



OAS

More rights for more people

The Coordination between Education and Labor in the Americas

Results of the Inter-Sectoral Workshop
on Youth Employment



The Coordination between Education and Labor in the Americas

Results of the Inter-Sectoral
Workshop on Youth Employment

OAS Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Inter-Sectoral Workshop on Youth Employment (2016 : Brasilia, Brazil)

The Coordination between Education and Labor in the Americas: Results of the Inter-Sectoral Workshop on Youth Employment, held in Brasilia, Brazil, December 15 and 16, 2016 / [Coordinated by the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development of the OAS].

p. ; cm. (OAS. Official records ; OEA/Ser.K/XII.20.1 CIDI/TRABAJO/INF.6/17)

ISBN 978-0-8270-6687-8

1. Youth--Employment. 2. Education. 3. Occupational training. 4. Vocational education. 5. Technical education. I. Title. II. Organization of American States. Executive Secretariat for Integral Development. Department of Human Development, Education and Employment. III. Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor. IV. Inter-American Committee on Education. V. Inter-American Network for Labor Administration. VI. Brazil. Ministerio do Trabalho. VII. Brazil. Ministerio da Educação. VIII. Series.

OEA/Ser.K/XII.20.1 CIDI/TRABAJO/INF.6/17

Copyright © (2017) Organization of American States. All rights reserved under the International and Pan American Conventions. No part of the contents of this material may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, entirely or partially, without express consent of the Organization.

The contents expressed in this document are presented solely for informational purposes and do not represent the views or official position of the Organization of American States, its General Secretariat or its member states.

Prepared and published by the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment of the OAS. Trabajo@oas.org

The Coordination between Education and Labor in the Americas

Results of the Inter-Sectoral
Workshop on Youth Employment

Organization of American States (OAS)

Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML)

Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE)

Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL)

Organization of American States

Luis Almagro

Secretary General

Nestor Mendez

Assistant Secretary General

Kim Osborne

Executive Secretary for Integral Development

Maryse Robert

Director of the Department of Economic Development

Acting Director of the Department of Human Development,
Education and Employment

Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI)

This publication was coordinated by María Claudia Camacho, Chief of the Labor and Employment Section of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment of the SEDI, OAS, and benefited from the valuable contributions of Maryse Robert, Acting Director, Romina Kasman, Education Specialist and Lorena Hillón, Consultant, from the same Department. Jonathan Cavanagh, Alejandra Ospina and Carmen Hargis-Villanueva contributed with the translation of texts.

The publication is available online on the following web pages: www.oas.org/sedi and www.rialnet.org

Graphic Design: Graphic Ideas Inc. ideas@graphic-ideas.com

Message from the OAS Secretary General, Luis Almagro	11
Messages from the authorities of the labor and education ministerial forums	15
Message from the Chair of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML)	15
Alfonso Navarrete Prida, Minister of Labor and Social Welfare of Mexico	
Message from the Chair of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE)	17
Jeffrey L. Lloyd, Minister of Education of The Bahamas	
Message from the Ministers of Labor and Education of Brazil, hosts of the Inter-sectoral Workshop	19
Ronaldo Nogueira, Minister of Labor and Employment of Brazil Mendonça Filho, Minister of Education of Brazil	
Introduction	23
Kim Osborne, Executive Secretary for Integral Development, Organization of American States	
Section 	29
Conceptual Notes: Coordination between Labor and Education in Response to the New Reality of the World of Work and the Challenges of Youth Employment	
Youth employment at the forefront of the coordination between education and labor	31
Organization of American States (OAS)	
Maria Claudia Camacho, Chief, Labor and Employment Section, Department of Human Development, Education and Employment, Executive Secretariat for Integral Development	

Matches and mismatches between vocational training and the world of work in response to the challenges of youth employment in Latin America and the Caribbean	37
International Labour Organization (ILO)	
Gonzalo Graña, National Officer on Social Dialogue and Vocational Training, Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR)	
A metaphor and three key lessons on youth employment	43
The World Bank	
Truman Packard, Lead Economist of the Global Practice for Social Protection and Employment	
Education, skills and youth in Latin America and the Caribbean	49
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)	
Elena Crivellaro, Economist, Structural Policy Analysis Division	
Youth and the employability challenge	55
ManpowerGroup	
Marcia Almström, Human Resource Director, Strategy and Talent Services	
Section 2	59
National Experiences of Coordination between the Ministries of Labor and Education	
The Experience of Chile	61
National Service for Training and Employment (SENCE)	
Rodrigo Vasquez, Head of the Training Department	
Ministry of Education	
Jose Cardenas, Head of the Technical Vocational Training Secretariat	
The Experience of Panama	67
Ministry of Labor and Employment Development	
Carmen Roner, Head of the Legal Advisory Office	
Ministry of Education	
Anayansi Escobar, National Director of Secondary, Vocational and Technical Education	

The Experience of Jamaica **71**

Ministry of Labor

Dahlia Green, Director (a.i.) of the Electronic Labor Exchange

Ministry of Education

Michelle Small Bartley, Director of the Youth Policy Division

Ministry of Education

Kevon Campbell, Senior Programme Development Specialist

The Experience of Mexico **75**

Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare

Gerardo R. de la Torre Gonzalez, Director of Institutional Coordination and Reports of the National Employment Service

The Experience of Brazil **79**

Ministry of Education

Eline Neves Braga Nascimento, Secretary for Vocational and Technological Training

Ministry of Labor

Higino Brito Vieira, Director of the Department of Labor and Employment Policies for Youth

Section 3 **85**

The Voice of Youth, Perspectives of Social Actors and Non-Governmental Experiences

Voices from the youth of the Americas: contributions on the issue of youth employment and education systems in the Americas **87**

Young Americas Business Trust (YABT)

Rafael de Souza Fonseca, President of the Vale Entrepreneur Association and representative of the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT)

Workers' perspective on youth employment and the coordination between labor and education **93**

Trade Union Technical Advisory Council (COSATE)

Marta Pujadas, Chair

Youth in the Americas: The Employer Perspective **99**

Business Technical Advisory Committee on Labor Matters (CEATAL)

John Craig, Counsel to the Canadian Employers Council and Spokesperson for the CEATAL

International Organization of Employers (IOE)

Maria Paz Anzorreguy, Coordinator of CEATAL and Senior Advisor of the IOE

Response from the Universities **105**

Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE)

David Julien, Executive Director

Section **4** **111**

Lessons Learned and Policy Recommendations to Strengthen Coordination between Education and Labor for Youth Employment

Results of Working Group 1 **113**

Moderator: Gerardo de la Torre, Director of Institutional Consultation and Reports of the National Employment Service, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare of Mexico

Results of Working Group 2 **119**

Moderator: Keysha Bastian, Assistant Director of Education, Career and Technical Education of the Ministry of Education of The Bahamas

Results of Working Group 3 **123**

Moderator: Rodrigo Vasquez, Head of the Training Department of the National Training and Employment Service (SENCE) of Chile

Message from the OAS Secretary General

This publication summarizes the contents and results of the “Intersectoral Workshop on Youth Employment: Coordination between Education and Labor”, which was held in Brasilia in December 2016 within the framework of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL).

This workshop was the first time that experts from ministries of education and ministries of labor of the Hemisphere met to discuss the specific challenges regarding the intersection between both rights (i.e., the right to education and the right to work).

The event was led by the Ministry of Labor of Mexico –as Chair of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor- and the Ministry of Education of The Bahamas –as Chair of the Inter-American Committee on Education–, and was hosted by the Government of Brazil. The workshop was an opportunity to share and analyze national policy experiences, discuss the main challenges of intersectoral coordination, identify lessons learned, and make policy recommendations.

I am convinced that the results of this workshop laid the foundations for advancing towards a regional, inclusive, and diverse cooperation agenda.

I celebrate the fact that the ministries of labor and education are working to strengthen their coordination, and I reiterate our commitment to working with governments and social actors to continue striving for greater and better coordination between the world of education and the world of work.

The governments of the region, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Inter-American Education Agenda, are committed to working to ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education, and to promoting full and productive employment and decent work.

The Organization of American States (OAS) supports these efforts and considers them fundamental in the strategic agenda to achieve “more rights for more people” in the Americas.

Luis Almagro

Secretary General

Organization of American States

Message from the Chair of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML)

For the past 54 years, the OAS Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) has hosted discussions at the highest level that have helped our countries share successful experiences. That exchange has provided insight into the world of work in the Hemisphere and has led to the formulation of integrated public policies for dealing with the challenges of a very diverse labor market, including those of recent years in which the labor market has been impacted by difficult macroeconomic and social conditions and even by natural disasters.

Accordingly, as Chair of the XIX IACML, the Government of Mexico promoted the need to strengthen the links between education and labor so as to foster effective insertion into the labor market.

It is a priority for our nations to generate high quality jobs, which requires focusing on the challenge of bringing youth into the labor market, given that the unemployment rate for them is two or three times higher than it is for the population as a whole.

This is an issue we need to address from a multisectoral perspective, starting with the recognition of education as the social equalizer par excellence, which enhances not only the opportunities open to individuals and their families but also those of whole communities and countries. That said, having a high quality education is not enough, if it is not accompanied by strategies to facilitate and secure access to employment.

For that reason, it is essential to prepare youth in a way that is tailored to the needs of the labor market; ensure that curricula relate to the realities and needs of each country's productive sector; strengthen the skills

and capacity of our workforce so that people can hold on to jobs and continue to develop their professional skills; support professional and occupational counseling; strengthen public employment services and labor observatories; and promote programs that foster youth entrepreneurship; all of which needs to be done within a framework of dignified and decent work.

I would like to thank the ministries of education and labor of the Americas for supporting detailed analysis of these issues at the “Intersectoral Workshop on Youth Employment: Coordination between Education and Labor.”

I also want to express my appreciation of the Organization of American States (OAS) for its support through the Technical Secretariats of the IACML and the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE).

I have no doubt that the debates triggered at the Workshop in Brasilia will yield important conclusions for fostering a virtuous circle that will enhance the quality and availability of education and vocational training and foster innovation, investment, business development, economic diversification, and competitiveness.

Finally, I wish to reiterate the spirit of collaboration between the Government of Mexico and the Secretariat for Labor and Social Security, while acknowledging the importance of international cooperation for effective actions to strengthen each country’s policies and programs, to the benefit of our societies.

Alfonso Navarrete Prida

Minister of Labor and Social
Welfare of Mexico

Message from the Chair of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE)

As Chair of the Inter-American Committee on Education, it is a pleasure and a privilege to extend congratulations to the architects of the “Publication on the Inter-Sectoral Workshop on Youth Employment”. I am certain that it will accomplish its goal of shedding significant spotlight on the critical and challenging issue of youth employment in the Americas.

I applaud the collaboration of the Ministers of Labour, Ministers of Education and other stakeholders which manifested in Brazil in 2016, to discuss strategies and develop solutions to address and improve the situation of youth in the labour market in our respective countries. Historically, Governments of the Americas have always recognized that our greatest asset is our youth. We are therefore grateful for the role that the Organization of American States through the Technical Secretariats of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor and the Inter-American Committee on Education have played in organizing such a productive workshop.

The compilation of observations and recommendations that emanated from the workshop in the form of this publication, will make for a valuable resource. I am encouraged by the focus given to Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) as a leading response to combat youth unemployment. Among the advice given on TVET, I find it constructive that it is being proposed that a strengthened Career and Technical Education Competency Certificate, be a part of the mainstream criteria for graduation and that technical secondary education be strengthened to promote a comprehensive education that facilitates the bridges from the world of education to the world of work. This is at the heart of the Inter-American Education Agenda, adopted at the 9th Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education in The Bahamas in February 2017.

While the publication gives some very creative and proactive steps to addressing youth employment, it must be supported by a strong commitment to follow-through by our leaders. Further, the proposals must be adopted, and sustained through policies so that we are able to achieve meaningful and positive results. We must also look to each other to exchange best practices and provide constructive feedback on programmes wherever required.

I am confident that we have adequate wisdom, creativity and fortitude contained in the “Publication on Inter-Sectorial Workshop on Youth Employment” to serve our national needs. I trust however, that we will take its most practical advice, which is, “to engage youth and students in the initial dialogue towards policy design, where they can feel that their opinion matters”.

Let us seize this opportunity to serve the youth of the Americas and ensure their future.

Hon. Jeffrey L. Lloyd

Minister of Education
of The Bahamas

Message from the Ministers of Labor and Education of Brazil, hosts of the Inter-sectoral Workshop

For Brazil, it was a privilege to host the Intersectoral Workshop on Youth Employment in 2016 in Brasilia, as well as to chair Working Group 1, “Integrated Public Policies for Productive Employment and Decent Work with Social Inclusion”, of the XIX Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) of the OAS. Together with the Vice-Chairs, Chile and Panama, and under the strong leadership of Mexico as Chair of the IACML and Bahamas as Chair of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE), considerable progress was made in this key area for our countries.

This workshop explored innovative ways of improving the articulation between education and labor. These are captured in this publication, which is a commendable initiative of the Technical Secretariat of the OAS.

Some of the greatest challenges that the countries of our Hemisphere face include the vocational training of youth preparing to enter the labor market as apprentices, as well as of workers who are already part of the labor market and need training for these jobs. There are also countless successful experiences in our region that deserve to be shared, some of which are cited in this publication.

The Government of Brazil has established actions in this regard, through vocational and technical training programs, as well as partnerships with private entities. Further, with the goal of adjusting the current vocational training model to the needs of the labor market and to the future of work, the Ministry of Labor promoted the restructuring of the National Qualification Plan, which became the Social and Professional Qualification Program of Brazil – QUALIFICA BRASIL. This program is an important

framework to develop Federal Government actions in partnership with states, municipalities, the Federal District, and relevant stakeholders from the private sector.

In addition, with regard to the youth population specifically, various programs aim to address the challenge of preparing youth for their first employment. These include the Youth Apprentice in Sports projects and Hacker Apprentices. The programs also stimulate new forms of association between the State and private entities in vocational training for youth.

Furthermore, the quest for basic, vocational, and technological education that is broad and integrated is imperative to ensure that the skills of youth entering the labor market are pertinent to the needs of the future of work. In this regard, the Government has gone to great lengths to improve the quality of secondary, vocational, and technological education, so that youth increasingly acquire the skills required to satisfy labor market demand. For that to occur, in addition to the changes in secondary education curriculum matrices, new national curriculum guidelines for mid-level vocational and technological education are being discussed.

We agree that the task before us is no easy one and it will require ongoing effort. However, it becomes easier when we can rely on the experience and vision of other countries with similar challenges. The OAS has proved to be an excellent forum for the exchange of experiences, cooperation, and the design of common strategies in this area and in many others. The articulation between education and labor to promote youth employment will bear fruit, and it is gratifying that the OAS will be by our side as we pursue that path. We hope that this publication will serve as encouragement and inspiration to do more, and to do it better.

