacity in key agencies, piecemeal regulation and quality assurance, and limited planning of delivery and infrastructure development. This paper will try to put information together on how the private sector can become involved in skills development/TVET sector along with the government activities; will identify the contribution the private sector can make to increase both the quality and quantity of state provision in Bangladesh. For the purposes of this paper, the private sector will refer to the industry and employers, as well as non-government training providers, which may include for-
profit organizations, employers and NGOs. In general, for-profit organizations and NGOs are involved in training delivery, while employers can deliver training as well as influence national, local and institutional strategy in partnership with government stakeholders.

**Objectives of the Paper**

The objectives of this study are:

- To recognize the major policy context regarding public-private partnership in TVET sector.
- To examine the current situation of public-private and/or any other partnership that exist in the TVET sector in Bangladesh
- To analyze the constraints/challenges for partnerships between public TVET Institutions and Private Enterprises
- To identify strategies to strengthen the public-private partnership in TVET sector in Bangladesh.

**Private Sector Involvement in Recent Global TVET Initiatives**

In most countries the state alone cannot provide sufficient access to high-quality training. Private provision, by employers and private training organizations, often fills the gap. Private sector involvement, whether at the strategic level or at the level of training delivery, can greatly enhance what is offered by the state, but this needs to be done in partnership with the state, with clearly delineated responsibilities which recognize each other’s strengths, rather than state and private provision working independently of each other.

In more recent years, donors have adopted competence-based methodologies in the design of TVET projects. These are prevalent throughout North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. The *Asian Development Bank reported in 2008* on an independent evaluation of its *Skills Development Project in Sri Lanka*. This project ‘aimed to restructure and reorient the vocational training system through introduction of competency-based training (CBT) to ensure a closer partnership between vocational training institutions and the private sector.’ The project is rated as successful, relevant, efficient, effective and likely to be sustainable.

The use of skills development as a tool for economic growth for developing countries is illustrated in the World Bank’s Social Protection Paper No.0931 *The Korean Case Study: Past Experience and New Trends in Training Policies (2009)* which provides lessons learned for developing countries wishing to emulate the success of Korea: *the respective roles of government and the private sector must be determined according to the development stage of a country. Planning, financing and regulation are best undertaken by government while the private sector takes gradually increasing responsibility for provision and delivery of training services.* These lessons from Korea point the way towards the creation of a skills development system which form the architecture of a long-term sustainable system of including the private sector and is able to adapt to future changes in a country’s labor market and economic circumstances.

The Singapore Skills Development Fund provides an incentive to employers for raising the qualifications of workers by assessing a 1% levy on workers earning less than S$2,000 per month. Enterprises can apply for assistance from the fund for an array of programs regardless of the amounts paid into it (*Government of Singapore as presented in the International Labor Organization [ILO] website, and SWDA 2008*).
In order to implement its skills strategies, the Government of South Africa requires employers to invest in training and development via a statutory levy (1% of the wage bill). This money is used in part to fund South Africa’s Sector Education and Training Authorities. In most countries sector bodies are heavily subsidized by public funding which may be important not just in order that they can operate effectively but also to encourage broad representation and participation by employers at the outset.

The *Australia-China (Chongqing) Vocational Education and Training Project (2002-7)* established five industry coordination committees at municipality level. Their task was to encourage industry to make significant inputs into TVET training standards, curriculum and delivery. These had limited impact in a country where industry is not yet acknowledged as a partner in TVET (Comyn and Barnaart, 2010).

In 2002-5 UNESCO undertook a small-scale project in Indonesia: *Access to TVET by Marginalized Groups*. The objective was to challenge gender-biased perceptions of technical and vocational training through integrating formal and non-formal education to equip out-of-school girls (15-20 years old) from poor, marginalized families with practical, occupation-oriented, technology-based skills training. The private sector’s contribution to the largely NGO and state-run project was the provision of apprenticeships, teaching assistance and materials. The project was deemed successful; and ‘the involvement of local businesses is critical’ was one of the lessons learned. Another was the involvement of an experienced NGO.

