LIFELONG LEARNING STRATEGY - G20 MEETING

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – BUSINESS STRATEGY ON LIFELONG LEARNING

Business strongly supports the creation of a Global Training Strategy to respond to the current financial and jobs crises and also to adapt labour markets from the long-term perspective. Business calls on G20 governments to enhance delivery of lifelong learning and employability to ensure that the needs of companies and learners are better served, especially by ensuring:

ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR ALL

- Basic education should provide basic and employability skills to all.
- Education systems should develop entrepreneurship and economic skills as well as recognize the role of enterprises in the economy.
- VET schools should be reinforced, integrated in education systems with bridges and oriented to work.
- Migrant workers should receive a particular focus, especially by recognizing their skills.
- Education and training systems should include the latest technology, equipment, processes and practices in order to increase quality and flexibility.
- Career advice, information and guidance are important to support school leavers.

MATCHING EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO THE NEEDS OF THE LABOUR MARKET WITH A SYSTEMIC CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO CHANGE

- Education and training systems should ensure that companies' needs are met.
- Governments should promote partnerships, integration and information sharing.
- Business has a critical role in identifying and providing information on labour market needs. Employers' organizations are the channel for this information.
- Training and employment services should enhance the employability of job seekers and their capacity to re-enter the labour market.

EMPLOYABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY DURING ONE'S WHOLE PROFESSIONAL LIFE

- Lifelong learning policies should enable employers to hire people with the right skills, and to adapt their workforce to current and future needs, and facilitate the entry of people into work.
- Business should provide training opportunities to employees internally or through training providers and provide on-the-job training.
- Employees must meet their responsibilities to manage education, careers, pursue opportunities and maintain employability.
- Skills should be transferable, and policies should recognise and support the portability of skills.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND SYSTEM RENEWAL

- Education and training policies should be subject to a rigorous process of continuous evaluation and system improvement.

Business calls on G20 governments to enhance delivery of lifelong learning and employability to ensure that the needs of companies and learners are better served, especially by ensuring:

1. **Access to quality education and vocational training for all**
2. **Matching education and training to the needs of the labour market with a systemic capacity to respond to change**
3. **Employability and flexibility during one's whole professional life**
4. **Continuous improvement and system renewal**

These four principles are described in the following strategy.

INTRODUCTION

EMPLOYER PRINCIPLES FOR A G20 TRAINING STRATEGY

Business strongly supports the creation of a Global Training Strategy to respond to the current financial and jobs crises and also to adapt labour markets from the long-term perspective. Improved lifelong learning[1] will contribute to minimising the impact of future downturns in the global economy and will help to ensure as many working people are retained in jobs and in the labour market as possible. Lifelong learning that meets the needs of the economy, employers and learners is pivotal to business growth and job creation.

Governments, individuals and communities must effectively engage to maximise the contribution of lifelong learning to labour market outcomes (see Annex). We need all the human capital we have if we want to achieve sustainable growth, create innovation, foster prosperity, raise living standards and well-being, meet demographic challenges, as well as eradicate poverty. Through their global representative organisations, employers in and outside the G20 are closely engaged with the ILO, and with other organisations such as the OECD, in the formulation of the Global Training Strategy requested by the G20 leaders (Pittsburgh, 2009).

There is an ongoing need to improve the relevance of education and training provision to the needs of the economy, employers and learners – in terms of pre-employment education and training, and education and training for the current workforce. This includes generic skills that support an adaptable and a flexible workforce and specific technical skills that are important to a range of industries and occupations. They are important for the flexibility and adaptability of both workers and their employers in adjusting to and, taking advantage of, changing workplaces, markets and technologies. It is also necessary to find effective tools to anticipate future skills requirements and how to match them with labour market needs.

[1] A lifelong learning approach integrates all stages of education, vocational training and skills development into both policy development and service delivery. Training should not be seen in isolation from education. Any global training strategy must give due attention to improving instructional systems for all ages, including education, pre-employment and vocational training.

Government has primary responsibility for education by ensuring that young people leaving the education and training system have the relevant skills to be employable in changing labour markets. Responsibility for further vocational training should be shared between society, employees and employers according to interest and benefit. When the interest is more on the employee side, she/he should bear most of the costs, and vice-versa. Employees must meet their responsibilities to manage education, careers, pursue opportunities and maintain employability. This includes parents' responsibility regarding their children's education.

ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR ALL

Education and training should deliver core knowledge, employability skills and the capacity for on-the-job learning and lifelong skills' development which is essential to obtain and maintain employment and facilitate labour market transitions. All people should have equal opportunities to access quality education and training throughout their formal schooling years and working lives to obtain the highest possible qualifications according to their abilities.