Ronaldo Nogueira

Minister of Labor and
Employment of Brazil

Mendonça Filho

Minister of Education of Brazil



Introduction

Kim Osborne

Executive Secretary for Integral Development
Organization of American States

The role of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development is to effectively support member states in their efforts towards building sustainable livelihoods for their people.

We understand that sustainable, equitable and inclusive development is central to the wellbeing of the peoples of the Americas, underpins our democracies and strengthens our economies.

To this end, the Secretariat has adopted the implementation of an integrated agenda that benefits from ensuring an inter-sectoral and cross-disciplinary approach where issues of education, energy and disaster risk management, labor, competitiveness and innovation are jointly considered and are mutually reinforcing.

Policy dialogue remains at the core of the OAS development agenda and informs its technical work. Ministerial processes, ensure a consultative approach to policy formulation, inform decision-making at the hemispheric level and allow our member states to chart the course for their own development as well as that of the region as a whole. These high-level inter-sectoral policy exchanges are converted into concrete action through technical assistance and human resource and institutional capacity building programs which are primarily effected through triangular and horizontal cooperation. Among the key mechanisms for cooperation is the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) which has over the past 12 years been supporting member states with the transfer of knowledge to advance their policy imperatives.

In an effort to optimize the opportunities presented through the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development to build inter-sectoral dialogue and complementary policies and programs, member states have seen it fit to strengthen the link between education and employment with the intention of building durable human and institutional capacity to meet their emerging needs. The ultimate goal is to ensure that we are narrowing the skills gap, developing productive talent, reducing inequality, expanding access and bolstering competitiveness and sustainability in our region.

The Relationship between Education and Labor: A Hemispheric Priority

There is an intrinsic link between education and labor.

All over the region we see that those who have fewer opportunities for accessing high quality education –generally those living in conditions of poverty and vulnerability- have the most precarious and lowest-paying jobs. This, in turn, reproduces a vicious circle that deepens poverty and inequality in the region and hampers upward social mobility.

The region is facing a paradox. On the one hand, millions of young people cannot find a job –the youth unemployment rate stands at 18.3% in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the latest ILO statistics. On the other hand, businesses are increasingly saying that they cannot find the talent they are looking for. This mismatch, which has often been referred to as the ‘skills gap’ poses a threat to employment, productivity and social inclusion.

With these challenges as a backdrop, since 2015, the Ministers of Education and the Ministers of Labor, gathered in the OAS Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE) and the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) have agreed on the need to strengthen their collaboration. Specifically, among other actions, they decided to prioritize the coordination of their efforts around youth employment policies, modernization of educational programs and curricula, and school-to-work transition programs.

The Ministers of Labor and Education have also recognized the additional challenges that arise from the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the changes in the future of work, which require urgent responses from governments, the productive sectors, workers, and from society in general. In light of these current trends, efforts for greater coordination on policies and among stakeholders are more relevant than ever.

The Inter-Sectoral Workshop on Youth Employment: Coordination between Education and Labor

One of the first concrete steps of the joint commitment of Ministers of Education and Labor to work together was the undertaking of a regional workshop to learn about the strategies adopted by both Ministries to improve education and vocational training systems, and to analyze and draw lessons learned and policy recommendations from specific collaboration and coordination initiatives between them to improve the labor inclusion of youth. It was the first workshop of its kind.

The Workshop took place in Brasilia, Brazil on December 15-16, 2016, and gathered officials from Ministries of Labor and Education of 21 OAS member states specializing in the areas of professional training, technical education and youth employment, as well as representatives of workers, employers and youth, and international organizations, including the Organization of American States (OAS), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE), the Ibero-American Youth Organization (OIJ), the Vale Emprender Association, representing the voice of the youth of the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT), and ManpowerGroup.

Given the richness of the exchange, and the wealth and depth of the conclusions of the workshop, the OAS is pleased to present this publication.

Section 1 contains a set of conceptual notes from experts from the OAS, ILO, the World Bank, the OECD and ManpowerGroup, based on the presentations they made at the Workshop. Jointly, the notes describe the main employment and education challenges faced by youth, including the skills gap, identify some policy responses and provide some recommendations to improve education-labor coordination.

Section 2 includes concrete national experiences of coordination between the Ministries of Labor and Education. The experiences of Chile, Panama, Jamaica, Mexico and Brazil, which were discussed during the Workshop, offer some very valuable elements of youth employment inter-sectorial strategies.

Section 3 presents the perspectives of the most significant stakeholders on the issue of youth employment. Youth itself, represented by the network of the YABT, made a broad hemispheric consultation to propose some specific recommendations. Workers and Employers, gathered around

the consultative bodies that advise the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor, as well as universities represented by the IOHE, also share their views.

Section 4 contains the main outcome of the meeting: a series of lessons learned and policy recommendations to strengthen the coordination between education and labor for youth employment.

We hope you find this publication valuable and enjoy reading it. We believe the lessons learned and policy recommendations identified are a solid foundation for the implementation of concrete actions in order to ensure an effective and fruitful coordination between education and labor. As Technical Secretariat of the OAS Labor and Education Ministerial Processes, we are ready and eager to continue working with governments, international agencies, workers, employers, and civil society in making it happen.



Conceptual Notes: Coordination between Labor and Education in Response to the New Reality of the World of Work and the Challenges of Youth Employment

Youth employment at the forefront of the coordination between education and labor	31
Organization of American States (OAS)	
Matches and mismatches between vocational training and the world of work in response to the challenges of youth employment in Latin America and the Caribbean	37
International Labour Organization (ILO)	
A metaphor and three key lessons on youth employment	43
The World Bank	
Education, skills and youth in Latin America and the Caribbean	49
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)	
Youth and the employability challenge	55
Manpower Group	

Nowadays, the coordination between education and labor is ever more important in light of the speed of technological change, the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the implications this has in the future of work. If this issue was a priority a few decades ago, today it is absolutely imperative.

Youth employment at the forefront of the coordination between education and labor

Maria Claudia Camacho

Chief, Labor and Employment Section, Department of Human Development, Education and Employment Executive Secretariat for Integral Development Organization of American States

Today, more than 160 million youth live in the Americas, from Canada to Argentina, including the Caribbean. They make up approximately 20 percent of the population and portray one of the clearest images of our diversity. Although their circumstances vary enormously, as a whole they constitute the most highly educated generation ever. They were born into the Internet era and are thus “digital natives.” They were the first generation to be born in democracy and they have a new perception on the world, education, and work. They are, moreover, a powerful engine for growth given their capacity to create and innovate and because the region is still enjoying, albeit not for much longer, a major demographic dividend.¹

What are the principal challenges?

The main challenges for youth are manifested in the labor market and have to do with high levels of unemployment, informality, and inactivity. They also reflect significant inequalities. Take these statistics, by way of illustration: the unemployment rate for youth living in extreme poverty is 24.6 percent, whereas for middle class youth the figure is 7 percent.²

1 ECLAC/CELADE (2005) Serie “Temas de Población y Desarrollo”, Transición Demográfica, No.1, 2005. It is estimated that the demographic dividend will end between 2020 and 2050 for the different countries in Latin America.

2 OECD (2016) “Economic Outlook for Latin America 2017: Youth, skills and entrepreneurship”

This is linked to the education they receive, as well as to the availability of social contacts and relatives who can help them find a job. In both cases, the poorest youth are at a great disadvantage. Moreover, the image of youth who neither study nor work (the so-called “NEETs”) -- who number almost 30 million – is in reality an image of a young woman living in poverty and looking after her children or family members. Indeed, 76 percent of “NEETs” are women.³

Another major challenge, intertwined with the labor market situation, is the region’s recognized lag in quality and inclusive education.⁴ There is broad regional consensus on this, along with a commitment to overcome this challenge, as stated in the Sustainable Development Goals and the Inter-American Education Agenda.

One of the concerns associated with the low quality of education is the high secondary school dropout rate: only 66 percent of those who finish primary school go on to graduate from secondary school.⁵ One of the main reasons cited by youth for dropping out of school is lack of interest and motivation; in some countries this reason is more important than the need to earn an income⁶. In other words, youth are questioning the value of what they are learning. There is a dangerous cycle here; youth are dropping out of school because they perceive that what they are learning is not useful, and those that finish secondary school or an even higher education still have difficulties finding a job, while the productive sector complains that it cannot find the talent it needs.⁷

Why should there be more education-labor coordination?

Our governments are developing a number of strategies to confront these challenges, including reforms of educational and vocational training systems, first employment laws, apprenticeship programs, and programs fostering entrepreneurship, to mention only a few. Nevertheless, the challenges persist for both youth and the businesses that want to hire them.

We need innovative, comprehensive, and intersectoral approaches.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ ILO/CINTERFOR and OECD articles in this publication explore this topic.

⁵ IDB (2017), “Learning Better. Public Policies for Skills Development.”

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ As reported in other articles in this publication, and according to ManpowerGroup surveys, enterprises in the region have a harder time than enterprises in other parts of the world in finding suitable candidates to fill their vacancies.

The challenges concern both the world of education and the world of work and require rethinking and strengthening the links between them. This is not a new issue. In the 1940s and 1950s, it was at the center of the discussions in the region regarding the establishment of vocational training institutes (VTIs). The context at that time was different, the main concern being to solve unemployment problems and production shortfalls. Nowadays, the coordination between education and labor is ever more important in light of the speed of technological change, the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the implications this has in the future of work. If this issue was a priority a few decades ago, today it is absolutely imperative.

Occupations come and go with dizzying speed. Today we see advertisements for vacancies for a “social networks manager” or “big data analyst”, and some studies show that 65 percent of the children now in primary school will work in occupations that do not yet exist.⁸ The productive sector is striving to adjust to the permanent changes in the environment and new “economies” -- such as the collaborative economy --, while governments attempt to respond with economic, education, and labor policies. In all these efforts, it is vital to understand what is happening in the world of work to be able to plan and take steps in the world of education.

Another important argument in favor of education-labor coordination is its potential for breaking the intergenerational reproduction of poverty and allowing genuine social mobility. There are various points at which that cycle can be broken, one of the most important being the school-to-work transition. Evidence has shown that a successful first insertion into the labor market has a powerful impact on a person’s future work experience and income.

Where and how can closer coordination be achieved?

Some specific areas of action within the scope of Ministries of Education and Labor for improving the coordination between the two sectors include:

- **Consolidating Labor Market Information Systems (LMIS), conducting forward-looking prospective analyses, and ensuring that they provide feedback to education and training systems.** The region has come a long way in developing LMIS to analyze employment. The

⁸ World Economic Forum (2016). “The Future of Jobs. Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution”

challenge now is that they can anticipate future training needs. This requires partnerships with committed and visionary employers and workers, as well as receptive education and training systems.

- **Strengthening Public Employment Services (PES), which have been established specifically to connect labor supply and demand.** Most people looking for a job do so through family members and friends; therefore, it is very important to ensure that PES are accessible to all. Efforts to achieve more and better education can fall by the wayside if good mechanisms are not in place to facilitate school-to-work transition.
- **Articulating formal education -- and, within it, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) – with professional training.** Traditionally, TVET has been regarded as an academically higher option than professional training; in fact, some legislations do not even recognize the latter as part of a formal education.⁹ Both constitute parts of the continuing learning process, thus, people should be able to move easily from one to the other and have the skills they acquire recognized and certified. Efforts should also be made to further value technical education, which currently has a significant deficit and where employment opportunities are increasing.
- **Fostering on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs,** which have yielded good results in other regions, to enhance youth’s skills and employability¹⁰ and make it possible to combine education and training with work experience.
- **Enhancing quality, inclusion, and equity in education at all levels,** so that all youth acquire basic, technical and solid socio-emotional skills. This would contribute to reducing labor market segmentation, in which, for instance, the existence of informal work is far greater among those with a lower level of education, who are, in addition, the poorest.
- **Improving the pertinence of education,** which means making it responsive not just to the needs of the productive sector, but also to the country’s development needs, to the challenges in the future of

9 ILO/CINTERFOR (2017), “The Future of Vocational Training in Latin America and the Caribbean: overview and strengthening guidelines” [http://www.oitcinterfor.org/en/publications/future_vt]

10 IDB (2016), “Apprentices for the XXI Century. A Model for Latin America and the Caribbean?” [<https://publications.iadb.org/handle/11319/7855>]

work, and to youth's own expectations. Today's millennials demand more flexibility and diversity in educational content. Enhancing the relevance of education also involves strengthening skills and knowledge in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math).

- **Strengthening socio-emotional skills.** The future calls for creative people who can innovate and adapt to constantly changing circumstances. Education, through its content and teaching methods, must boost those skills, which will be in much greater demand in the future¹¹ and which can be transferred to different sectors and occupations.
- **Facilitating life-long education and training.** This is imperative in the knowledge economy and it requires adjusting education and training to a new life cycle -- in which people rotate between periods of study and work, or study and work at the same time--, having flexible module-based curricula, and finding innovative ways of delivering content (face-to-face courses, virtual courses, or blended).

In short, we have to make sure that there is more education in labor and more labor in education. Education systems should continue to develop a more integral approach that embraces the expedited changes in the environment and, as a result, revises the learning processes and skills being developed in the classroom. Forming well-rounded, fulfilled, and happy human beings requires an education that also prepares them for a productive life. For their part, labor institutions, too, need to open up to new approaches and embrace and put into practice the notion of life-long education and training. That implies, inter alia, strengthening social dialogue as a means of forging policies and solutions and re-understanding the workplace as a learning environment.

We must continue to dismantle artificial divisions between education and labor, given, for each of us, they are inextricable intertwined.

11 World Economic Forum (2016) op.cit. "Social skills—such as persuasion, emotional intelligence and teaching others—will be in higher demand across industries than narrow technical skills, such as programming or equipment operation and control," p. 22). [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf]

In order to achieve their social and economic objectives and promote the integral development of our countries, vocational training policies should promote the alignment of productive development policies with technological change, build upon social dialogue.

Matches and mismatches between vocational training and the world of work in response to the challenges of youth employment in Latin America and the Caribbean

Gonzalo Graña

National Officer on Social Dialogue and Vocational Training
Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in
Vocational Training (CINTERFOR)
International Labour Organization (ILO)

Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean face important deficits in terms of decent work. Their difficulties in accessing and staying in the labor market are reflected in high rates of unemployment and underemployment, as well as in precarious labor inclusion that is often in the informal economy. This means that they have no health coverage or social protection and obtain salaries that often condemn them to being poor workers. They thus find themselves in jobs where they can rarely exercise their right to trade union organization and collective bargaining. The reality is that one in five youths in Latin America and the Caribbean is neither in employment nor in education or training, which is a violation of their rights and poses a risk of social exclusion today and in the future.¹

Historically, the education system in general (including technical education), and vocational training in particular, have been charged with preparing youth for entry into the labor market. However, the region has significant gaps and challenges in both fields with regard to preparing youth to transition from the world of education to the world of work.