**Methodology of the Study**

The study is based on both secondary and primary sources. The secondary sources which have been reviewed are: books, journals, reports, and data from various official and unofficial sources. For secondary sources, data from official sources have been collected, *National Education Policy, National Skills Development Policy*, various documents of ILO TVET Reform project have been consulted. Information from ILO Bangladesh Country Office publications, DFID Guidance Note, World Bank Dhaka Office publication along with Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Labor Force Survey (LFS) have been extensively used for the purpose of this study. Both formal and informal interview methods were adopted to collect qualitative information concerning various aspects of public-private partnership in TVET Sector in Bangladesh. Interviews (face to face and through internet) conducted with different key informants from different organizations, government officials, employers, and members of civil society as well. Internet sources were also used to collect information on public-private partnership in TVET Sector. As a methodology, qualitative approaches have been adopted.

**Findings**

**Public-Private Partnership Provision in the Policy Documents**

The Constitution of Bangladesh expresses that “The state is responsible for development of human resources of the country irrespective of gender, and to assist in employment as per the capabilities of every citizen.” Bangladesh is a country with the population of about 160 million and the labor force being about 60 million. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is indispensable
for the development of human capital of this country. In order to create a wider field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for opening more employment opportunities, Bangladesh has by now good policy frameworks. The Government of Bangladesh focuses in its poverty reduction strategy on broad based and inclusive economic growth. A better skilled workforce and a TVET system can respond to present and even future demands that will have to be fulfilled in order to ensure this inclusive growth.

The **Bangladesh National Education Policy 2010 (NEP)** envisions a society with people having acquired quality education and modern and updated knowledge of science and technology, its people transformed into skilled human resource so that they may contribute to eradicate illiteracy and poverty. Through the expansion of technical and vocational education, the vast pool of human resource of the country will effectively compete with the emerging technological advancement in the global society. Particularly the large youth population of Bangladesh will have to be turned into a professional and skilled human resource.

Skills development is one of the important components of continuing education. There are approximately 19 ministries, who are directly or indirectly linked to activities related to skills development. The **National Education Policy** in its fifth chapter titled as Vocational and Technical Education proposes 25 points of strategic interventions as some of them are the following: Introduction of Pre-TVET courses from grade VI; setting up of Technical school in each Upazila (sub-district); introduction of flexible courses for drop outs and older students, offering Grade-I skill certificates to those who would leave school after Grade-VIII; update curriculum, and inclusion of courses relevant to job markets overseas including foreign languages. Along with others, the NEP stated four strategies regarding public-private partnership (PPP) in technical vocational education and training. Two of them are directly positioning PPP, while we can easily assume that PPP is critically linked in the other two strategies. These are:

18. Public-private partnership collaboration will be encouraged to establish new technical and vocational institutes and to develop their management. But boys and girls belonging to insolvent families will have opportunities to study in these institutions.

22. Private sector will be encouraged to establish quality vocational and technical institutions. Priority will be given to them for inclusion of MPO for the teachers of these institutes. Necessary resources, materials and instruments and financial support will also be provided.

Beside these two strategies, strategy nine suggests to introduce “Apprenticeship program” nationwide through revising The Apprenticeship Act 1962 which can create a good opportunity for public-private partnership in this sector. Another strategy suggests making mandatory for the teachers of all level to get hands-on training within mills and factories on the subjects they are involved in teaching.

Adoption of the **National Skills Development Policy (2011)** of Bangladesh is a landmark in the advancement of TVET programs in the country in their dynamism to perform satisfactorily given the conditions of national and global economies. The policy has emphasized the planned development of skills in Bangladesh for economic, employment and social policies to enhance national development in a coherent fashion. **National Skills Development Policy** represents the attempt to develop a cross-cutting policy agenda for skills development. **National Skills Development Policy** provides the vision and direction for skills development over the period 2010-2015 as it sets out the major commitments and key reforms that government will implement in partnership with industry, workers and civil society. It aims to emphasize the varied types of formal and non-formal training involved in skills
development besides state controlled TVET systems to manage its human resources more effectively. Vision of the policy has been set as follows:

“Skills development in Bangladesh will be supported by government and industry as a coordinated and well planned strategy for enterprise and national development. It will empower all individuals to access decent employment and ensure Bangladesh’s competitiveness in the global market through improved skills, knowledge and qualifications that are recognized for quality across the globe.”

