

GOOD PRACTICES, REPLICATION STEPS AND WAY FORWARD



Employment Support Services (ESS) and Career Guidance Cells (CGC) for a smooth school-to-work transition



While training institutes play an important role by producing students with skills and qualifications, their responsibilities should not end there. It is equally important that skilled graduates also receive guidance to choose the right path for their future as well as a mechanism to find jobs matching their qualifications.

The provision of these services tends to be absent in Bangladesh. For this reason the National Skills Development Policy calls for Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutes to provide career guidance, and post-training placement support (as per articles 11.19 & 11.20).

ILO's Canadian-funded Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) project has worked with a number of TVET institutes to create a smooth school-to-work transition for TVET students. By establishing Employment Support Services (ESS) and Career Guidance Cells (CGC) within institutes students are guided to make informed career decisions and gain job search skills. In addition, the job hunting process is made a lot easier by linking TVET institutions with potential employers in the industry.

This publication looks at the steps taken so far, how the initiative can be scaled up to benefit more institutes and students as well as steps that still need to be taken to ensure sustainability.

The ESS & CGC services were implemented in the Bangladesh Institutes of Glass and Ceramics, Rajshahi Mohila Polytechnic Institute, Panchagarh Technical School and College, Barisal Technical School and College, Nilphamari Technical School and College, Bangladesh- Korea Technical Training Centre, Rajbari Technical School and College and UCEP Bangladesh.



What has been done so far?

Under the supervision of the B-SEP project, eight Employment Support Service (ESS) units and Career Guidance Cells (CGS) were piloted from 2015-2018. Among the institutes, seven are government run and one is a non-government training institute.

The ESS & CGC services provide a range of support to help TVET students make the transition from school to work. These are:

Selection of councillor to guide students on how to write their CV, apply for jobs and the right choices for their career path.

A Employers' Advisory Committee including industry representatives was established to ensure that the views of industry were heard.

A job portal was created that includes the CV's of the students and to which employers have access.

A Career Directory was created and developed which contains occupation-wise job descriptions, qualifications and skills needed. This helps students understand the requirements and competencies necessary to finding employment in different positions.

Job fairs were held to create an interactive platform for students and prospective employers.

Results

252 teachers, 6,064 students and job seekers and 487 employers have benefitted from these services. As a result they have gained job searching and interview skills as well as developed industry connections all of which are vital for recruitment and career purposes. Among the 6,803 beneficiaries 1,491 are female. As of May, 2018 this approach has helped 338 graduates to find work after they took part in 10 job fairs organized by six TVET institutes and received advice from the Career Guidance Cell.

'The Employment Support Services initiative helped us to establish relationships with the industry in addition to creating employment for our graduates'
Md. Ayub Ali, Principal, Bangladesh Institute of Glass and Ceramics.

How can this approach be replicated?

Employment Support Services units and Career Guidance Cells can be established relatively easily. Their establishment helps add value to any TVET institute and also brings it in line with the National Skills Development Policy. Steps that TVET institutes can take to replicate this model include:

Establishing an Employers' Advisory Committee



Formation of an Employers' Advisory Committee is essential for implementing Employment Support Services. The committee supports TVET institutes to carry out match making with relevant industries and organizing job fairs.

Establishing the Employment Support Services and Career Guidance Cell



TVET institutes need to provide sufficient space to establish Employment Support Services and a Career Guidance Cell in the institutes. A Career Guidance Cell team should be formed and oriented about their roles and responsibilities for guiding students. The team members will deliver career guidance and counselling sessions and follow up sessions to students.

Develop a job portal



A job portal needs to be developed and kept updated. TVET students can access the website and post their CV while employers can post their job vacancies. The job portal will be linked to the TVET institutes' websites.

Develop and update a career directory



TVET institutes may develop and update a career directory. This provides information on industry-specific job descriptions, competencies, qualifications, vacant jobs, hierarchy of job positions and the working environment of certain industries. TVET students can easily use this directory as a reference for searching jobs and industry attachments.

Organise job fairs



It is a key responsibility of Employment Support Services to organize job fairs. The job fair can bring national, local or industry specific employers together. TVET students, graduates and job seekers are able to interact with industry representatives, explore their stalls, leaflets and gather information. The employers can interview graduates and visit the lab and practical classes to see what skills students have gained.

Organise social marketing campaigns



Social marketing campaigns can help boost awareness of the benefits of TVET education and help increase enrolment.

What needs to be done?

While Employment Support Services units and Career Guidance Cells provide valuable services for career guidance and job placement of TVET graduates, a number of challenges still need to be addressed if the model is to be scaled up for all TVET institutes. These are as follows:



Sufficient human resources

The ESS & CGC will not function unless sufficient human resources are made available. Proper human resources management can address this issue and the Department for Technical Education (DTE) and the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) of the Government of Bangladesh should take the initiative in this regard to show the path.



Sufficient infrastructure

Infrastructure limitations are an obstacle to establishing ESS & CGC services. Sufficient room and computer facilities are necessary for these services to function. The Government should allocate funds to create such infrastructure.



Sufficient budget

Adequate budget is needed for establishing and operating ESS & CGC services beyond the piloting phase of the donor-funded projects. When the projects expire, the DTE and the BMET should make budget available to continue this initiative otherwise it will not continue beyond the development partners' funding support.



Need for monitoring and measurement

Performance measurement tools should be incorporated into ESS & CGC operations to track progress. Data to show the effectiveness of the ESS and CGC will be vital to support funding as well as build further links with industry.

Bangladesh Institutes of Glass and Ceramics (BIGC) establish successful ESS & CG Cell

The Bangladesh Institutes of Glass and Ceramics (BIGC), with the help of ILO's B-SEP project established an Employment Support Service (ESS) and Career Guidance and Counselling (CG&C) cell in 2015. Under this pilot project, BIGC signed an MoU with the Ceramics Industry Skills Council that linked the institute with various companies and allowed students to undertake industrial attachments. This gives the students hands-on training in the ceramics industry and in turn increases their employability in the job market.

In addition, the BIGC developed a directory that provides information about the type of occupations that are available in the industry with details of job descriptions, educational qualifications and experience requirements for each job. Providing students with such a directory helps them know just what employers are looking for and where to look for jobs. BIGC also developed a website with online job portal through which students can apply to vacancies posted by the different glass and ceramic companies.

Monno Ceramic is Bangladesh's leading ceramic company which produces ceramics for domestic and export markets. Up until 2015, the company would recruit approximate 20-25 staff a year for their factory. However, according to Mr. Abdullah Al Mamun, Manager, Research and Development of Monno Ceramic the process of recruitment was not easy and they struggled to find quality employees. However since engaging with Bangladesh Institutes of Glass and Ceramic (BIGC) in 2015, Monno Ceramic has recruited 45 skilled employees annually from amongst the BIGC students.



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