¹ For a detailed analysis of youth employment in the region you can consult the ILO publication “Decent work and youth in Latin America. Policies for action” (in Spanish): http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/documents/publication/wcms_235577.pdf

For purely illustrative purposes and due to space constraints, it is necessary to first mention coverage and access problems. Although primary education is practically universal in the region (95%) and enrollment in secondary education (73%)² has improved significantly, noticeable differences remain in terms of access depending on the socio-economic level of households. In other words, youth from poor households continue to have higher dropout levels compared to youth from affluent households. Nevertheless, it is in higher education that the region continues to face greater challenges of coverage and access, even though enrollment rose from 18% in 1996 to 44% in 2014.³ In terms of coverage of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), there is a significant gap between our youth and those in OECD countries. While in Latin America and the Caribbean only 25.5% of youth choose this type of training, in OECD countries enrollment in TVET is 40.6%.

As coverage increases and access opportunities expand, the issue of quality of education begins to loom larger in public and specialized debate. Year after year, when results of standardized tests such as PISA are published, the gap in terms of math, reading, and science tests between youth in our region and those from developed countries becomes more evident. For example, in 2015, the percentage of youth that did not achieve the minimum level in math was 63%, while for OECD countries it was 23%. For reading, the figures are 45% and 18% respectively, and for science 50% and 23%.⁴ Accordingly, the idea that there is a lot of teaching, but little learning, gains traction.

At the same time, vocational training systems (VT) and vocational training institutions (VTI) are also part of the debate and they, too, are under pressure to significantly improve coverage and equity in access, as well as the quality and relevance of training offered to our youth. Vocational training and human resource development policies and VTIs have always had to address social and economic objectives, in addition to fighting social exclusion and promoting the labor market inclusion of disadvantaged youth. They have also had to address increasing human capital and leveraging improvements in productivity, adoption of new technologies and, above all, the reorganization of productive processes through continuous training. Thus, VTIs face particular challenges, as well as challenges that differ from those that the regular education systems face. ILO Recommendation 195 is well worth reading regarding this duality.

² ILO/Cinterfor/ and ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean “The future of vocational training in Latin America and the Caribbean”, available at: http://www.oitcinterfor.org/en/publications/future_vt

³ IDB “Learning Better: Public Policy for Skills Development.”

⁴ ILO/Cinterfor and ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, op. cit.

In terms of aspects that require continued improvement, there is the disarticulation of stages and, often enough, lack of bridges and walkways between vocational training and regular education. In other words, youth who choose vocational training often face challenges when transitioning into regular education, if they wish to do so, both at the end of their training and during it. This poses a huge threat to the objective of lifelong learning and the construction of learning itineraries by those who are participating in the labor market.

Another aspect is that the impressive increase in training options has generated a “jungle” of qualifications. This jungle has made it difficult to fully understand what the curriculum of a title or qualification offered entails, apart from the problem of the quality of the training offered. Furthermore, many countries lack a regulatory entity and a system of governance of the enormous and diverse private supply of training options to ensure adequate quality control and provide transparency to all users and relevant stakeholders.

In addition, unequal access to information and lack of transparency regarding certain training options are a problem in some countries or sub-national regions. Youth who wish to access training often do not know the content or the quality of that training, the potential of finding employment at the end of it, or its relevance to the needs of the local productive sector. This issue, regarding the relevance of training in terms of the needs of the business network of the territory where the VTIs are located, is crucial and generally at the center of the agenda and debate on reforms to vocational training systems.

Regarding this issue, two aspects are worth highlighting. First, the efforts of VTIs to develop mechanisms and apply methodologies for analyzing current and future needs of the labor force on the national, sectoral and local levels.⁵ Second, the importance of social dialogue and the participation of employers’ and workers’ organizations in the management and governance of VTIs, in addition to the participation of Sectoral Technical Committees, Sectoral Committees, or Councils, where they play an essential role in efforts to ensure quality and relevant training tailored to the real needs of the productive fabric, as well as equity in the access of disadvantaged youth.

To summarize and conclude, we wish to present what we, ILO/Cinterfor, have called guidelines for building sound training systems for work

⁵ For information on the application of techniques to anticipate training demands by TTIs of LAC, visit: <http://www.oitcinterfor.org/en/estudiosprospectivos>

and for life. In order to achieve their social and economic objectives and promote the integral development of our countries, vocational training policies should⁶:

- 1.** Promote the alignment of productive development policies with technological change.
- 2.** Build upon social dialogue.
- 3.** Ensure a regulatory framework that covers the core aspects of an integrated vocational training system.
- 4.** Make sure sufficient, sustained, and guaranteed-by-law funding is provided.
- 5.** Promote lifelong learning and coordination between formal education and vocational training.
- 6.** Foster quality apprenticeship.
- 7.** Increase the quality and relevance of training by constantly improving institutions, developing knowledge and creating relevant information.
- 8.** Use more effective teaching methodologies and approaches, based on evidence, and constantly improve them, considering experience and assessment.
- 9.** Promote equal opportunities and social inclusion.
- 10.** Coordinate with employment and vocational guidance services and with active labor market policies.

⁶ A detailed description of these guidelines can be found in ILO/Cinterfor and ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, op. cit.

I argue that given the dangers of sustained levels of unemployment or underemployment -the dangers that can be measured in scarring, long term damage to an individual's prospects and in aggregate, a long-term constraint on the productivity potential of an economy- that the concerns of youth employment and their smooth and successful insertion into jobs cannot be considered a niche issue. It has to be considered as part of the mainstream of economic policy for higher productivity and economic growth.

A metaphor and three key lessons on youth employment

Truman Packard

Lead Economist of the Global Practice for Social Protection and Employment
The World Bank

I want to give you, what I believe, is one illustrative metaphor and three key lessons from the body of international evidence on policies to improve youth employment.

These lessons affirm, very powerfully, the intersectoral approach that the OAS is helping to bring about with the facilitation of this event.

Let's start with the metaphor.

Early 20th century coal miners used to have the custom of taking a caged canary with them down into the coal mines. The canary was serving as, what is called, a sentinel species. A sentinel species is an animal that is affected by unseen or undetected dangers in the environment. They are sentinel because they can act as an early warning device for human beings. In the case of the 20th century coal mines, if the canary's song ceased, the coal miners knew that invisible and undetectable methane and carbon monoxide gases were at dangerous levels and because of this they took immediate measures to escape from that danger. It was from this experience of using the canaries in the coalmines that this English language metaphor came about: the canary in the coal mine as a danger sign, a sign of an impending danger that could soon affect everybody else.

When I'm asked to talk about youth employment, my mind frequently goes to that metaphor. And the reason that I think of the canary in the

coalmine is because I've come to conclude that an economy and a labor market that does not serve its youngest participants is in trouble of being trapped in a low productivity equilibrium - a low productivity equilibrium that can last for decades. And in fact, can even reverse the process of economic and social development.

Even before the global financial crisis of 2009/2010, the signs of danger were all around. The canary's song was becoming faint. We saw a lot of segmentation in labor markets around the world. In this region, segmentation that took the form of the regulated economy versus the unregulated economy, the so-called formal sector and the informal sector. In addition, both in this region and in countries across the world, particularly in Europe, we also saw segmentation within the part of economy that was formal and within the regulatory reach of the authorities. This segmentation took the form, usually, of people who had air tight employment contracts with privileges and protections versus those who did not - a classic case of insiders and outsiders. These outsiders were legally employed but they were employed in a form that did not provide certain key protections, from health shocks and other shocks that come about in the day-to-day experience of the labor market. That segmentation was a sign that something was profoundly wrong. And it was something that usually took on a demographic dimension - where those in protected forms of employment were middle aged and older, and those who were stuck, for years, in temporary forms of employment or lesser forms of employment, were the younger members of the workforce.

In the years or slow recovery since the crisis, the danger signs have become more glaringly obvious. The canary is barely audible and no longer stirring. Education systems and labor markets that are not offering plausible pathways to prosperity through work. Because they are not offering these pathways, and are in fact presenting obstacles for young people, there is a growing disillusionment with work as a viable strategy for social advancement. When young people stop believing that work is the best means of advancement, social cohesion can be threatened. Yet we've been very slow to act. We're not seeing the warning signs of the gasping canary. Education and skills training systems are struggling to impart sought-after skills. Labor institutions and regulations tend to hurt the employment prospects of the youngest job-seekers

Young people continue at a disadvantage. A review of spending on social protection and labor programs in most countries will show that the amount being spent for the elderly far outweighs, by a factor of 10 or sometimes even higher, what is spent on labor insertion programs, on job search assistance programs, and other programs that are designed to

smooth the entry of young people into the labor market. Social protection systems and social protection spending is still biased, inherently, against young people. Labor policies and labor services are designed mainly to favor those who are already in jobs – the insiders- rather than to help people who are trying to enter employment and to get their foot on the first rung of the employment ladder.

Too often, when one examines education and skills training systems, and also the systems of labor assistance and social protection, the needs of young people are considered a niche concern. A niche program. A matter of social inclusion concern, if you will.

I argue that given the dangers of sustained levels of unemployment or underemployment -the dangers that can be measured in scarring, long term damage to an individual's prospects and in aggregate, a long-term constraint on the productivity potential of an economy- that the concerns of youth employment and their smooth and successful insertion into jobs cannot be considered a niche issue. It has to be considered as part of the mainstream of economic policy for higher productivity and economic growth. Will we heed to warning of the canary, lying still?

Youth economic engagement is much more than a matter of productive, social inclusion Although of course, there are important inclusion benefits from engaging young people. However, youth economic engagement is the business of planning policy, the business of economic policy, and it is a challenge that really needs to be pulled into the mainstream. Youth economic engagement is fundamental, leading indicator of a country's productivity potential and economic growth

Report after report published on the subject of youth employment come to the conclusion that a country which succeeds in making the entry of new generations of workers into its economy smooth and successful, can boost and sustain productivity growth and shared prosperity and make that growth resilient to changes in technology, changes in demography, and other big mega trends that are constantly redefining and reshaping the world of work.

So that was my metaphor: the canary in the coalmine.

Here are three important findings drawn from the body of international evidence on what works for youth employment.

First, young people around the world underestimate the importance of education and the completion of education to their prospects in the labor

market. That's a finding that is consistent from a lot of different studies in a wide range of countries. The more optimistic finding that accompanies that observation is that this can be easily corrected. Interventions in the classroom that try to provide young people with more information about the advantages of staying one year longer in education, completing secondary education, getting into a course or in college after the completion of secondary education. The interventions that demonstrate to young people the monetary and social advantages to continuing in education have shown to be very successful. That's very hopeful.

The second finding is that comprehensive interventions, interventions that target market failures both on the supply side and demand side of the labor market, and that improve the institutions that operate in between supply and demand, by combining training with life skills coaching, income support, and job search assistance, have a positive impact.

Third, giving employers a primary and leading role in the design of solutions can improve the relevance of human capital as the needs of the economy change, and the resilience of systems in the face of mega trends that are challenging the world of work and challenging the smooth entry of each new generation of the labor force into the economy.

Since current skills mismatches could be aggravated in a context where technological change, globalization and trade are responsible for job destruction and new types of job creation, the capacity of countries to improve the skills of their population and adjust to these changes will partially determine labor market outcomes, economic growth, productivity and competitiveness.

Education, skills and youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*

Elena Crivellaro

Economist, Structural Policy Analysis Division
Organization for Economic Cooperation and
Development (OECD)

Introduction

Education and skills are widely recognized as key elements to support inclusive development and favorable labor market outcomes. Improved education leads to economic growth, social inclusion and greater equality. Skills are strongly linked to having access to good quality education, but go much further: they are “the bundle of knowledge, attributes and capacities that can be learned and that enable individuals to successfully and consistently perform an activity or task, and that can be built upon and extended through learning”.¹

Despite the strong expansion of education in the last two decades in Latin America and the Caribbean, substantial challenges remain, largely related to completion, quality, pertinence to demands from labor markets, and financing relative to OECD countries.

* The article is based on OECD/ECLAC/CAF (2016). Latin American Economic Outlook 2017: Youth, Skills and Entrepreneurship,

1 OECD (2012), Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives: A Strategic Approach to Skills Policies, OECD Publishing, Paris,

Latin American youth education at a glance

Educational attainment in Latin American and the Caribbean has increased in the last decade (2004-14), particularly for youth entering more often to secondary and tertiary education. In ten years' time, the percentage of the population aged 15-64 who have only completed primary education or less has fallen to the benefit of higher levels of education.

Latin American youth today are better educated than their peers in previous generations. And youth living in extremely poor and moderate poor households are the ones who benefited the most from expanded education in the region. However, still 41% of the overall population of Latin America and the Caribbean aged 25-29 has less than secondary education. Likewise, completion of higher education increased from just above 10% to 16% over the last decade, still low compared to OECD standards.

Additionally, despite the recent increase in educational attainment, still many young Latin Americans leave school too early: 31% of the Latin American youth (more than 43 million), have not completed secondary education and are not enrolled in school.

Over the same period, enrolment in higher education increased significantly – from 29% to 44%, but again enrolment rates remain low compared with OECD countries.² And, more worryingly, higher education institutions face quality and adequacy problem that lead completion of tertiary education to still be a problem in the region: while 41% of the population aged 15-64 began tertiary education, on average, only 14% completed it across Latin American and Caribbean countries.

The region's high secondary school dropout rates and low tertiary education completion rates call for policy action.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is crucial to develop a highly skilled labor force, with a range of mid-level trade, technical, professional and management skills alongside those high-level skills associated with university education.³ In emerging countries, TVET is increasingly perceived as a tool to respond to changing labor market needs, while at the same time supporting social cohesion. However, TVET in LAC rarely train youth in mid- and high-level trade, technical, professional and management skills. National vocational training

² Only two countries, Argentina and Chile, the region's leaders, have higher rates of enrolment in tertiary education at 80% and 84%, respectively, than the OECD average of 70%.

³ OECD (2014), Education at a Glance 2014: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing,

institutes have expanded and developed better connections with private sector needs. They play an important role in providing basic technical skills to high school drop-outs and disadvantaged youth, but, with a few exceptions, programmes are limited in size.⁴

Latin American youth skills at a glance

Skills levels are poor in the region, mostly due to the low quality of primary and secondary education and structural barriers. Young Latin Americans enrolled in school do not acquire basic-level proficiency in reading, mathematics and science, according to the latest results of the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean participating in PISA 2015 ranked again in the bottom third of the country distribution in all three subjects tested.⁵

Low pertinence of education is another crucial challenge in the region, with few higher education students focusing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), disciplines associated with higher earnings. The region lags behind in STEM fields of study, mainly in science, with enrolment rates ranging between 2-7%, compared to an average of 10% in OECD countries.