BASIC EDUCATION

- **Basic education systems should focus on:**

  → Improving basic skills, including numeracy and literacy, and other key competences, and fostering skills in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). This is linked to the improvement of early childhood education and care (ECEC) which is important for equity.
  → Developing inter-personal and core employability skills, such as problem-solving, analytical skills, self-management, teamwork, linguistic skills, digital competence, creativity and communication skills.
  → More working life oriented education on all levels – influencing teaching plans, voluntary and obligatory working practice in public and private sector for school students.
  → Entrepreneurship culture and economic qualifications.
  → Improving examination outcomes and design, and delivering qualifications that the community understands and values. In particular, employers need to be able to understand the capacities, skills, competencies and achievements of those seeking work. More effectively conveying the skills, knowledge, and competencies achieved by the completion of a qualification through clear education and employment outcome statements will better support the capacities of employers to generate job opportunities and move job seekers into work more easily.
  → Giving equal consideration to private and public education institutions and ensuring that there is alignment and coordination in their respective processes.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION

- Education systems should offer effective options for participation in academia, tertiary studies towards professional vocations, and vocational training by facilitating the transition from education into training and work. There should be a more fluid transition notably by connecting the vocational system and tertiary system and a better access to higher (vocational) education after secondary education.

- Governments should create more VET (vocational education and training) oriented schools, or VET options within mainstream schools (to counteract the perceived disparities between technical and academic schooling) and increase company-based vocational education and training based on recognized training schemes (apprenticeship system). Policies for vocational training should focus on making VET more adjustable and accessible for higher education in general by open the educations path from VET school to universities. Business should be actively engaged with these schools, including through industry advice, work placements and boards of management. Public/Private Partnerships should be explored to maximise use of resources and expertise, especially in developing countries.

- Vocational training should be more subject to research, statistics, analyses and so forth to gain better fundamentals for shaping the most relevant VET education for the future. VET should be a subject for research on all levels at universities, colleges and other institutions.

- Vocational training policies should encourage those with specific needs to benefit from training to facilitate their entry into the labour market. High quality, market relevant training is a critical tool in supporting employers in bringing persons from disadvantaged groups into work, and ensuring they are not disproportionately displaced in any downturn.

- Migrant workers provide an invaluable source of potential skills and experience, and should enjoy the same capacities and aspirations for labour market participation as other workers. Critical to this is improved recognition and use of skills gained under other education and training systems.

There should be an increased emphasis on:

→ Simplified pathways for the recognition of qualifications gained in other jurisdictions. The transferability of skills can be supported by consistent and transferable national or international qualification frameworks.

→ Clear guidance and support for employers and employees seeking to transfer skills and qualifications gained in other jurisdictions, including support for bridging any gaps in both linguistic and vocational skills.

DELIVERY AND QUALITY

- Training policies should promote the flexibility to choose training options which meet specific industry needs and create competitive conditions that enhance user choice. This should include recognition of private sector training. Training providers should use instruments that support and encourage learning/training in the work process such as coaching.

- Training policies should enhance the quality of services delivered by providers by encouraging their involvement in suitable benchmarking schemes. Certification is critical in this regard. Information on performance should be transparent, and made widely available to all users of the education and training system. Where standards are not acceptable, governments should work with providers (with the input and engagement of employers) towards improving outcomes.

- Training policies should support cooperation and networking between educational and training institutions and business, including internationally. More transparency and greater recognition of qualifications gained in other jurisdictions are important foundations for cooperation and improved training and employment outcomes.

- Governments should ensure that public money is allocated effectively and that the needs of the economy, business and learners are served. Sufficient resources should be invested in education and vocational training in a way that promotes performance at the lowest possible level of compliance costs.

  → Governments must look at ways to continuously raise teacher quality, improve the pipeline of talented people going into teaching, improve teacher training and preparation, and introduce robust evaluation of teacher quality and effectiveness with a view to improve learning for all.
  → Robust monitoring and evaluation of educational achievement is important. Due attention should be given to encouraging and recognising high-performing teachers.
  → All teachers, particularly those involved with vocational education and training, should have up-to-date knowledge of, and links to, the industries their students will work in. Business and industry have a role here.

ENTERPRISE CULTURE

- Governments should create an enterprise culture and awareness in all graduates. Entrepreneurial skills and enterprise culture should be embedded in the education, training and research system and become educational outcomes in their own right. A critical educational outcome should be not only capacity and technical competence to participate in private sector employment (the course most school leavers will follow), but also an understanding of the role of enterprise in society. Better familiarising teachers with the role of, and even work in, the private sector is critical, as is bringing

business people into the classroom. This is a particular issue in many developing countries.

- In an era where sustainability is a focus, entrepreneurship skills are necessary to support innovation and sustainable growth, in particular given the major role SMEs play as sources of economic growth and employment creation.

- Good management and leadership skills are prerequisites to improving business performance, growth and job creation. Further attention is needed to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of strong leadership and management and to promote better responsiveness by education and training providers.

USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND FACILITIES

- Governments and business need to ensure that education and vocational training providers have access to the latest technology, equipment, processes and practices that are compatible with those used in workplaces such as e-learning which has become essential.
  - → Adaptability to technological developments will become increasingly important in work and in life in general. Nearly all jobs will require information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The best guarantee of maintaining job opportunities in changing industries (and across industries and vocations) is an effective process of lifelong learning, re-skilling and skills renewal.
  - → New technologies have the potential to transform teaching and training methods by giving schools and vocational centres more opportunities and by offering access to an unprecedented wealth of information.
  - → Students and trainees need to receive both the educational benefits of, and the capacity to utilise, new and emerging technologies. The use of ICT supported learning material should be encouraged.
  - → Innovative practices and technologies are particularly relevant for the developing world and isolated schools and training centres, and should be identified and promoted.

- Governments should promote the effective and efficient use of educational facilities and resources, including for training outside working hours.

CAREER GUIDANCE AND CAREER COMPETENCES

- Careers advice, information and guidance in schools must offer young people relevant up-to-date, realistic information on career options and requirements. Effective links between careers counselling and business are mutually beneficial and should be supported.

- There should be a focus on skills for effective career development and management. Policies should improve and integrate careers, employability, skills and enterprise into the education and vocational training system. The development of career skills not only supports the choices and development during initial education, but also gives students career development tools for their start in the labour market and throughout their professional life.

MATCHING EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO THE NEEDS OF THE LABOUR MARKET WITH A SYSTEMIC CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO CHANGE

Policy makers must ensure that lifelong learning policies are effectively linked with labour market and other key policy areas such as innovation and R&D, as well as general economic policy. They should continuously strive to understand and anticipate changing labour markets. Governments should work with business to identify current and future labour market needs. This is particularly important in responding to new technologies, and demographic and economic challenges and avoiding labour market shortages.

INVOLVEMENT OF BUSINESS

- A productive partnership between policy makers, educators and those who actually generate employment is essential. Employers, through their representative organisations, should work with Governments and educational institutions to provide clear goals for education and identify labour market needs in order to better prepare new labour market entrants for success in the workplace.

  This involves:

  → Governments regularly providing information on labour market needs, outcomes, trends and developments to business and other stakeholders.
  → Business should identify current and forecast training needs Employers' organisations channelling employer views and feedback into education and vocational training policy making and service delivery. Employers' organisations should also liaise with other key interests in this area, including education and training providers, academia, and workers' organisations.
  → Employers providing high quality, straightforward information to governments, education and training providers and the public on their current and projected skills needs

- → Equipping young people for, and better assisting employees in, the management of their careers and their capacity to remain in employment and ensure effective efficient job transitions and training pathways. Cooperation between schools and regional business/companies is important notably to give first-hand experience.

- Legislation and funding systems should guarantee, through a supporting policy framework, that employer needs are taken into account and encourage partnerships and meaningful dialogue between educational and training institutions and employers. Education and training systems should encourage responsiveness to user needs and wants.

- Governments should promote integration and information sharing. There should be an active and complementary link between the work of public employment services, private sector providers and the vocational training system. Training and employment services should enhance the employability of job seekers and their capacity to re-enter the labour market. Information on the needs of job seekers in contact with employment services should be fundamental to the planning and delivery of vocational education, in particular re-training services and job placement services.

Measures should include:

- → A holistic approach to unemployed job seekers should be provided, including an audit of employability skills, job seeking skills and training required. Active labour market policies are important in developing individual plans for job seekers facilitating their labour market access or better transition job to job.
- → Government responses focusing on providing opportunities for the vulnerable that equip them with skills, competencies, aptitudes valued in the labour market, and strengthening overall workforce resilience.
- → A particular commitment to the needs of young people and those with low or no skills to ensure they have opportunities to develop the generic and employability skills needed for success in the workplace, including support for successful transition into work or training. This is important in times of crisis as they are the main victims.
- → A particular commitment to the skills development and training needed to re-equip job seekers over 45 taking account of an ageing population in most countries.
- → Legal frameworks that combine social security and labour flexibility should be explored to ensure an easier transition between jobs and facilitate geographical and occupational mobility. Mobility has to be promoted and links between mobility and skills enhanced.
- → Governments should develop facilities allowing employees and enterprises to be supported in their choice of learning and to tailor the content according to competencies they have already developed.
- → Ensuring that both the supply and demand sides of labour markets are being met. Governments should ensure continued stakeholder dialogue and co-operation, including strengthened engagement between business, government and administrations, as well as individuals and other interests.

EMPLOYABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY DURING ONE'S WHOLE PROFESSIONAL LIFE

No matter what their demographic circumstances or challenges, all countries should provide their young people with the best possible education and vocational training to facilitate successful entry into work, and encourage lifelong learning and social acceptance of flexibility to maintain opportunities for labour market engagement. Lifelong learning policies and services should maximise employability and flexibility with a focus on developing "21st century skills".

Lifelong learning policies should enable employers to hire people, with the right skills, and to adapt their workforce to current and future needs. An effective lifelong learning system is fundamental to maximising the capacity of employers to provide employment opportunities, and thereby improve social development and living standards. The principles and priorities set out in this document are critical to achieving this. In addition:

- Business should provide training opportunities to employees internally or through training providers and provide on-the-job training for learnerships, apprenticeships and internships.

- Employees, particularly young people entering the labour market for the first time, should have skills (or be supported) to actively manage their careers.

- Skills should be transferable, and policies should recognise and support the portability of skills between different employers. Recognition of Prior Learning systems (RPL) is also critical to ensure employees who have acquired their education informally and are competent but do not have any "formally" recognisable qualifications, are not excluded.

- Governments should actively seek to minimise the financial and regulatory burden of hiring new staff as an incentive to provide training opportunities. This includes flexible and supportive legislation for taking on apprentices and trainees, including termination of employment, and scope to employ solely for the duration of vocational training.

- National training policies should support and encourage employers to develop their own training policies and commitments and look to leverage private investment in education and training.

  → Employer investments in informal and on-the-job training should be better recognised towards formal qualifications, and should be supported and encouraged by governments including through financial incentives.
  → Governments could also better support employer training commitments through measures such as tax incentives, training credits for the lower skilled, training bonuses for hiring unemployed persons who need to be retrained, etc.
  → Governments could an also include training as part of government broad procurement strategies and national infrastructure strategies.

- Governments should provide specific support to small and medium sized enterprises. Efforts should be made to support SMEs as a vital area of employment growth, but often with problems accessing training resources. Governments should provide SMEs with suitable information and better assist them through the creation of customized support. Networking of training and appropriate training centres can be tools to assist SMEs. Business associations have a role here.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND SYSTEM RENEWAL

Opportunities for lifelong learning enhance the skills and capacities of present and future generations. This demands the most effective and efficient education and vocational training system possible, which in turn dictates the need for the best possible systems of performance measurement, feedback and evaluation to equip stakeholders such as governments, teachers, parents and employers to critically evaluate system performance, and make changes.

Just as employees are increasingly challenged to learn and adapt their skills throughout their lives, and just as employers must continually adapt to new competition; education and vocational training systems must be capable of continuous renewal and improvement. This demands high quality processes of evaluation, feedback and revision of policy and service delivery.

Effective policy and service coordination is also critical. Optimising skills and productivity requires coordination between education, labour, research and innovation ministries but also involving those in charge of social security and active labour market policy. This is important at all stages starting from school level.

ANNEX

	ROLES	HOW ACHIEVED
GOVERNMENT	▸ Establish, maintain and improve a coordinated national education and training system incorporating the concept of lifelong learning. ▸ Respond to industry needs in developing quality education and training systems ▸ Anticipate future skills ▸ Invest in quality education and pre-employment training at all levels. ▸ Provide adequate resources for education and training to ensure high quality skills are developed and maintained. ▸ Reduce digital divide, especially in developing countries.	▸ Invest and create the conditions to enhance education and training at all levels. ▸ Provide training opportunities to young people, and develop youth employment programmes (including funded training). ▸ Encourage training at company level, e.g. through tax incentives. ▸ Effective consultation with key users of the system, particularly employers. ▸ Simple, transparent user friendly education and training systems. ▸ Facilitate and support a culture of life long learning. ▸ Ensure coordination between different ministries and departments.
BUSINESS	▸ Work through representative organisations to channel input to educators and governments. ▸ Participate in the design and implementation of education and training and polices, programmes etc. ▸ Train and retrain employees. ▸ Identify labour market needs and communicate to policy makers. ▸ Advocate continuous improvement in education and training.	▸ Identify current and forecast training needs. ▸ Provide training opportunities to employees internally or through training providers. ▸ Provide experiential training for learner-ships, apprenticeships and internships. ▸ Contribute data and intelligence via business and industry organisations. ▸ Actively participate in training and education policies and institutions.
INDIVIDUALS	▸ Access good initial education. ▸ Access continuing education / training. ▸ Take initiative and invest in themselves to develop transferable skills and competencies that are not job or employer specific. ▸ Pursue a career and life long employability, recognising this may include work in different industries and with different employers.	▸ Use training and education received. ▸ Maintain skills and employability, undertake re-training and ongoing education. ▸ Be flexible and adaptable to the use of new technologies and processes. ▸ Be mobile and flexible where possible in seeking and undertaking work. ▸ Undertake training to support work functions and tasks within the firm.

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