The National Skills Development Policy also suggested creation of full scope of pre-employment and livelihood skills training, including TVET and apprenticeships; education and training for employed workers, including workplace training; and employment oriented and job-related and/or demand-driven short courses, for both domestic and international markets. It also aimed at enhancing individuals' employability (wage/ self employment) and ability to adapt to changing technologies and labor market demands; improving the productivity and profitability of enterprises; and strengthening national competitiveness and reducing poverty.

The National Skills Development Policy illustrated as many issues as are relevant to the skills development sector in Bangladesh. Along with other concerns it also shed some lights on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) issue in the TVET sector in Bangladesh. The National Skills Development Policy recognized that “private training providers deliver a significant amount of education and training in Bangladesh and are an important contributor to the local skill development system.” To strengthen their role, the government expresses its willingness to promote and support the expansion and diversification of training options for industry and the community, including through support for student micro-credit schemes.

The NSDP also stated that “financial support will be provided to private training organizations that meet national quality standards for BTEB affiliated programs. To improve the quality of private training providers, the government and its partners will improve performance monitoring and take the necessary steps to have MPO supported skills training providers move to a performance based funding model, rather than simply being funded for the number of trainers employed”.

The policy also strategized that to ensure the growth of training places, measures will be taken to allow public training facilities to be leased by private training organizations so they are utilized through double shifts and not allowed to stand idle over holiday periods.

The National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction (FY 2009-2011) set the target of raising the enrolment of students in TVET to 20%; currently it is roughly 7% of total student body at SSC and HSC level. It also envisaged creation of TVET opportunities for those who could not complete grade VIII education, which is a basic requirement for admission in the TVET stream under the existing system and making TVET curriculum, duration and schedule flexible. It was also proposed to facilitate creation of self employment to TVET trainees by offering them easy credit.

Current most important strategy paper of the government is the 6th Five-Year Plan document. Regarding skills development and employment generation issue it has been emphasized in the 6th Five Year Plan to the enhancement of skills through “improvement of the percentage of vocational and technical graduates obtaining employment both in the domestic and international markets”.

Provision of a National Skills Development Council (NSDC) was included in the National Skills Development Policy. The NSDC is the tripartite apex forum where representatives of government, employers, workers and civil society provide leadership and clear direction to the skill development
system in Bangladesh. It is the highest skills development body which will oversee and monitor all activities of public and private training providers related to TVET and skills training. Membership of the NSDC will be reviewed to ensure regional and national industry representation alongside representatives of national youth organizations and other elements of civil society, including disability groups, to ensure that direct beneficiaries are included at the highest level.

NSDC is also responsible for the approval and implementation of all governance, regulatory and legislative provisions related to human resource development and training. Whilst initially established as a Council, government, industry and their social partners will monitor the performance of the NSDC to determine whether it should be restructured as an autonomous body to maximize its effectiveness.

In cooperation with the Government of Bangladesh, the ILO is implementing an EU funded project to reduce poverty through reforms to the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system. The purpose or specific objective of the **TVET Reform Project** is "a market-oriented and flexible TVET system which responds to the demand for competitive skills of the modern sector as well as to the needs of youth and under-privileged groups". The project has five major components. Component 1 aims to review and strengthen TVET policies, systems and legislation at the central and decentralized levels. Component 2 seeks to enhance the flexibility, quality and relevance of TVET. Component 3 is concerned with the strengthening of TVET institutions through improved knowledge and skills of managers and teachers. Component 4 endeavors to improve skills development and enhance productivity and competitiveness in key growth and export-oriented industries in the formal industrial sector. Component 5 is concerned with increased access to TVET for underprivileged groups. These reforms will enable more people to acquire employable skills and thus generate income through wage-earning jobs or self-employment. The activities for this TVET reform project, the first of its nature in Bangladesh, have been carried out adopting five components dealing with specified major issues of TVET focusing on Bangladeshi context. The current TVET Reform Project in Bangladesh is an example of systemic reform in which all of the recent global initiatives are being incorporated: an NTVQF is being developed, composed of competence-based qualifications with the support of sector bodies. Whilst making progress in trialing a number of new programs, the project has experienced some of the obstacles such as– lack of engagement by employers in some sectors; policy documents largely the work of consultants, slow legislative process delaying implementation etc.