As a result, Latin America and the Caribbean is the region with the widest gap between the available pool of skills and those skills that economies and societies require.⁶ Since current skills mismatches could be aggravated in a context where technological change, globalization and trade are responsible for job destruction and new types of job creation, the capacity of countries to improve the skills of their population and adjust to these changes will partially determine labor market outcomes, economic growth, productivity and competitiveness. Among

4 Public spending in training programmes in LAC ranges from 0.02% of GDP in Peru to more than 0.30% in Colombia and Costa Rica, compared to an OECD average of 0.14%.

5 In PISA 2015, over a total of 72 participating countries, 10 were from LAC: Argentina (province of Bueno Aires), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay. On average, LAC countries (excluding the Province of Buenos Aires) scored 409.9 points in science, vs. an OECD average of 493 points: this represents a difference of 83 points, which is equivalent to almost three years of secondary schooling. Although several countries in the region improved their results, particularly in reading, and are improving faster than OECD countries, they must all accelerate their rate of improvement to achieve higher performance levels. OECD (2016), PISA 2015 Results (Volume I): Excellence and Equity in Education, OECD Publishing, Paris.

6 OECD/CAF/ECLAC (2014), Latin American Economic Outlook 2015: Education, Skills and Innovation for Development, OECD Publishing

the top ten countries where firms identify difficulty filling jobs in the Manpower Group Talent Shortage Surveys, five are from Latin America.⁷ And the share of firms identifying difficulty filling jobs is larger in all Latin America and Caribbean countries than for the average of OECD countries.⁸

The way forward – skills and educational policies

Owing to the constantly changing social, political and productive environment, skills and educational policies must be flexible and robust enough to embrace future trends proactively. At the same time, policies should provide youth with tailored tools to shape the specific environments in which they live. Some initial policy orientations and recommendations are the following:⁹

Strengthen the education system and promote lifelong skills-enhancing programmes

Improving Latin American youth's skills involves strengthening the coverage and quality of the education system and promoting lifelong comprehensive skills-enhancing policies. Broader reforms of the education system are expected to increase access to, and quality and pertinence of, primary, secondary and tertiary education. As they do, alternative human capital policies such as the existing training and productive inclusion programmes should support the current generation of low-skilled youth and provide all future adults with training options. Education curricula and skills-enhancing programmes should provide youth with technical training for productive inclusion and foundational skills, which are critical throughout people's lives to favor their mobility and adaptability to changing external conditions.

Combine classroom teaching with practical on-the-job training

Combining classroom teaching with practical training and other active labor market services helps better prepare students for the world of work. This is relevant beyond the design of short vocational courses. It should inform the design of all TVET programmes from secondary to tertiary education, as well as academic education, to offer students better job prospects.

⁷ These are Peru (68%), Brazil (61%), Mexico (54%), Colombia (47%) and Costa Rica (46%).

⁸ Manpower Group (2015), Talent Shortage Survey Research Results, Milwaukee, USA.

⁹ Additional analysis is needed to tailor policy for the specific needs of each country.

Collect information on the skills of the population and those demanded by businesses to build better national skills-enhancing strategies

Countries need more efficient ways to collect information on the skills individuals have and those skills businesses need to design national skills-enhancing strategies. This information helps countries identify skills shortages and gaps and plan for future skills needs to become more productive and competitive. The lack of country-level comparable data hinders governments' capacity to develop policy solutions to address the current skills mismatch.

Develop skills programmes that are more responsive to the needs of the marketplace

Latin American and Caribbean countries need to go beyond the current skills mismatch and define long-term strategies that aim to identify and promote new knowledge, linked to the development of the digital economy. To do that, it is essential to encourage public-private work that allows identifying future areas of knowledge and skills that will be needed in the long term, to be promoted today.

In addition, 40% of companies surveyed in 42 countries by Manpower Group report difficulty in filling their job openings. Further, in the Americas, technicians are among the five jobs with the highest shortages

Youth and the employability challenge

Marcia Almström

Human Resource Director, Strategy
and Talent Services, ManpowerGroup

Paradoxically, the world of work presents both a shortage of skills and significant levels of unemployment. Both these phenomena occur simultaneously. In addition, 40% of companies surveyed in 42 countries by Manpower Group report difficulty in filling their job openings. Further, in the Americas, technicians are among the five jobs with the highest shortages and, specifically in Brazil, technical jobs are in the highest levels of skills shortage. The lack of technical and personal skills, as well as a lack of previous experience, represents the main challenges. Thus, as a strategy to overcome these challenges, 76% of surveyed companies in the Americas prioritize training and development of their current teams, which makes the companies protagonists in the process of qualifying people in order to face the challenge of filling their vacancies. At the same time, it is important to highlight that while the shortage of skills represents a challenge for companies, it also represents an opportunity for those professionals whose profiles are in high demand.

Our youth, the so-called “Millennials”, will represent 35% of the labor force in 2020 and are also the focus of the survey done by ManpowerGroup in 25 countries, which included 19,000 young people and 1,500 hiring managers (Millennial Careers: 2020 Vision). With a new outlook on labor relations and, in contrast to the inaccurate perception that millennials are disengaged, disloyal, and egocentric, millennials have a spirit of entrepreneurship and a strong connection with the digital world. The priority of this generation is developing new skills as a way to ensure

their employability and career security. In that sense, it is worth bearing in mind, with respect to the opportunities that arise for our youth in the new world of work, that the technical training incentive undoubtedly opens the doors for the creation of youth employment and thus reduces the medium- and long-term impact of their late entry into the labor market. For companies, then, a challenge arises: they must review their human resource management practices, taking into consideration the interests of the new generations, developing skills and building the leaders of the future.



National Experiences of Coordination between the Ministries of Labor and Education

The Experience of Chile	61
National Service for Training and Employment (SENCE)	
Ministry of Education	
The Experience of Panama	67
Ministry of Labor and Employment Development	
Ministry of Education	
The Experience of Jamaica	71
Ministry of Labor	
Ministry of Education	
The Experience of Mexico	75
Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare	
The Experience of Brazil	79
Ministry of Education	
Ministry of Labor	

Why connect education and labor?
The answer is: in order to facilitate the transition between labor training and technical-vocational higher education; achieve horizontal and vertical articulation of the training system; coordinate and strengthen the programmatic supply; and, finally, emphasize relevance, quality and the decentralization of what is offered in training.

The Experience of Chile

Rodrigo Vasquez

Head of the Training Department of the National Service for Training and Employment (SENCE)

Jose Cardenas

Head of the Technical Vocational Training Secretariat of the Ministry of Education

Like other countries in the region, Chile faces important challenges regarding youth employment. One of the most critical challenges is the number of youth who are neither in school nor in employment or training, the so called “NEETs”, who represent 25% of youth between the ages of 20 and 24. The reasons underlying their inactivity largely depend on gender; while women state that the main reason for not looking for employment is childcare and housework, men state that the reason is a lack of interest, illness, or disability. Another important issue is the structural problem of the distribution of income that makes the situation of inactive youth worse (the level of NEETS for the lowest income levels is eleven times greater than those in the highest income levels). On the other hand, this issue will not be solved if youth are not included in the world of work. To respond to these challenges, Chile has developed far-reaching intersectoral strategies, such as the new system developed by the Ministries of Labor, Economy and Education on labor intermediation and training. This system supports populations who face challenges entering the labor market, in particular, youth, inactive women, and people with disabilities.

One of the intervention strategies is the labor training program +Capaz, which is connected with education sector policies in a collaborative way. +Capaz seeks to identify employment opportunities, generate quality training linked to the productive sector to guarantee that training plans and curricula are aligned with employment opportunities, promote labor

participation mechanisms, promote constant evaluation and certification of labor skills to recognize lifelong learning, and maintain continued training at work.

The program articulates the different intervention components under the same methodological strategy and aspires to be a comprehensive public policy which focuses on socio-emotional skills. These skills are considered to be an important element in the different strategies to address youth employment. In addition, considering the importance of an intersectoral approach, the program includes partnerships between the public and private sectors and is articulated with other public policies, specifically to focus on the needs of the productive and social sectors. Direct coordination with the world of education is achieved through the labor training process derived from the training plans that have been built together with the productive sectors and that include other sectors of the economy. These also include socio-emotional skills and basic skills to achieve greater relevance.

Chile also has the Committee of the National Labor Skills Certification System, ChileValora, which is an intersectoral organization that links members of the productive sector, both workers and employers, with State organizations related to each productive sector. The Committee carries out projects related to labor skills that allow for the creation of certified and accredited occupational profiles for each productive sector, training plans based on labor skills, and labor training pathways. These efforts have aligned the National Service for Training and Employment (SENCE) with the entity that evaluates and certifies skills. This, too, uses an intersectoral strategy and includes different stakeholders.

For its part, the Ministry of Labor implements various strategies together with the education sector such as Trade Training, which is done through the network of technical and vocational institutes. These institutes previously only carried out the Ministry of Education's training programs. Currently, the program +Capaz is present in 270 Technical-Vocational Secondary Education Institutes of the 932 that exist in Chile. This means that training is no longer offered only by private organizations, which have traditionally offered it. On the other hand, a new technical-vocational education policy recognizes and favors articulation between labor training and secondary technical-vocational training. +Capaz has also developed an innovative strategy that allows participants to be trained in a specific trade while at the same time continuing their studies in Technical-Vocational Higher Education careers. This strategy recognizes previously acquired learning and supports the costs of tuition and fees, which is an unprecedented approach that articulates professional training policies with the formal education system.

The Ministry of Education, in the framework of the National Technical-Vocational Training Policy, incorporates an intersectoral approach in its perspective, as it seeks to enable young workers to build both labor and educational career paths. In addition, in order to achieve the goals proposed in the National Policy, it is necessary to incorporate a participation component, to include the productive development needs of the different territories, and improve the quality of learning and technical and socio-emotional skills of youth. The Ministry has created Technical Training Centers (CFTs in Spanish) in the 15 regions of the country, in the framework of an economic and social decentralization strategy, and looks to improve technical training in favor of the productive development of the regions.

Likewise, considering the importance of an intersectoral and territorial strategy, the CFTs incorporate regional councils, which are led by regional authorities and include the participation of employers and workers. Further, the design of the curricula offered by these centers is articulated with the program +Capaz so that training options offered in the world of training (within the +Capaz program) are later recognized and accredited within these technical-vocational training institutes.

Another effort to promote inter-sectoral coordination is the recent creation of the Advisory Committee on Technical-Vocational Training, which includes the Ministers of Economy, Labor, Education, Finance, the Promotion Corporation (CORFO), the National Service for Training and Employment (SENCE), representatives of enterprises and workers, as well as representatives of technical-vocational higher education institutes. The goal of this committee is to consolidate a shared vision regarding technical training within public and private stakeholders, and dignify technical training. The roles of this committee include advising the President in the analysis and definition of policies and programs, elaborating a National Technical-Vocational Training Strategy, making recommendations regarding the proposed Qualifications Framework, making recommendations to enhance any proposal regarding technical-vocational education developed by the Ministries of Education, Economy and Labor, and proposing mechanisms for inter-sectoral coordination and for connecting the public and private sectors.

Chile has learned, among other things, that in order to improve the educational and labor opportunities for youth, it is important to build institutional arrangements that allow public and private stakeholders to interact, such as the Committee on Technical-Vocational Training. Thus, it is important to develop a national technical-vocational training strategy that has a development goal for the country and, in that way, guides the

training processes of technical-vocational education and properly links them with the world of work, as the National Qualifications Framework does.

One last thought: Why connect education and labor? The answer is: in order to facilitate the transition between labor training and technical-vocational higher education; achieve horizontal and vertical articulation of the training system; coordinate and strengthen the programmatic supply; and, finally, emphasize relevance, quality and the decentralization of what is offered in training. Thus, the inter-sectoral strategies implemented in Chile by the Ministry of Labor, SENCE, the Ministry of Education and other sectors recognize that articulated labor and educational pathways can improve the opportunities available for youth.

In order to face the challenges of youth employment, Panama established the High Committee on Public Policy of Technical and Vocational Employment and Occupations... the objective of this Committee is to provide a report that contributes to increasing employment, productivity and social inclusion, with more and better technical and vocational training.

The Experience of Panama

Carmen Roner

Head of the Legal Advisory Office of the Ministry of Labor and Employment Development

Anayansi Escobar

National Director of Secondary, Vocational and Technical Education of the Ministry of Education

In order to face the challenges of youth employment, Panama established the High Committee on Public Policy of Technical and Vocational Employment and Occupations. This Committee comprises the most representative sectors of the country, including public and private universities, trade unions, and businesses. The objective of this Committee is to provide a report that contributes to increasing employment, productivity and social inclusion, with more and better technical and vocational training. Based on the recommendations made by the Committee, the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Education have started working together through joint strategies.

One of the initiatives pursued by both ministries is the Panama Pro Joven Program, which was established in 2014 as an alternative to connect job seekers and businesses, and in that way, facilitate the labor inclusion of youth. Specifically, youth in technical careers are the focus of this initiative, since they generally face more difficulties obtaining jobs or continuing their university studies. The Panama Pro Joven program contains three fundamental elements: first, training in soft skills for life and for work, where youth receive guidance on how to behave in interviews and on labor relations and emphasis is placed on ethical values and responsibility. Second, the program also includes a three-month internship, where compensation is defrayed by both the government and the business. Finally, there is also a tutoring component for youth, led

by labor mediation and human resources specialists. Between 2014 and 2016, a total of 2,100 youth between the ages of 17 and 20 benefitted from Panama Pro Joven, and 800 have been placed in formal jobs.

The Vocational and Employment Orientation Program (POVE, for its acronym in Spanish), is another initiative jointly implemented by the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Education. The program motivates youth to study careers most in demand on the labor market. In addition, in response to Committee on Employment indications regarding technical and vocational careers that the country requires, both ministries visit schools to share this information with youth. POVE also provides the following: panels with student leaders where youth share their perspectives; a dialogue between professionals and business men and women who have graduated from the education system, so they can share their experiences regarding the training process; vocational orientation evaluations; and a fair with public and private universities to inform youth about the careers offered by each institution. In this way and through POVE, Panama is looking to reduce the unmet demand for human talent in some vocational and technical occupations.

An example of a State initiative involving both the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Education is the Higher Education Institute of the East (ITSE), which is expected to open in 2019. This Institute, which was inspired by the Singapore model known as Open Hands, Minds and Hearts, is a public-private partnership effort that offers appealing and pertinent programs for entering the labor market. The Institute will offer two-year careers, in which 70% is practical and 30% theoretical. They will include Engineering, Technology, Business, Hospitality and Tourism and are expected to attract close to 5,000 students. Moreover, one of the advantages of the ITSE is that the courses offered by this institute will be recognized by the Technological University of Panama.

As for other strategies implemented by the Ministry of Labor, the offices of the Public Employment service have been modernized, and coverage is expected to extend to the entire national territory. In addition, the Employment Observatory is also considered a strategy within efforts to articulate education and labor, as it analyzes the labor market and identifies training needs and the most in-demand occupations. On the other hand, the Labor Exchange is the entity that lists vacancies from private businesses, along with the National Institute of Vocational Training for Human Development (INADEH), which trains individuals in response to the requirements of the labor force. Partnerships were also established with the CAF, IDB, ILO, and, in particular, with the

National Council on Private Businesses (CONEP). These partnerships have strengthened research on labor market trends, the exchange of information, and the development of new technologies to benefit young students in Panama.

For its part, and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Ministry of Education, aims to ensure that all citizens and residents of the country have equal opportunities to receive the same level of education. Furthermore, it focuses on infrastructure and education policies. With regard to infrastructure, it aims to eliminate schools that are in poor condition, remodel some existing schools, and build new ones. Another goal is to eliminate levels of illiteracy and establish an integral evaluation system.

The purpose of establishing an integral evaluation system is to start with the basics, that is, first establish if children can read. If a child cannot read, it will be difficult for him/her to acquire other knowledge such as math and science. Thus, to address the issue of youth employment it is important to first start here. For that reason, the integral system includes evaluation of infrastructure, management evaluation, evaluation of teacher performance, and evaluation of learning. Accordingly efforts are focusing on teacher training, tools and methodologies and include programs such as Bilingual Panama to develop teachers' English language skills. Another program is the After School program to strengthen the academic and interpersonal skills that impact the life of students.

The Ministry of Education is also reviewing the technical training itinerary, in other words, the knowledge of those who obtain certification from INADEH. It is also working on the certification of students from pre-secondary and secondary education, since dropout levels are high, especially in vulnerable zones. The ITSE is also implementing a new strategy, together with the Ministry of Labor, to strengthen technical training since the ITSE itself cannot cover the entire country, and other higher education institutes will be opened nationwide. Finally, the Ministry of Education aims to define the Framework for Qualifications, in the same way as Chile, and thereby contribute to youth employment strategies.

With these different intersectoral initiatives, and taking advantage of new technologies, Jamaica is working towards improving the outlook for youth.

The Experience of Jamaica

Dahlia Green

Director (a.i.) of the Electronic Labor Exchange
of the Ministry of Labor

Michelle Small Bartley

Director of the Youth Policy Division
of the Ministry of Education

Kevon Campbell

Senior Programme Development Specialist
of the Ministry of Education

The new technologies brought about by the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the ever-changing labor market pose not only challenges but also opportunities for youth employment. Recognizing these opportunities, the Jamaican government has employed various strategies including the use of technology to reach the youth population, among many other initiatives. Furthermore, it has implemented a strategy that involves the entire government, that is, not only the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Ministry of Education, but also other ministries, departments and agencies, such as the Ministry of Science, Energy, and Technology. The focus of these efforts is the inclusion of vulnerable and unattached youth, namely the young persons who are not in school and are not employed for over six months, who number over 140,000 young people, or 19% of the youth population. Other groups targeted by these efforts include teenage parents, youth with varied ability, LGBTQ youth, and homeless youth. However, it is sometimes difficult to reach these groups, and other factors such as their socio-economic conditions, the ability to integrate into the employment sector, and discrimination against people with disabilities and LGBTQ groups pose challenges.

Given those challenges and the importance of the issue, Jamaica has embarked on various intersectoral initiatives to address youth employment. These include community outreach initiatives, workshops, personal development sessions that are geared towards the development of soft skills which, research shows, many young people lack, and employability

skills sessions that include how to prepare resumes, write application letters and tips on how to prepare for an interview, among other activities. In addition, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education use job and career fairs where job seekers are given the opportunity to experience mock and actual interviews, and where they can access Labor Market Intelligence and career development information. In addition, the New Employment Opportunity (NEO) Programme, which is conducted in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank, aims to have 100 unattached youth reintegrated into the system and give them employment opportunities over the next few years.

Another strategy is to use the Labour Market Information System (LMIS), which is an Internet-based system of the Ministry of Labour that permits increased access to labor market information. The LMIS has three components: the Electronic Labour Exchange that provides online and offline services to job seekers and employers, such as posting and applying for jobs. There is also a Skills Bank, which is a database of skilled persons who have received certification from a vocational or educational institution, and finally, the Labor Market Intelligence which provides information on the local economy, population and the labor market. The LMIS also works with the Youth and Adolescent Policy Division (YAPD) through the Youth Jamaica online platform, operated by the Ministry of Education, which provides information on job opportunities to young persons. This platform caters specifically to youth as it not only uses a website but also different technology, such as social media and text/Whatsapp messaging, to provide this information. It also uses E-Learning Jamaica to provide education resources.

Jamaica has also implemented the National Youth Policy to address issues related to young people. It provides the framework for multisectoral collaboration, policy requirements and an Interagency Strategic Plan that indicates the roles and actions to be executed by each entity responsible for youth related programs. This Policy is implemented by the Ministry of Education's YAPD, which is also in charge of coordinating, planning, developing, monitoring and evaluating it. Regarding the policy, the YAPD has the following priority areas: education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, health and wellbeing, social inclusion and reintegration, and participation and mainstreaming.

Another important initiative developed by the Government to address youth employment is the creation of an Inter-Ministerial Committee, which will ensure collaboration regarding youth among Ministries, departments, agencies, non-governmental organizations and private sector entities, as well as monitor and evaluate policy outcomes. This Committee

will have a working group that will be responsible for employment and training, specifically. The HEART Trust also addresses youth employment through the National Unattached Program that seeks to reintegrate unattached youth mainly through apprenticeships. In addition, the National Youth Service provides work experience, internships, training and job placement. Other initiatives include collaborating with high schools and vocational institutions to prepare students to enter the labor market, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to provide degrees and certification in specialized areas, Youth Information Centres which operate as HUBs for entrepreneurship and facilitate community outreach and engagement and, finally, the Jamaica Emergency Employment Program (JEEP), which gives underemployed and unemployed youth apprenticeship and training opportunities.

Finally, given the Fourth Industrial Revolution, there are new technologies and realities to take into consideration. Youth in Jamaica, as in the rest of the world, are encountering technology that other generations did not have. Recognizing this new reality, Jamaica uses different approaches such as social media not only to reach youth but to provide valuable information to this population. An example of this is the aforementioned Youth Jamaica Platform. The government also provides workshops and training on how to access global work. In addition, to take advantage of digital technologies, the Ministry of Education partnered with the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology to provide young persons with training in emerging fields such as animation. This partnership also provides training in money management, Internet marketing, and freelancing, where services can be provided to persons around the world while working from Jamaica. With these different intersectoral initiatives, and taking advantage of new technologies, Jamaica is working towards improving the outlook for youth.

...the strategy implemented by Mexico for dealing with the issue of youth employment focuses not only on training but also on employment promotion.

The Experience of Mexico

Gerardo R. de la Torre Gonzalez

Director of Institutional Coordination and Reports
of the National Employment Service
Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare

When discussing the challenges of youth inclusion in the world of work, strengthening technical and vocational training is usually at the forefront. However, although this focus is crucial, often the problem goes beyond the specific situation of youth and is not exclusively related to the world of work or education. In fact, an important element that must be considered is appropriate economic development, which does not always exist and thus implies a lack of sufficient economic growth and creation of quality employment associated with it. Given this reality, the strategy implemented by Mexico for dealing with the issue of youth employment focuses not only on training but also on employment promotion, as well as other initiatives that involve different stakeholders.

These initiatives take place in a context where youth represent 30% of the total population in Mexico, and 50% of the unemployed population. Furthermore, due to the largely restricted nature of formal employment and the fact that the majority of youth lack qualified training, informal employment becomes not only a viable alternative, but the only alternative. This is especially true considering that the creation of quality employment in the current economy of the country is insufficient.

With regard to fostering economic growth and employment creation, the Government of Mexico is developing a project that promotes Special Economic Zones (ZEE). These zones arise from the Federal Law of Special Economic Zones to promote better economic conditions in certain territories of

the country that are lagging behind in terms of economic development and that have natural and logistical advantages to become highly productive regions with high levels of employment creation. The ZEE require the participation of all branches of the Federal Public Administration and of the State Governments where these projects take place. In addition, in order to promote employment and productivity, they require the participation of the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit (SHCP), the Secretariat of Economy (SE), the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS) and the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP), as well as the support of the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.

In order to support the process that allows for the implementation of the ZEE, an Interagency Human Capital Group was established, coordinated by the Federal Authority for the Development of the ZEE and the Economic Productivity Unit of the SHCP. This interagency group is in charge of promoting strategies and actions to develop training of human capital according to the needs of businesses, which helps attract national and foreign investment. Some instruments to strengthen human capital include models of inclusion into middle and higher education, which encompass professional and occupational guidance, curricula on technical pathways, and a model of qualified apprenticeships, among other elements. Other instruments include models of inclusion into higher education, which encompasses higher technical university education, as well as job placement programs and active labor market policies (job training and training for work, labor mobility, and fostering entrepreneurship). These policies are implemented with programs developed by the Secretariats of Labor and Social Welfare, of Economy and of Public Education.

Currently, through research and analysis, the ZEE project identifies the present and future needs of the region, employment opportunities and the necessary incentives, such as fiscal and promotion incentives. Knowledge of prospective investment, of the sectors and kinds of activities involved makes it possible to identify occupations and thus develop curricular training content that lives up to real expectations. This articulation between training and the needs of the productive sector that is found in other countries is a crucial element in youth inclusion strategies.

An important initiative to articulate associated policies with the country's economic growth needs and with the productive inclusion of youth is the creation of the National Productivity Committee (CNP). This Committee involves the majority of entities that have a say in the skills development, employment promotion, and productivity strategy of the country and the ZEE, as well as the business sector, business organizations and trade unions. The objective of the CNP is to recommend policies and concrete

projects that increase and democratize productivity in Mexico, in addition to defining integral policies addressing both supply and demand. This dual approach is fundamental given the importance of considering not just the real demands of the productive sector but also the supply: that is to say, the skills and abilities that youth have to offer in the labor market.

What youth have to offer depends on their education, training and skills, which is why having information on the current and future needs of the productive sectors is so necessary. Thus, pursuant to recommendations made by the CNP, a partnership was established with the Automotive Cluster of Guanajuato (CLAUGTO) and with the Secretariat for Public Education, which coordinated the integration of a methodological proposal and established instruments to determine what an occupational profile should contain. The objective of this partnership is to define, disseminate, and apply occupational profiles as a means of placement, as well as establishing recruitment protocols for the workers required by businesses, based on the new occupational profiles.

As regards the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare, it is worth mentioning the work of the National Employment Service (SNE). The SNE is involved in the development of human capital through training and labor inclusion models intended for job seekers. In order to serve the intended population (unemployed persons and employers), it serves more than 5 million people annually and, thanks to its services and support, places more than 1.3 million people in jobs. Youth, specifically, represent 54% of the population served. However, job placement rates are not sufficient as only 37% of people placed in jobs are youth. The reason for this is that youth are in the process of labor inclusion for the first time and thus do not always have the skills and abilities that the labor market requires. The SNE provides three models of service: a job placement mechanism with the labor exchange, an employment portal that amounts to a self-employment mechanism, and job fairs. In addition, there are specific support mechanisms, such as Bécate, which is a training program that allows for direct connection with job opportunities. The majority of beneficiaries are youth, and 8 in every 10 are formally placed in jobs. Another issue is labor mobility, which provides support to groups who must relocate due to insufficient access to employment in the region where they live. There is also a mechanism that promotes self-employment and provides support through resources, tools, and equipment that allow people to develop their own productive activity and generate income.

These are some of the most salient initiatives that Mexico is analyzing and deploying in order to address, through a variety of approaches, the challenges of youth inclusion.

This situation has led to major efforts to align professional qualifications with the real needs of the labor market, in addition to adjusting the contents of vocational education to match the needs of productive sectors where there is a deficit in the labor force and the needs of the country's strategic sectors.

The Experience of Brazil

Eline Neves Braga Nascimento

Secretary for Vocational and Technological Training
of the Ministry of Education

Higino Brito Vieira

Director of the Department of Labor and
Employment Policies for Youth of the Ministry
of Labor

In order to address the issues and challenges in the region, learning from the experiences of other countries is fundamental. For that reason, forums that facilitate the sharing of experience, such as the Intersectoral Workshop outlined in this publication, are increasingly important. They enable each country to learn from successful experiences and ones that can contribute to the development of new projects under different circumstances, and in the least amount of time. Therefore, Brazil values this exchange and reiterates its conviction that youth development is not only a challenge, but also a contribution to the future of the country.

In terms of the opportunities available to youth, Brazil has made significant progress despite recent economic and political challenges. That progress was possible due to a number of initiatives between different sectors, and to developments such as the National Education Plan (Plano Nacional de Educação). This National Plan covers the period from 2014 to 2024 and includes a series of well-structured goals designed to ensure the right to basic quality education in respect to access, the universalization of literacy, and increased schooling and educational opportunities. Noteworthy goals set forth in the National Plan include: guaranteeing a minimum of 25% enrollment for youth and adults in basic and secondary education, in a manner that is integrated with vocational education; tripling enrollment in mid-level technical-vocational education, while ensuring the quality of education; and, expanding public sector education by at least 50%.

In addition to the National Plan, Brazil also has the Apprenticeship Law (Lei da Aprendizagem), which serves as a framework for addressing youth employment. This law arises in a context where diversity itself presents a challenge in the country, given that 50 million people out of a population of 206 million are youth. These young people recently experienced a considerable increase in unemployment, which went from 15% to 26% between fourth quarter 2015 and first quarter 2016. In other words, in just six months, youth unemployment increased by 11%. For that reason, the initiatives undertaken by the Ministries of Labor and Education, as well as the initiatives pursued with other partners, are aimed not only at preventing any increase in those figures, but also at reverting the trend.

The Apprenticeship Law, enacted in 2000, has survived several governments and has established itself as an actual State Policy. The focus of this law is youth between the ages of 14 and 24, people with disabilities regardless of their age, and, first and foremost, adolescents. The law regulates any formal contract of no more than two years between apprentices and medium or large enterprises, and requires apprentices to be enrolled in an apprenticeship program. That is, they must be enrolled in a training institution that provides basic and specific contents related to the occupation for which they were hired. These entities come from the S System, from the Federal and State Vocational, Science and Technological Education Network, and from non-profits. Between 2015 and 2016, 790,745 apprentices were hired from a potential of 1.2 million. This shows that although the Ministry of Labor has made great progress, it still faces a great challenge: providing successful public-private intermediation and showing businesses that hiring apprentices is an investment that enables them to shape their own labor force, and not an expense.