**Current Involvement of the Public and Private Actors in TVET System**

Many different actors, including the private sector, non-profit actors, NGOs and civil society; as well as the large number of government ministries have been delivering skills based education and training (TVET) in Bangladesh. Public TVET in Bangladesh is delivered by institutions belonging to 19 ministries. A large number of private institutions deliver training courses commercially. Hundreds of large and small NGOs offer skills training through short courses. Industry bodies provide training as per the needs of relevant enterprises. Some industrial enterprises supply semi-skilled and skilled workforce through the on-the-job training. A few recruiting Agencies for the overseas employment market are operating training institutes to cater to the needs of the Foreign Employers. Some agencies have established centers under joint-venture with the employers.
Public TVET providers come under 19 different ministries. Some of these ministries provide skills development training to new and current employees working in departments/agencies of the ministries. A total of 11 ministries administer accredited TVET programs. In addition, some offer non-accredited courses, e.g. basic training on livestock, pisciculture, poultry farming, etc. The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor and Employment play a major role in skills development in Bangladesh. However, based on enrolment numbers, seven ministries administer most of the training provision in the country. Under these ministries, there are around 363 training institutions, enrolling about 300,000 trainees per annum for short and long-term courses.

**Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB)** regulates admission, curricula and testing ensuring the quality assurance of the skill training system through accreditation of courses and registration of training providers while **Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) under the Ministry of Education** supervises more than 120 governmental institutions at different levels. Major training institutions to deliver TVET supervised by the DTE includes: Technical School and Colleges (TSC) and Polytechnic/monotechnic institutes.

**Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET)** delivers skills training through 37 Technical Training Centers (TTCs) and one Institute of Marine Technology (BIMT). Six TTCs are reserved exclusively for women. TTCs offer a 2-year course (SSC voc.) in 31 different basic engineering trades; while the BIMT offers 4-year Diploma courses and 2 years certificate courses. Besides regular courses, short courses, language courses, special courses targeting to foreign employment and many evening skills upgrading courses on request of employers, are also conducted at TTCs.

**Ministry of Youth and Sports** through its **Department of Youth Development (DYD)** provides training mostly in basic skills through 47 national Youth Training Centers and mobile training facilities in technical trades, secretarial courses, dressmaking, block and boutique, printing, pisciculture, livestock rearing, poultry, etc. DYD is also operating self-employment schemes for youth by offering training in a variety of skills, such as welding, electrical wiring, radio and TV repair, garment making, dairy farming and poultry.

**Ministry of Women and Children Affairs** is involved in skill development through its training centers under the Department of Women’s Affairs which operates different training centers offering the courses on Embroidery, Tailoring, Batik, Tie-Dye, Handicrafts, Duck and poultry rearing, Fish cultivation, Agro-based training, Computer application, Graphics Design and Web page Design etc.

Trainees are mainly young males (74%) who completed Grade VIII, can afford to stay longer in schools, and aspire to obtain white-collar jobs. The minimum entry requirement for public training institutions is Grade VIII, which excludes most of the unemployed/underemployed population.

Non-government agencies also provide non-accredited training, though there are no estimates of the size and scope of their operations nationwide. Several NGOs (UCEP & Save the Children, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, MAWTS – Caritas, BRAC, TMSS, Ananda, SOS Children Village, Muslim Aid, Practical Action, CMES etc.) and private providers provide basic skills and training to target groups such as youth, the under privileged, and the rural population. However, while there are a few prominent organizations of this type providing training, most are very small in terms of enrolment and facilities and usually provide short-term training (ranging from 4 to 6 months duration) in
income generating activities such as tailoring/sewing, embroidery for women and electrical, radio/TV, and carpentry for men.

A good number of private trade training schools run by individuals and trust initiatives. The growth of private trade schools is primarily hinged to the large scale export of skilled and unskilled manpower to the Middle East and other countries. They offer non-formal and non-standard training of short duration. Necessary steps need to be taken to help these schools to conform gradually to the National Skills Standards (NSS) requirement.