In the last 10 years, 55% of apprentices have focused on one area: administration. This gives cause for concern considering that Brazil has 2,600 occupations, according to the Brazilian Classification of Occupations (CBO), and the challenges of the world of work require diversity. This situation has led to major efforts to align professional qualifications with the real needs of the labor market, in addition to adjusting the contents of vocational education to match the needs of productive sectors where there is a deficit in the labor force and the needs of the country's strategic sectors. Sectors suffering from workforce shortages include Information and Communications Technology, agricultural businesses and the 4.0 industry. It is particularly urgent to address these "deficits" or shortages, considering the challenges facing the future of work and the constant changes in professions and occupations. Given this scenario, the role of

the Ministry of Labor is worth highlighting as it is responsible for public policies and managing the apprenticeship program, and for articulation between the labor market and vocational training.

The Ministry of Education contributes to these strategies through the pedagogical structure of technical education, basic and continued education, and partnerships with other entities to provide vocational education. This is especially important since vocational education is considered to be the shortest path to entry into the labor market and an interesting alternative for professional pathways for youth. Investments and actions related to vocational education are already part of State policies in many countries. In Brazil, partners include the National Program for Access to Technical Education and Employment (Programa Nacional de Acesso ao Ensino Técnico e Emprego –PRONATEC), which promotes the expansion of vocational education and is turning into a more ample program encouraging youth to look for technical courses. The S System (SENAC, SENAI, SENAR, SENAT, among others) is another important part of this effort, as are the Vocational, Science and Technological Education Networks, the Federal Network – which consists of Federal Institutions and Private Technical Schools – Private Higher Education Institutions and State Schools administered by the Secretariat of Education or the Secretariats of Science and Technology, in addition to the municipal strategies focused on technical education.

The Ministry of Education has also partnered with other ministries, such as the Ministry of Justice, to extend the courses offered to people in prisons, including youth, as well as with the Ministry of Defense to train soldiers who, due to their extended stay in the military academy, are often not qualified for the world of work. Another noteworthy program is the Thousand Women Program, where close to 100,000 women victims of violence, or otherwise socially vulnerable women, were served. All these program-related actions have various fronts, many of which serve youth.

Current efforts also include a focus on mid-level integral education, which implies that mid-level technical-vocational education, for instance, will be offered only to those who have concluded their basic education. This allows students to acquire mid-level technical-vocational skills at the same institution, which implies only one enrollment. The reform of Secondary Education, by incorporating a technical itinerary as one of the options available for students, should encourage selection of this formative option.

The National Catalogue of Technical Courses (CNTC) is also worth highlighting. The CNTC is an instrument that lists the mid-level technical-vocational education courses offered, in order to guide institutions,

students, and society in general. The Catalogue contains 13 technological areas that include industrial production, security, cultural production and design, and educational and social development, among others. Looking to the future, there are six training sectors with greater demand for technicians: environment and production, metal-mechanic industry, energy, information and communications technology, construction, petro-chemistry and chemistry.

While many challenges remain, these efforts seek to address the realities of the fourth industrial revolution and involve huge investment in curricular and educational development associated with the world of work and income.



The Voice of Youth, Perspectives of Social Actors and Non-Governmental Experiences

Voices from the youth of the Americas: contributions on the issue of youth employment and education systems in the Americas Young Americas Business Trust (YABT)	87
Workers' perspective on youth employment and the coordination between labor and education Trade Union Technical Advisory Council (COSATE)	93
Youth in the Americas: The Employer Perspective Business Technical Advisory Committee on Labor Matters (CEATAL) International Organization of Employers (IOE)	99
Response from the Universities Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE)	105

They have solutions to offer that lead to the creation of cooperation networks and guidelines that allow governments to become strategic partners and facilitators of actions for change, and not solely resource providers.

Voices from the youth of the Americas: contributions on the issue of youth employment and education systems in the Americas

Rafael de Souza Fonseca

President of the Vale Empreder Association and representative of the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT)

Introduction

Youth are the most important stakeholders in the process of identifying and recognizing the issues of employment and education in this century, and they also have proposals for change. Therefore, they need governments and representation organizations to pay attention so that, through joint and coordinated efforts, they may carry out local actions that lead to significant global transformations.

Youth wish to be involved and assume responsibility for addressing the challenges of each region, instead of criticizing governments. They have solutions to offer that lead to the creation of cooperation networks and guidelines that allow governments to become strategic partners and facilitators of actions for change, and not solely resource providers. They see education models as something stimulating: as empowering youth and allowing them to explore their full creative potential, energy, and idealism. Listening to youth ensures that the ideal future is what we seek.

The youth proposals development process

The Young Americas Business Trust (YABT), as an international organization for cooperation, has worked closely with the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS) to promote the social and

economic development of youth around the world. This work has been done through incentives and the implementation of entrepreneurial programs in countries of the Americas, as means to overcome poverty, coordinate initiatives, and create opportunities for youth. The Talent and Innovation Competition of the Americas (“TIC Americas”), for instance, elicits the participation of young entrepreneurs who, over the years, have contributed thousands of solutions and innovative actions to the subtopics of the Summit of the Americas.

In 2005, the “**Young Americas Forum**” was created as an opportunity within the **Summit of the Americas**, for youth to become proactive leaders in the definition of State priorities and mandates. As a result of each forum, youth adopt a declaration of commitment, from which actions are developed and recommendations are presented to stakeholders involved with the forum and to governments.

Between the **1st Young Americas Forum**, held in Buenos Aires in 2005, and the **4th Forum**, held in Panama in 2015, youth have been able to connect more than 23,000 people, in schools, universities, NGOs, and governments, as well as entrepreneurs, business men and women, and stakeholders from civil society and the private sector. This work has led to consultations and virtual questionnaires, dialogues, fora, meetings, and assemblies that resulted in the creation of a Declaration of Commitment and a Plan of Action. The Plan of Action includes the creation of a Youth Network of the Americas, an Observatory to monitor and control proposals, and the organization of youth participation in upcoming Summits.

In addition, the **Youth Network of the Americas (RJA)**, the **Ibero-American Youth (JI)**, the **International Organization of Ibero-American Youth** and the **Vale Emprender Association** have produced other documents, as outcomes of the following events:

- Ibero-American Convention on the Rights of Youth, coordinated by the International Organization of Ibero-American Youth (OIJ), in Madrid, in 2012;
- Pan-American Youth Forum, held in Buenos Aires in May 2015;
- Dialogue for Latin America. Young Entrepreneurs: Drivers of Sustainable Growth, Brazil, 2015;
- 1st Forum of Youth Leaders from the Southern Cone, Salta, Argentina, 2016;

- “Debating the SDGs: What Role do Youth Play?” held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 2016;
- XXV Ibero-American Summit, held in Cartagena in October 2016, was the framework for the creation of the Ibero-American Pact for Youth;
- International Meeting on Youth Policies and Inequality in Latin America, held in Mexico in 2016.

Recommendations on Employment and Education

As part of the process of organizing youth participation in the **5th Young Americas Forum**, in Peru 2018, the following proposals were put forward:

- Provide opportunities for continuous participation in the Inter-American Committee on Education, and for Ministers to establish a common methodology to ensure that the youth perspective is included in public policy proposals;
- Guarantee that pre-school, primary, secondary, and higher education are cost free, as a fundamental human right, which reduces social gaps. Further, create specialized programs aimed at literacy and vocational education as a public policy, thereby strengthening the supply of social and labor skills;
- Improve the evaluation of current education systems, with a view to restructuring them and ensuring that the goal of pedagogical models is the development of integral, creative, innovative human beings, capable of critical thinking, thereby renewing teaching-learning processes and including the participation of all social sectors. For that, periodical consultations will be needed that allow for continuous improvement and contextualization of the education system;
- Regarding sexual diversity, inter-culturality, gender diversity and diverse identities: promote, strengthen and expand secular public education systems that include vulnerable youth;
- Promote education, training, and the implementation of technological and scientific literacy, thereby reducing the technological gap in urban and rural areas, and allowing technology to be used to create social value;

- Strengthen and articulate education systems and scientific research centers. Develop programs and de-bureaucratize mobility procedures for academics, volunteers and cultural exchanges in the Americas, and generate intersectoral strategic partnerships among multiple stakeholders;
- Facilitate the participation of families in the learning process and its connection with the cultural environment;
- Promote incentives for continuous and quality teacher training and improve the labor environment in educational communities;
- Conduct an extensive study on new trends in youth employment and their relation to the digital revolution, with a view to establishing guidelines for governments of the Americas on the implementation of education programs that create employment;
- Promote the social, economic, and political integration of youth with disabilities, while recognizing their right to employment, through the implementation of plans for accessing training and adaptation of workplaces;
- Promote explicit cooperation of youth in the development of social impact initiatives through the exchange of knowledge and services, and advocate their role as promoters of peace, through the creation of training programs for the prevention of violence and conflict resolution;
- Reinforce cultural practices and sports for youth.
- Finally, ensure that authorities – in response to these requests- create action plans and conduct evaluation and impact assessments, to safeguard social cohesion, proper compliance with those plans, the communication of results, and the continuous participation of youth so that any necessary adjustments can be made throughout the process.

Regarding entrepreneurship, the government can avoid hampering entrepreneurship by cutting red tape and establishing modern, tailored, practical, and functional legislation that offers mechanisms to attract young entrepreneurs and articulation between public and private initiatives.

Entrepreneurs are a product of market scarcity and of the need to meet demands and transform dreams into reality, because knowledge allows people to envision opportunities and propose real solutions to society's

problems. An entrepreneur is able to map his/her skills and those of the people around him/her and is able to manage efforts and resources. A competitive environment stimulates training of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, which stimulates the search for knowledge and, thus, increases the competitiveness of each region. This generates more wealth, which is then invested in education and completes the virtuous cycle. We must then invest in initiatives that encourage youth to expand their skills and talent, since the wealth of a nation is based on quantity and quality of its accumulated and applied knowledge. Furthermore, knowledge is vision, which allows people to make wiser and quicker decisions. Proposals put forward in this regard include:

- Increase the protagonism of youth in the entrepreneurial ecosystems, and in the development of social innovation projects, through collaborative platforms (“qualified accompaniment” or support), and through access to sources of funding;
- Promote scientific vocations and youth access to academic and scientific careers and to innovative entrepreneurship opportunities;
- Promote the economic empowerment of young women in terms of social shared responsibility and labor inclusion, through the development of productive skills, entrepreneurship programs, micro-financing and cooperatives;
- Strengthen public policies geared to the enhancement of cultural entrepreneurship and comprehensive training;
- Create systems of articulation/coordination among people with an entrepreneurial profile around ideas, actions, initiatives and projects at various levels of maturity;
- Create platforms for cooperation among international institutions, independent of governments, where countries of the Americas can share experiences, methodologies, missions, and opportunities to develop projects.

Improving the standards of formal education as a platform to access equal labor opportunities is essential. Further, it is important to offer flexible pathways of learning, as well as recognition, validation, and accreditation of the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired during formal and informal education.

Workers' perspective on youth employment and the coordination between labor and education

Marta Pujadas

Chair of the Trade Union Technical Advisory Council (COSATE)

Education is a lifelong human right and should be the starting point of the sustainable and inclusive development of a society as a whole. Education is essential for peace, tolerance, human fulfillment, and sustainable development and is crucial in achieving full employment and eradicating poverty. It is fundamental that all social and civil society stakeholders together commit to promoting lifelong training opportunities for all.

The education aspirations are embodied essentially in Goal 4 and the 7 targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims to “Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning”. Specifically, target 4.4 urges that by 2030 there should be a substantial increase in the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.

The transformation of the world of work in the past few years has affected the new generation of workers. Labor flexibilization, new atypical forms of employment, outsourcing and subcontracting result in current modes of precarization and informality that confront youth incorporated into the world of work with a change in paradigm in relation to their rights. International experience confirms that social dialogue and tripartism promote decent work, without exceptions, where education and human development are the basis for economic take-off and sustainable development.

A central point in the discussion on workers' qualifications is the need to establish collaborative actions among social stakeholders regarding vocational training and the importance of social dialogue in order to successfully confront the greatest challenge of our times: the creation of decent employment and wealth. In the framework of these actions of collaboration, concrete proposals and actions come into play in order to bring technical-vocational education to all workers at all levels of responsibility, thereby contributing to the quality of employment and productive employment.

In this regard, unions are vital for promoting equal opportunities for youth, reaffirming the integral focus of education, and articulating union development with vocational training and formal education. It is important to reaffirm union development as an important part of civic and social development that promotes morals, values, skills and abilities to strengthen and guide transformative actions with a view to achieving the political objective of building a sustainable and inclusive development model.

For this reason, it is important to highlight the social-political aspect of union development in order to strengthen unions and promote decent work. In this exchange, social actors can easily combine collective bargaining with promotion of vocational training. This virtuous framework is, however, being weakened as increasing social inequality causes productivity gaps in the poorest homes and further deepens exclusion.

Improving the standards of formal education as a platform to access equal labor opportunities is essential. Further, it is important to offer flexible pathways of learning, as well as recognition, validation, and accreditation of the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired during formal and informal education. For this, it is imperative to vindicate the role of the state in executing public policies regarding education and social inclusion. We must demand state policies for the elimination of all forms of child exploitation, with an integral approach that ensures that children and adolescents attend the public and free school system from pre-school onwards.

Access to a first job with decent employment should be a priority for States

Failure to develop these policies means that for people reaching an economically active age, there are deep inequalities: between citizens who have access to a good formal education and those who do not. This in

turn means that, when entering the labor market, problems of employability exceed the required qualification for those jobs. Access to jobs is determined by deep underlying inequalities.

In a context of family breakdowns, of state budget constraints, of societies evermore stratified and with a concentration of power in the form of domination, is it useful to talk of education as a pathway to personal development of youth without reviewing the contents of formal education? Surely it is important to define the model of society in which we aspire to achieve the most appropriate model of education. In that sense, democracy, the possibility of participating on an equal and free footing allows humans to become the focus once again. Only in a society with substantial respect for integral human rights can a real democracy be built.

Our region lives with significant inequalities to which youth, migrants, and women are profoundly vulnerable. The conditions of vulnerability make youth a group so heterogeneous that a uniquely flexible response to their demands is required. These conditions are based on sex, ethnic origin, and home and family socio-economic profile. The source of vulnerability is the logic to which the dominant production model responds. The deep global economic transformation, with production factors that are evermore dependent on scientific and technological advances, has expanded the demand for different types of schooling s to cater to their needs. Thus, even those who are incorporated into the labor market with completed education fall victim to the gap between the imposed demands of the productive apparatus and formal education. The common denominator between all these vulnerable groups is precarization. The lack of employment, the increase of atypical forms of employment, “false labor autonomy” and entrepreneurship allow for a form of income that, given the lack of decent work, becomes an alternative to the rights-based approach.