Enterprise-based training is the training conducted in the enterprise or in the workplaces. Vocational training institutions are not capable of performing the two functions of pre-employment training and specialized advanced skill training as needed by specific employers. Although small in size enterprise-based training is in operation with sector corporations and large private establishments. Training in the work places connected with credit facilities and income generation activities are also conducted by the NGOs like Grameen Bank, BRAC, YMCA. Almost all of the enterprise-based training programs are non-formal and non-standard. A survey is now being conducted by BTEB to assess the extent, type and level of enterprise-based or workplace based training to prepare a directory of such training institutions and to help them to conform to the National Skills Standards (NSS) wherever possible.

**Partnership Examples**

Until now, TVET training providers and employers have conducted training activities independently, except for a few partnerships initiated by some NGOs and industry groups. Any Skills Development Project can pilot a partnership structure and processes to bring public authorities, training providers, employers, and NGOs together. The approach should be market-responsive rather than supply-driven. Employer representatives will identify occupations where training gaps exist and specify the required skills standards. The Project will provide resources for skills training development and addressing training gaps. Resources will be available for establishing or strengthening training partnerships between industry associations and public TVET institutions.

While the incidence of training remains low, some interesting initiatives have emerged. NGOs such as UCEP, for example, have developed strong linkages with industry - far more so than government institutions and agencies - and reap for their graduates great benefits from doing so. As an example of private-sector facilitated TVET, the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers Export Association (BGMEA), in association with UNICEF and ILO, has established a Garment Workers’ Education Program to provide basic education and vocational education (to those who qualify) to former child laborers in the garment industry. The Program meets half the cost of the courses provided, while the other half is met by the students or their families. BGMEA has also established a training institute of its own to meet the requirements of its industry, including the need to “increase the efficiency, productivity and product value of the industry.”

**Chittagong Skills Development Centre (CSDC)** is the first industry-led, non-profit skills training centre in Bangladesh which has been developed under the private-public partnership (PPP). As a pioneering private-public partnership, CSDC strives to strategically develop the nation’s workforce by catering to the ICT, Manufacturing and Service sectors’ present and future skill needs. CSDC
seeks to grow the skilled labor pool by providing high quality, cost-effective, value-added skills training to its corporate members and other private companies. CSDC’s high quality, cost-saving advantage stems from its corporate members sharing their training resources, technologies, trainers, space and equipment; while also actively developing, assessing and dynamically improving training programs. This ensures demand-driven, timely and calibrated training, with neither the overhead investment and delay of building a brand new centre; nor the uncertain value of external training vendors.

**Challenges Regarding Public-Private Partnership in TVET in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh suffers from a mismatch between employment opportunities and the skills of job seekers. The educational system produces entrants to the labor force with qualifications that do not match the requirements of the productive sectors of the economy. Over the past few decades, the ratio of unskilled to skilled workers has increased in Bangladesh, while most other countries have experienced the reverse trend—and while the global demand for skilled workers has risen. Bangladesh lacks mechanisms to identify which skills are in demand where and to train potential labor migrants accordingly.

Technical and vocational education and training is an important tool to improve the employability of individuals, increase productivity in industry and reduce poverty. In Bangladesh, however, the TVET system is hampered by inadequate links with industry, outdated curricula and delivery strategies, and little flexibility to respond to training needs at the local level. Bangladesh has an outdated national skills standard that lacks international compatibility. No system is in place to provide employers with reliable signals of the skill levels of job applicants. TVET is highly centralized but poorly coordinated, with multiple ministries and private enterprises offering training courses without common curricula or standards. Private training institutions are not regulated. Instructors generally lack practical experience and classroom equipment, so they teach mainly theory. TVET managers and teachers often fail to recognize their roles in promoting employment and employability.

Enrolment in regular TVET courses requires the completion of grade VIII or higher, which effectively excludes a large proportion of the working-age population. Formal apprenticeships are almost non-existent; instead, many young people engage in non-formal apprenticeships, for which there is no quality control or system for recognizing their learning. Training is supply driven because there is a lack of data on the demand for Bangladeshi workers and the skills needed, both domestically and abroad.

Like many other least developed countries Bangladesh also have a number of systemic weaknesses in its TVET/skills development system. Particularly, the weaknesses and challenges relevant to the public-private partnership can be pointed out in this way:

- Irregular meeting of National Skills Development Council and manpower shortage within the NSDC secretariat.
- All of the necessary Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) are not formed and functioning yet.
- All the other coordinating agencies are also not fully functional.
- Mismatch between the labor market (demand side) and TVET programs (supply side). In most cases The TVET sector is not providing skills that are useful for industry.
- The TVET sector is not well developed; the framework of the TVET sector is not so strong.
- No participation of industries or private sector in the quality processes for training organization certification.
• There is no or lack of opportunities for private sector involvement in development and endorsement of national quality standards.

• Industries are not consulted during the accreditation process of a course curriculum.

• Training needs are not always identified and prioritized according to industry skills and workforce development.

• There is no National Qualifications Framework approved as a comprehensive policy to regulate the quality and consistency of qualifications within a national context.

• Public sector providers do not have the capacity (teacher experience of the workplace, the equipment, or resources) to deliver the training that industry requires.

• Workplace learning and work experience will become more important as competency based training is going to be implemented nationally, but the TVET sector is not properly ready for that.

• A lack of up-to-date, reliable labor market data on which to base decisions on current and future skills needs and strategies for meeting these.

• A fragmentation of responsibility for skills development between Ministries or agencies leading to a lack of strategic leadership and the inability to implement reforms.

• A highly centralized day-to-day management of TVET institutions, resulting in low levels of devolved authority to training providers and rigid systems which prevent responsiveness to local labor markets.

• A lack of investment in infrastructure and staff;

• There is no/limited provision of participation in the policy formulation/review process by the representatives from private sector.

• As the PPP is a new concept in Bangladesh there is a serious dearth for initiating agencies for such kind of partnership.

• Political consideration in making partnership with the private organization(s) can make the initiative failed.

• Working with Government may take a long time and decisions and actions can be slowed down unnecessarily by bureaucracy.

• Private and public training centers both suffer from similar problems with quality and weak links with industry; while private institutions reported lack of access to resources and excessive government regulations as major constraint.

**Public-Private Partnership Prospects**

No government of today can afford to provide and finance all the skills needed by a modern economy, and, to its credit, Bangladesh does not do so. The key is finding the appropriate balance in government and non-government provision and financing of skills. The highest priority for any government is in getting the policies right to facilitate skills development that encourages each of the partners to pursue its comparative advantage in a market context. However, there are many things that the non-government sector cannot do – developing policies and standards, preparing teaching materials/curriculum, training instructors, provision of information on training – and it is in these areas that the government has a very important role to play.
Public–private collaboration occurs at many levels, including the macro (policy) level, the meso (sector) level, and the micro (enterprise) level. Its scope ranges from employer-worker participation in shaping national training policies to an enterprise’s donation of materials or giving of advice to a local training institution. The collaboration can be vertical, between local partners and national institutions, or horizontal, between local institutions or between national entities. PPPs can take the form of the representation of partners on training boards and committees so that they can provide advice and be consulted on policy issues, planning, curriculum development, performance evaluation, and quality control. At the micro level, partnerships can be developed between individual firms and public training institutions and may also involve local government and both public and private training providers, including voluntary agencies. Public training institutions may seek the advice and assistance of enterprises on curriculum development, the setting of quality standards, or performance evaluation, as well as the provision of information on training needs and planning, donation of equipment, vocational guidance and counseling, recruitment of successful trainees, or the organization of industrial attachments to give trainees or trainers practical experience (Mitchell 1998).

Public–Private Partnerships inherently lead to changes in the role of government in TVET systems and require a conceptual shift from administrators to facilitators of change. This changing government role includes moving from the provider of TVET to a role incorporating the management and regulation of TVET. This involves a process of change within the government system which inherently means a slow but deliberate process. For public TVET providers to develop PPPs with industry, a process to decentralize and devolve decision making requires implementation. This involves two competing dynamics. One is the tightening up of operational frameworks governing the system, whilst loosening the authority to make decisions at the local level. A perception within industry is that working with Government takes a long time and decisions and actions are slowed down unnecessarily by bureaucracy. This makes working with Government difficult for industry. Allowing limited decision making power at the local level will help alleviate this problem.