This understanding of inclusion does not generally address the need to make labor the revitalizing axis of social justice.

A virtuous model presupposes making public policies regarding formal education compatible with the bridge towards employability that, given sectoral realities, provides technical training through collective bargaining. The dizzying technological changes make this compatibility the key to enabling workers to enter the subsequent concentric circles of economic and human development and reduce the existing inequality gaps.

Technology can be a partner in this alternative of sustainable and inclusive development by overcoming social, gender, generational, racial, ethnic, and class gaps. For that reason, it must be part of the State policies aimed at social equality. One of the main challenges is understanding how to take advantage of technologies and that new policies must be adopted to ensure the following: full and decent employment, sustainability, occupational health and safety, social protection, and inclusive growth.

The future of work as a concern for society does not entail adaptation to the vertigo that comes with the technological changes. The world is preparing itself to discuss how the advances of technology can provide societies with more equal opportunities and better jobs. The debate regarding the future of work is present in the agenda of the ILO and, as far as the union movement is concerned, places the working man firmly at the center of a focus based on rights.

We must then ask ourselves: What type of education is going to be the most appropriate for the future work of our youth? For that, the following is important: greater training in technological skills, ensuring that workers have learning access and opportunities and are not left out of the technological leaps; and tripartite intervention in the new paradigms regarding sustainability and automatization. In this way, we workers will be prepared for changes in the productive processes without giving up rights or the quality of our jobs. The need to overcome situations of vulnerability blurs the standards of decent jobs for those young people, migrants, and women who enter a labor market that demands more and pays less.

After reaching agreements, it is necessary that stakeholders double down on efforts to develop more and better training activities that include the following: technical aspects of each occupation, a culture of work, health, security and environment, civil values such as solidarity and collective participation, and integral, integrated and continuous education processes that accompany the changing and diverse socio-labor contexts. Further, understanding education and training as a tool that contributes to building the society to which we all aspire!

It is demonstrably clear that these challenges are best addressed through education, training, and support for entrepreneurship. In other words, young people must be equipped with the skills they need for success and the conditions must be in place to create opportunities to actively employ these developed skills.

Youth in the Americas: The Employer Perspective

John Craig

Counsel to the Canadian Employers Council and
Spokesperson for the Business Technical Advisory
Committee on Labor Matters (CEATAL)

Maria Paz Anzorreguy

Coordinator of CEATAL and Senior Advisor of the
International Organization of Employers (IOE)

Individuals and organizations who have been active in the international labor community, particularly in the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) and the Inter-American Network of Labor Administration (RIAL), have long been aware that many of the most important issues of the international labor agenda cannot be resolved solely through labor laws, labor market policies and tripartism. Many issues raise complex legal and policy matters that can only be addressed meaningfully through coordinated efforts by state actors and stakeholders across several disciplines.

Youth employment is a key example of an area where coordinated efforts are required and can make a significant impact on outcomes. Young people in the Americas are facing tremendous challenges in securing meaningful employment and pursuing careers. It is demonstrably clear that these challenges are best addressed through education, training, and support for entrepreneurship. In other words, young people must be equipped with the skills they need for success and the conditions must be in place to create opportunities to actively employ these developed skills.

In the Americas today, and indeed around the world, there is an ongoing debate about promoting sustainable development. Economies and societies must grow in a sustainable manner so that issues such as

poverty, inequality, and social deficits can be addressed while also ensuring greater opportunities for future generations. Employers believe that true social and economic progress depends on growing local and regional economies, creating decent and productive jobs in the formal sector, and investing in education, skills development and health care. For this to occur, a vital private sector is critical, and must be respected and supported. In the overwhelming majority of countries, the private sector is not only the major driver of economic activity but is also the predominant creator of new jobs.

The principles of sustainability require planning for an improved future. What sustainability means, in the simplest of terms, is that through collective efforts, there can be a significant and positive impact on the lives of young people. This explains why the employers of the Americas have made it their priority to promote programs and policies to address the needs of young people.

One such body utilizing the concept of sustainability to improve conditions for young people is the Business Technical Advisory Committee on Labor Matters ("CEATAL"). CEATAL represents the employer associations of each Organization of American States ("OAS") member state. It is coordinated through the International Organization of Employers ("IOE"), the largest network of private sector employers in the world. Through these employer associations, CEATAL represents tens of thousands of small, medium and large private sector employers across the Americas.

On December 3, 2015 at the XIX IACML meeting in Cancun, Mexico, CEATAL presented its Declaration on the theme "Youth, Entrepreneurship, and Education" ("Declaration"). Through this Declaration, employers across the Americas adopted a number of key principles, which are outlined below.

The Declaration explicitly acknowledges that young people represent a significant portion of the population of the Americas and are the present and future of our societies. Statistics show that the age range of 15-29 represents 25.6 percent of the population of the Americas. The Declaration further acknowledges the high level of youth poverty and unemployment in the Americas and that inadequate coordination to address these issues will result in the loss of tremendous opportunities for social and economic growth.

To ensure that opportunities do not go unrealized, the CEATAL Declaration proposes to focus coordinated efforts on the development of public policies, with a particular focus on promoting education, entrepreneurship, and investment.

In respect of education, the Declaration calls for greater consultation between education authorities and the private sector to ensure that young people have the qualifications required by companies and that professional training systems offer educational experiences that are aligned with new types of jobs and the evolving needs of enterprises. The Declaration acknowledges the critical role that education, professional training and apprenticeships play within companies in enabling entry into the labor market. Education systems should be on the ‘cutting edge’ of the economy and labor market, preparing youth with practical skills desired by companies. The Global Apprenticeship Network (“GAN”), discussed below, is a clear example of the success that can be achieved through coordinated efforts to ensure that youth have the appropriate skills to succeed in the labor market.

In respect of entrepreneurship, CEATAL’s Declaration characterized it as a social value to be re-affirmed and to become a focus of education. Education and training programs should create an environment that promotes business development, risk-taking and innovation. Given that the majority of new jobs are created by small businesses, it is clear that the future of economic life in the Americas is heavily dependent on today’s young people going into business for themselves, establishing new micro and small enterprises, and creating decent, productive jobs in the formal economy.

In respect of investment, the Declaration highlights that youth employment cannot be created by legislative fiat. New jobs in an ever-evolving economy depend on private sector investment. As a result, governments must strive to promote a business climate that supports investment for future growth.

CEATAL is encouraged by the fact that private sector employers are actively pursuing initiatives that seek to promote the development of young people and create opportunities for them. Examples of initiatives include mentorship, internship and education programs provided to youth through joint efforts between private sector employers and colleges/universities. Further, private sector companies are partnering with large and impactful international organizations such as the United Nations Children’s Fund (“UNICEF”) to support and even deliver early childhood

education programs that have a tangible and long-lasting impact on young people. As well, the private sector is playing a growing role in promoting initiatives for children's health, such as nutrition programs directed at the communities in which companies operate.

One of the strongest examples of coordinated efforts to promote youth employment is the GAN. The GAN was established in 2013 in response to the global youth unemployment crisis and the need for business to develop skills for the future of their companies. The GAN has developed into a successful international coalition of committed companies, international organizations and employers' federations dedicated to creating job opportunities for youth and a skills base that matches labor demand. GAN National Networks (GNNs) are the in-country platforms, which allow the GAN to achieve concrete results. The GNNs' essential role is to quantify commitments and root the GAN concepts within the national context; catering to the distinct economic, cultural and institutional needs present at both the national and local level. Commitments for work-readiness programs (e.g. apprenticeships, internships and learnerships) by member companies have been impressive.¹

In total, the GAN has participated in 160 major international events, collected more than 30 best practices, produced 10 toolkits and launched 9 GNNs. In the Americas, there are GNNs in Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico. The United States Department of Labor is actively engaged in the development of GNNs in the hemisphere by supporting the GNN in Costa Rica, (which will be launched December 12, 2017) and Argentina and promoting apprenticeships and work readiness programs in Latin America.

At the international level, the GAN Secretariat serves as an international think tank involved in oversight, strategic direction and planning, overall comparative policy and legislation, and participation in global events and forums.

At the national level, the GNNs advocate for work-readiness programs/ apprenticeships, and attempt to elevate the status of those programs in the countries where they operate. Advocacy plays an important role for the GNNs, as apprenticeships programs have historically faced some stigma. This is often the result of a lack of knowledge of the benefits of apprenticeships as an alternative to a traditional career path.

¹ Commitments for work-readiness programs are showcased in detail in the Catalogue of Best Practices by Member Companies and Partners, which can be found here: <http://www.gan-global.org/report>.

Many countries are now starting to adopt or revive apprenticeships based on models of countries with strong apprenticeship systems and low youth unemployment rates (e.g. Switzerland, Germany and Austria).² Multi-stakeholder dialogue with governments, parents, training institutes and youth are strongly encouraged to enhance the perception of apprenticeship programs and to influence policies that create more opportunities for youth.

The takeaway from efforts to date, and notably the GAN, is that the private sector can be very effective when it joins with local, national and international institutions to deliver programs that promote the future of young people and, in turn, a sustainable future. Governments and the OAS must do their part to encourage and support such initiatives. In addition, the RIAL is the ideal body within the OAS for coordinating information across the Americas about best practices and for disseminating information to governments and stakeholders about initiatives and their outcomes.

² In October 2017, the joint GAN, Accenture and ETH Zurich, Swiss-American Chamber of Commerce “Jobs Now!” Booklet was officially launched in Washington DC. The Booklet features experienced from companies, CEOs, and US Governors on the merits of applying Swiss-style apprenticeships in the US. The Booklet could be a helpful resource for other countries in the hemisphere interested in apprenticeships. The Booklet can be found here: <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insight-swiss-style-training>.

Throughout the Americas, different countries have been working on the development of educational subsectors and academic structures offering a great number of technical and vocational programs largely articulated with their own industrial and business sectors.

Response from the Universities

David Julien

Executive Director

Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE)

Context

With almost 40 years in the field of higher education, the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE) is internationally recognized for providing different spaces and platforms for collaboration to more than 350 higher education institutions (HEIs) of the Americas. Its mission is to promote reflection, debate and the implementation of innovative strategies with the goal of increasing the impact of higher education in the region.

Through its different continental and intercultural programs, IOHE is a truly academic network that brings together experts in higher education to address the interests and priorities of its membership comprised of HEIs of all educational levels, and local, regional and national government entities, the private and philanthropic sectors, and a wide range of international, governmental and non-governmental organizations, that share similar objectives.

Within this context, and motivated by the commitment to increase the scope of the organization and ensuring the relevance of its activities, IOHE signed a Collaboration Agreement with the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2003. This agreement has allowed IOHE to participate in different initiatives like the Intersectoral Workshop on Youth Employment, which took place in Brasilia in 2016. Recently, IOHE was also present at the IX Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education, “The

Inter-American Educational Agenda: Building Alliances and Advancing Towards the Sustainable Development Goals”, that took place in Nassau in February 2017.

General Outlook

The World Education Forum of May 2015 resulted in the publication of the “Incheon Declaration: Education 2030”, which presented a global consensus regarding the need to provide inclusive, equitable, quality educational services that promote “lifelong learning for all”¹. It is particularly interesting to bring our attention to point 10 of this Declaration, which establishes the commitment of “promoting quality lifelong learning opportunities”, as well as “equitable and increased access to quality technical and vocational education” (UNESCO, 2015, pg. 68). The commitments outlined in this Declaration now further support the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4 of the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

Throughout the Americas, different countries have been working on the development of educational subsectors and academic structures offering a great number of technical and vocational programs largely articulated with their own industrial and business sectors. The ultimate objective is to strengthen the skills and increase the relevance of their labor force through investment in human capital. These training centers, and vocational and technical education institutions are highly committed in increasing the productivity, labor mobility and employability of their future graduates. During this time, IOHE – as a continental organization – has had the privilege of accompanying its members in this process of reflection, dialogue, adaptation and response to the current environment.

To provide evidence of what has been mentioned above, it is worth taking the time to review the experiences of certain member institutions from different countries of the region. In Canada, for example, we find the particular case of Quebec and its Cegep² education system now celebrating its 50 years. The 48 technical and vocational training institutions that comprise this network, address a population of almost 200,000 students through diverse technical and technological training programs. Given that this subsystem of higher education is part of the basic education structure of the province, Quebec now has the highest post-secondary graduation rate of the country (47% in Quebec, versus 28%

¹ UNESCO. (2015). *World Economic Forum 2015, Final Report*. Paris: UNESCO.

² <http://www.fedecegeps.qc.ca/>

in Ontario and 31% average in Canada)³. Further, its graduates report 30% higher income than those who do not have technical studies.⁴ In the United States, the wide network of Community Colleges offers social mobility and labor inclusion opportunities to 12.2 million people⁵. In addition, successful programs articulated with the business sector such as SAWorks, developed by Alamo Colleges⁶ from San Antonio in Texas, enhance the academic experience with practical workplace experiences adding value to the students' program. This approach better serves students and businesses in the region and beyond.

Regarding noteworthy examples in Latin America, we find institutions such as the INACAP in Chile, SENA in Colombia or CONIF in Brazil. In all these cases, the HEIs work closely with the business sector in order to address the needs of the labor sector and thus adapt their programs. Mexico is a particularly interesting case considering the accelerated development of the technical and technological education subsystem. Although it was only 25 years since the first Technological University opened its doors, this higher education subsystem now serves 242 thousand students in 109 institutions, "with the goal of preparing higher level professionals and promoting their inclusion into the national productive activity".⁷ Therefore these institutions are continuously looking for ways to collaborate with the industry in order to develop a labor force that addresses the demands and specific profiles of the local sectors.

This fast-paced evolution of the educational sector in the region has had an important impact on our Organization. We now have a larger number of technical and technological higher education institutions as part of our membership and that has motivated the establishment of collaboration spaces specifically aimed at this sector. It is thus that the Inter-American Space of Technical and Technological Institutions of Higher Education (EIESTEC) was established in 2014.⁸ From the beginning, this continental platform has been understood as a joint effort between IOHE and a dedicated group of institutions to promote communication and articulation between institutions of technical and technological higher education. In addition, it aims at better positioning short programs as well as academic

3 http://www.fedecegeps.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Fiche_Regard-1-R%C3%A9seau_coll%C3%A9gial_public-2016.pdf

4 http://www.fedecegeps.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Fiche_Regard-1-R%C3%A9seau_coll%C3%A9gial_public-2016.pdf

5 <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/AACCFactSheet2017.pdf>

6 <https://www.alamo.edu/projects/saworks/>

7 <http://cgut.sep.gob.mx/>

8 <http://www.oui-iohe.org/la-asamblea-regional-de-colombia-de-la-oui-se-llevo-a-cabo-en-la-sede-de-la-universidad-del-cauca-en-popayan-colombia/>

programs articulated with the productive sector, in order to facilitate future graduates with access to the labor market.