Some of the scope of Public-Private Partnership can be listed below:

- The Government established a high-level National Skills Development Council (NSDC), which the prime minister chairs, signaling national commitment to addressing the shortcomings in the current TVET system. This tripartite forum of representatives from government, employers, workers and civil society should be fully activated. Strengthening NSDC secretariat through deploying appropriate manpower and having the council meeting in a regular basis can make Public-Private Partnership in TVET more meaningful.
- Industry should be organized on sectoral lines to provide specific advice on occupations and skills in demand, and to identify key skills project priorities for their sector. Government and industry should implement these arrangements through a network of tripartite Industry Skill Councils (ISCs).
- Reviewing and strengthening TVET policies, systems and legislation at the central and decentralized levels with the active and meaningful participation from industries/private sector; recently developed National Skills Development Policy needs to be implemented through proper planning.
- There should such opportunities for private sector involvement in development and endorsement of national quality standards. Mismatch between the labor market (demand side) and TVET programs (supply side) can be minimized through engaging industries in this process.
Participation of industries or private sector can be sought in the quality processes for training organization certification.

- Formal apprenticeship can be introduced with the assistance from industry sector to provide the TVET learners with workplace learning and work experience.
- Laws can be amended to open financing services of Palli-Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) to ‘private organizations’ which are capable of delivering relevant skills development trainings.
- Developing fully implementable National Qualifications Framework (NTVQF) as a comprehensive policy to regulate the quality and consistency of qualifications within a national context.
- Decentralizing roles, power, and authority of Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB), Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) at division and regional levels by demarcating clear roles and creating opportunities for participation of industry sectors in those decentralized bodies.
- As NSDP stated, the Board of BTEB can be restructured to include additional representatives from industry, professional bodies, civil society and other key government ministries so that operational autonomy of BTEB is strengthened. BTEB can have a mechanism to work with Industry Skill Councils to ensure that industry will have a clear role in the quality assurance of training delivery and assessment, including the registration of training organizations and validation of assessment.
- There may have a PPP Board of Management to all government training centers, with priority given to those institutions who will deliver the new demand oriented industry endorsed qualifications from the NTVQF.
- As the ILO TVET Reform project started, establishment of skill centers of excellence for thrust sectors so that they develop as key industrial training centers with links to other providers through a network hub model.
- Experts from industries can be used as part-time trainers; guest lecturers in the TVET institutions.
- Introducing in-service training for teachers using industry-government training centers. The centers would have two goals: to develop the skills of public sector trainers through hands-on experience, and to upgrade the skills of industry-based trainers.

Conclusion

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is a model of development cooperation in which actors from the private sector (private corporations, corporate foundations, groups or associations of businesses) and the public sector (e.g. Ministry of Education and/or its agencies) bring together expertise and resources to achieve development goals. In a partnership, the public and private sectors jointly define goals, activities, roles, and responsibilities to be supported.

In a market economy, public-private partnerships (PPPs) act as bridges to link education and employers. The term is used as shorthand for a range of public policies, funding systems, and curriculum frameworks that have as a shared goal a tightened level of communication among educators and employers (Hawley 2007).

The forms and modalities of PPPs vary widely. They can be formal and structured, or informal and flexible. They can consist of state inputs into enterprise training efforts, enterprise inputs into public
training, joint efforts, inter-firm alliances, or alliances between government agencies in a policy framework established in PPP. They may also involve intermediary institutional mechanisms through which enterprises are contracted to deliver training services in accordance with public policies, procedures, or priorities as a result of the introduction of incentives or the provision of public financing (Mitchell 1998).

Many countries have implemented a number of measures such as the recognition of informal learning, national qualifications frameworks, campaigns on the value of TVET and competency based approaches, to further increase and improve the supply of skills entering the workforce. Alongside this international trend, Bangladesh is also in the process of developing a comprehensive National Technical Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF), competency standards, updated curriculum and labor market information systems. Each of these components provides an opportunity to embed industry engagement which in the longer term can lead to the development of strong partnerships.

References


23. World Bank (c.2008) Afghanistan Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Note Series, No.4, Technical and Vocational Education and Training

24. World Bank (undated) Lessons from the Korean Experience and Global Trends