This initiative has grown at par with the evolution and consequent response to the needs of the technical and technological higher education sector of the Americas. Further EIESTEC meetings took place in Santiago, Chile (2015)⁹, Cali, Colombia (2016)¹⁰ and most recently, Montreal, Canada, in October 2017.¹¹ This last EIESTEC meeting took place within the framework of the Conference of the Americas on International Education, CAEI-2017, which dedicated one of the plenary sessions to fulfill a commitment established during the Intersectoral Workshop, of bringing together the OAS, the International Labour Organization (ILO) along with government representatives and representatives of HEIs from the continent, led by IOHE. This session concluded with the signing of a collaboration agreement with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and its regional network CINTEFOR (Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training) with the purpose of strengthening the activities of the EIESTEC network across the continent. This is without a doubt an important agreement that will provide greater articulation with national and international organizations of the technical and technological higher education sector. Furthermore, it will improve collaboration with Secretariats and Ministries of Labour and Education of the Americas.

Looking Forward

Considering the situation previously described and the continental scope of our organization, and in particular the partnerships and mechanisms of collaboration that are available to IOHE, we propose developing, through the EIESTEC program, a general consultation to better understand the situation of youth employment in the Americas. This would be done through the 350 HEI (from 28 different countries) that are members of the organization, with the following perspectives in mind:

1. Articulation between HEI and the Business Sector

Identify the HEIs of the continent that already have collaboration experiences with businesses and the local industrial sector, whether through participation in consultative committees, updating curricula, sectoral articulation or skills accreditation, among others.

⁹ <http://www.oui-iohe.org/es/ii-encuentro-eiestec/>

¹⁰ <http://www.oui-iohe.org/eiestec-3/>

¹¹ <http://www.oui-iohe.org/es/iv-encuentro-eiestec/>

2. Skills and Labor Market Demands

Articulation with industrial clusters and/or supply chains (from SMEs to larger companies) to identify required labor skills and define relevant lifelong learning and vocational training programs.

3. HEIs Management Training

Design management training programs that may help improve certain aspects of the work of educational leaders, strengthen inter-institutional connections, and learn about good practices and trends in this sector.



Lessons Learned and Policy Recommendations to Strengthen Coordination between Education and Labor for Youth Employment

At the end of the Workshop, participants were divided into three Working Groups, in order to identify the main lessons learned and policy recommendations.

Results of Working Group 1	113
Results of Working Group 2	119
Results of Working Group 3	123

Results of Working Group 1

Moderator: Gerardo de la Torre

Director of Institutional Consultation and Reports of the National Employment Service, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare of Mexico

Lessons Learned

- 1.** Strategies to involve employers and workers' organizations in the definition of technical education and vocational training are necessary. Some useful strategies are:
 - Develop surveys for employers on their technical skills requirements in the short and medium term. It's necessary to be clear and understand what they need.
 - Generate cross-cutting specific and generic profiles by sectors and activity classifications, with the active participation of employers and workers' organizations
 - From public employment services, support employers in the definition of job profiles, mainly for small and medium enterprises.
- 2.** Vocational education and training must respond to a country vision - where we want to go - and be linked to sustainable economic and productive development strategies. This includes understanding the dynamics of industrial, commercial, agricultural and service development; as well as the development dynamics at the sub-national level (regional, provincial) and, if possible, at the local/municipality level, to define vocational training courses and contents.

3. Create teams within the Ministries of Education and Labor, which have the vision and perspective to integrate the technical or organizational needs of both sectors to facilitate the definition and articulation of intersectoral policies in favor of flexible professional training and in accordance with the requirements of the productive sector. This implies having, within both Ministries, professionals who know about or have studied and developed their professional trajectories in professional technical training and the transition of youth into the labor market or to the productive sectors.
4. Social dialogue has a very important role in defining and implementing policies on labor inclusion, vocational training, and the promotion of entrepreneurship and, in this sense, contributes to a closer link between education and labor. Social dialogue is key in the development of occupational profiles and in the orientation of training. It is important to point out that unions understand training as an extension of collective bargaining.
5. One of the most important challenges of vocational training is to encourage young people to seek their vocation based on their interests and abilities - to develop what they like to do. Help them identify what makes them happy (since basic education), not just to build their resume.

It must be taken into consideration, that countries in the region operate in economies in which industrial revolutions (second, third and fourth) coexist and intertwine, making policy development in favor of vocational guidance and training for labor inclusion and production of young people even more complex.

The current context calls for flexible public policies for professional training, labor inclusion and entrepreneurship development that are adapted to the regional and sectoral social, cultural and environmental contexts.

6. Life skills, also called soft skills, are key in the labor market, even more important in the current context of a constantly evolving world of work.
7. It is recognized that education is too 'Edu-centric' and that it needs to be effectively adapted to the needs and to the social and employment evolution of the countries of the region.

8. Faced with an environment of constant and accelerated transformation, as shown by the so-called “fourth industrial revolution”, education (basic education, technical training and secondary and vocational education) faces the great challenge of adapting to this social, economic, political and cultural change, therefore, the following factors, among others, should be taken into consideration:
 - The role of teachers, as multipliers of modern techniques and flexible vocational training, linked to productive organizations. This is central to linking education to the world of work.
 - To involve universities in discussions on the definition of contents of primary, secondary and technical-vocational education, as well as vocational training, in order to define educational policy measures and technical and professional vocational training in the short, medium and long terms that adapt to the productive environment with the support of business and labor organizations.
9. Youth councils (regional, national and sub-national) are indispensable fora to include the voice and expectations of the youth, given it is essential to listen to young people about their aspirations and needs, as well as to understand the different generations (millennials, generation Z, digital natives).

Recommendations

1. Involve all actors, including employers and trade unions, in vocational training, and achieve the participation of all actors in a systemic and coordinated manner. In order to achieve this, it's necessary to strengthen consultation mechanisms and instances such as vocational training, productivity, and employability Committees or Councils.
2. Strengthen the diagnoses, through the analysis of trends and behaviors of the labor market based on information systems / labor market observatories, fed by censuses and surveys of business activity, work and productive occupation and development of technologies. Take advantage of studies and analysis on the subject to define, reformulate and adapt professional training and technical and vocational education to the goals of labor and productive inclusion of young people.

- 3.** Develop articulated structures between the Ministries of Labor and Education, with public servants whose profiles and trajectories specialize in the areas of vocational training and technical education, to achieve a better link between education and training with the world of work.
- 4.** Link vocational and professional technical training to local, regional, national and global development priorities in a flexible manner with a long-term vision. (From the local context to the global context).
- 5.** Evaluate and define the characteristics of target populations for training, and attend to the great diversity of our countries, in order to achieve good results in labor market insertion. Within these characteristics it is important to consider the income profiles and adapt the training to the particular needs of each group. For example, in the case of young women, include issues of child care and non-discrimination; and in ethnic groups harmonize uses and customs.
- 6.** Work with other sectors (health) in the care of young people, especially the vulnerable youth. It is necessary to strengthen the capacity of public employment services to offer comprehensive care to young people for their access to: formal labor and productive integration, training and capacity development with interventions according to their profiles, labor mobility, and health services, among others.

Results of Working Group 2

Moderator: Keysha Bastian

Assistant Director of Education, Career and Technical Education of the Ministry of Education of The Bahamas

Lessons Learned

1. Education must be collaborative and no longer in isolation.
2. Career Planning must be seen as critical to senior high school education, so as to allow for measured decisions by students.
3. Parental involvement in the education process is critical for the student's progress.
4. Education plans are segmented and even though they appear to target all youth, a bias seems to exist in favor of those above the poverty line.
5. There is still a lack of marketing of the value of a TVET education as a viable & competitive option for youth engagement, reflected in the allocation of resources and promotion of the area.
6. There must be more involvement of stakeholders in education. There seems to be a lack of interest on part of students to be engaged in the conversation on education, this has to be addressed.
7. TVET is a means to address labor and youth engagement, but many programs have been noted to focus more heavily on the service industry as opposed to the production and manufacturing industries.

8. Many still see a quality education as solely academic, ignoring the highly technical skills sets needed in the global community

Recommendations

1. Education must adapt a preventative attitude and not one that is reactionary. Governments should seek to create programs and skills sets that address labor market needs, but also anticipate future projections and provide training accordingly.
2. Develop policies for education that transcend political parties and become national oriented. A national platform for education should be developed across political divides, there are some examples in the region that have brought together political parties and stakeholder to develop long term education goals and policies.
3. Create Intersectoral Ministry working committees, with those that have implication in education and youth employment.
4. Develop thorough assessments of diversified initiatives within varying ministries that have implications for youth engagement, in order to ensure a successful implementation.
5. Develop a modular approach to Technical Education with Competency Certification at each level to engage unattached youth (i.e. not working/not in school).
6. Develop afterschool Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that consider the role of single mothers, or mothers of a young age.
7. A strengthened CTE Competency Certificate, as a part of the main stream criteria to earn high school diplomas.
8. CTE programs, for relevance and reliability, should seek to expose students to an internship program for immersion and transfer of knowledge from academic to application.
9. Increase investments in structured entrepreneurship programs to create expansion in the labor market and provide direct entry, employment opportunities.

- 10.** Target at risk youth through social/civic and community outreach, considering some of them are not in schools.
- 11.** Include fundamental civics skills in curriculum. Teach students to be responsible citizens is fundamental to reshaping nations.
- 12.** Engage youth and students in the initial dialogue towards policy design, where they feel that their opinions matter. It was recognized that many efforts are made to engage youth after decisions are made.
- 13.** Improve involvement of stakeholders in education, including parents, teachers and private sector.
- 14.** Improve dialogue among governments in the Caribbean region as to address simple inconsistencies, for example the school leaving age. This was mentioned in the context of this Group, which was mostly comprised by Caribbean representatives, considering the existence of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy.

Results of Working Group 3

Moderator: Rodrigo Vasquez

Head of the Training Department of the National Training and Employment Service (SENCE) of Chile

Lessons Learned

- 1.** The disarticulation between education and labor policies in relation to youth employment has not contributed to the effective development of programs to facilitate school - work transitions.
- 2.** Lack of coordination with cross-sectoral policies for young people, such as child care or health systems, does not favor synergies between different public-private initiatives that promote higher levels of youth employment and better quality.
- 3.** The lack of information systems and methodologies to understand occupational demand, which could provide info on future jobs in each territory, has affected the pertinence and foresight of public policies.
- 4.** It is necessary to achieve greater equity in access and greater quality of interventions in youth employment policies. This is proportionally related to the variable of resources, expressed in the human factor -the facilitators, technical groups-, as well as infrastructure, methodological resources, and in how we manage to increase the levels of investment in order to be able to improve policies towards youth.

5. It is necessary to advance in greater stability of the sectorial education and labor policies, avoiding abrupt changes or budget limitations due to changes in government. In that sense, to advance from the project and program's logic, to stable policies that remain in time and effectively allow progress (also in modular form, building progressive careers), requires, as a condition, that states have policies that are permanent over time.

Recommendations

1. Strengthen secondary education and technical-secondary education to promote a comprehensive education that facilitates the bridges and transitions from the world of education to the world of work, and from the world of secondary education to occupational training. This relates to updating and improving technical skills, in particular improving the profiles of current expenditures of secondary education, as well as basic and socio-emotional skills.
2. Strengthen tripartism (state-employers-workers) in the design and management of policies and programs, having the effective commitment from companies to open spaces for youth employment. In the cases where their expertise is pertinent, also consider the opinion of non-governmental organizations.
3. To incorporate elements of the world of work, citizenship, rights and duties, aiming at a more versatile training. To think not only of the eventual necessity of a productive sector, with respect to a certain function, but the training of youth in life skills through work.
4. In regards to qualification frameworks, recognize different knowledge types, regardless of the form in which they have been acquired. In this sense, strengthen and improve competency certification systems, articulated with modular training systems that allow the closure of gaps detected in competency assessments.
5. Curriculums, training plans and methodological instruments must be adapted to the entry conditions and particularities of each target group and each territory, aiming also to know the relevance of the training according to the standards included in the respective qualification frameworks.
6. Invest in the training of teachers and facilitators, especially in emerging issues such as innovation, and new technologies, where there

- is a growing demand for training. Currently, there are no trained teachers to develop training in new technologies, relevant to companies' needs.
- 7.** Greater articulation with companies to detect future occupational needs, thus providing feedback on the training offer.
 - 8.** Organize training systems in a modular way using the dynamics of both the youth and companies. In that sense, if in general we are targeting programs for a first job, we need to modularize them in order to achieve better intervention dynamics. More specialized trainings should be delivered throughout life and with greater financing from companies.
 - 9.** Define / develop "training routes" that allow the achievement of career paths from a trade or occupation at an initial level to a technical level (baccalaureate) and, where appropriate, at a professional level. There are already existing experiences of some training routes that allow the delineation of this trajectory.
 - 10.** Carry out strategies of technical education positioning in the productive sectors in order to improve the opening of new jobs through the commitment and adherence of companies. This is coupled with revaluing vocational and technical education and training to the population in general, which values baccalaureates more, making it a viable and desirable option.
 - 11.** Continue to move forward in the institutional strengthening of education and labor entities through trained technicians for policy monitoring. Due to the changes of government and authorities, medium level technicians are required to ensure the permanence and sustainability of the initiatives that are underway.
 - 12.** Consider entrepreneurship programs for technical levels within the Ministries of Education and Labor in addition to professional studies, research, innovation, and consulting programs, to be able to specify sectoral diagnoses and new forms of intervention.
 - 13.** Strengthen or improve labor observatories as a way of systematizing labor market information and making it available to the youth. Take the information available in different entities, systematize, process and make it available so that young people effectively have information for their decision-making.

- 14.** To follow up with graduates, to identify trends in employment permanence, continuous studies, etc., so that they are not only trained, or receive some sort of labor intermediation, but that they can continue to be monitored once they are employed.
- 15.** Initiatives to improve youth employment should be framed within a set of active labor market policies; taking into account shared and organized actions with labor intermediation policies, socio-occupational orientation, job training, recruitment incentive programs, and public employment programs, among others.
- 16.** Improve monitoring and evaluation of youth employment policies. Due to budget availability, it is difficult to consider better mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. However, it is necessary that governments also develop this line of management.

Suggested Following Steps

- 1.** Enhance south-south cooperation to strengthen all institutions to be able to exchange practices, and learn from other countries.
- 2.** The systematization of these conclusions should be sent respectively at the level of Ministers, in such a way that systematization becomes an input for the programming of sectoral actions for our governments.



OAS

More rights for more people

**Organization of American States
Department of Human Development, Education and Employment
Executive Secretariat for Integral Development**

17th Street and Constitution Ave. N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20006, USA

www.oas.org/sedi www.rialnet.org

trabajo@oas.org



RIAL

Inter-American Network
for Labor Administration



Inter-American
Committee on
Education