

Leading career development services into an uncertain future: Ensuring access, integration and innovation

Country paper: Qatar [Insert country name]

In advance of the symposium all attending countries are asked to produce a country paper setting out the key issues for their countries in relation to the key themes of the conference.

Please use this template to enter your information. You should aim to be concise. Use bullet points and links rather than providing a lot of local detail. **The paper should be no more than 10 pages in length.**

How to submit:

- Download the Country Paper Template, save this on your computer.
- Prepare the country paper based on consultation within the country team and preferably with relevant national authorities and information sources.
- Submit the Country Paper by sending it to jmc@iccdpp.org (John Mc Carthy, director ICCDPP)
- Deadline: **31st of January**

If you have questions concerning the country paper, please contact John Mc Carthy (jmc@iccdpp.org)

Background information

1. List all of the members of your country team with their organisation.

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2. What are the key aims your country has for participating in this symposium?

To further develop its education and labor market systems, and to link them to the needs of the Qatari people and economy, the State of Qatar seeks to scale-up its newly emerging career development system. To contribute to the development of such a system, there is a need on the part of Qatar's symposium delegates to engage with other country delegates in order to, for example, explore the future of global career development, exchange relevant career development knowledge and practices and to connect such learning experience with Qatar's policy aims, support services, innovations and other ways forward for building an impactful career development system in the State of Qatar- a system that would contribute invaluablely to the development of high quality human capital needed to help in transitioning Qatar to a knowledge economy status.



Theme #1 - Context and challenges for career development policy.

In your country...

3. Is the level of policy interest in career development:

- Growing?
- Shrinking?
- Staying about the same?

Comment

In light of the spirit of public policies supporting the design and implementation of Qatar's 2011-2016 and 2017-2022 national development strategies, it becomes clear that the level of public policy interest in career development is growing. This is particularly reflected in terms of, for example, increasing attention to the role of career development within public education and training sector and public sector's employment, professional development and scholarships programs in addition to employee productivity, training and career pathways initiatives. In a complementary manner, and at the institutional level, interest in career development policy has increased at an increasing rate in leading career development centers, private and international schools, higher education institutions and national talent development committees - especially in the energy and industry sector, public health, banking and newly emerging industries like tourism, logistics and transport organizations and other big private health sector organizations such as Sidra Medicine Corporation.

4. What are the key political, social, economic and technological issues that are likely to have an impact on people's lives and careers in your country?

Give up to five of the most important issues as you see them.

1	A prosperous economy geared towards nurturing knowledge economy and economic diversification and supporting private sector and entrepreneurship development.
2	Social protection system intended to protect the civil rights of all citizens, support family cohesion, empower women and vulnerable groups and prompt modernism.
3	Political leadership supporting effective implementation of national policies related to equal opportunities, promotion of social inclusion and modernization of the legislation system.
4	A vibrant ICT system geared towards scaling up the impact of the existing digital government, cyber security initiative and digital society program.
5	High-quality education and training system designed to help people to acquire the skills needed to effectively contribute to achieving national development goals.

5. What roles do career development programmes and services play in addressing these political, social, economic and technological challenges?

(1) Qatar's career development policies will be influenced by a set of issues emanating from Qatar's changing realities. Examples of these include: (a) Qatari people will be more concerned with exploring opportunities for further development, growth and prosperity (b) careers in Qatar will be more diversified, complex and competitive, and more citizens will pursue STEM-related careers (c) barriers to education, careers and employment will not be a concern for the majority of Qataris (d) political stability and support would pave the way for developing relevant policies and investing in career development as a powerful means for human capital and labor market development (e) socio-cultural barriers to women employment and career progression will be weaker (f) parents and family members will continue to play an important role in the education of their children and their future careers and (g) other socializers in Qatar like teachers, counselors, role models, media influencers and significant others will continue to influence young Qataris.

(2) Roles of career development in addressing challenges associated with the Qatar context include:

(a) Career self assessment role: This involves a process of administering on-line and conventional career self-assessment tools, methods and programs. The results of such assessment are usually related to education and career opportunities within and outside Qatar (b) Career orientation role: This is a joint education and labor market effort exemplified by a set of programs and events which are designed and delivered to help Qatari youth to familiarize themselves with, and identify, assess and learn how best to access available and potential education, training and employment opportunities (c) Career management skills development role which includes training in career decision-making skills, career planning, employability/life skills and transition learning services in addition to education/ career advising and employment services -especially by national talent development committees.



Theme #2 - Aims for, and access to, career development

In your country...

6. What are the key policy aims for career development programmes and services?

Key policy aims of career development programs and services in Qatar center on supporting Qatar's education, training, labor market, equal opportunity rights and continuing education and professional development as powerful means for lifelong learning, career advancement and high quality of work life. As a result, goals of public policy on career development in Qatar include: (a) education-labor market goals, e.g. improving the match between education outcomes and labor market needs through, for example, improving the career management, employability and career laddering skills needed to support the development of high quality national workforce (b) lifelong learning goals, e.g. supporting Qatari youth and adults to actively engage themselves with lifelong learning/continuing personal and professional development in order to be able to grow, develop and improve their skills and adapt to changing conditions (c) promoting Qatar's public policy on social equity, e.g. supporting effective implementation of equity principles related to, for example, education, employment and empowering vulnerable groups like people with disabilities .

7. What groups of people can access career development programmes and services and what groups are excluded?

Groups of people who can access career development programs include: (a) mainstream students in public secondary schools, private/international schools, tertiary education ,university graduates, 16-21 years old students with disabilities, young employed/unemployed adults, trainees, young adults on scholarship programs, young entrepreneurs and adults in transition who are supported by ministerial, national talent development committees and youth empowerment agencies.

Groups of people who can have greater difficulties to access, and/ or can't access career development programs include students in primary and preparatory public schools, students in public TVET, adult employees in small-medium size private sector organizations, old adults transitioning to retirement, women in career break and young adults in career transition.

8. How are the opinions of citizens and service users heard and incorporated into policy and practice?

Within the State of Qatar, and for public backing purposes, policy and practice issues are usually influenced by a set of well-entrenched traditions of consultation, consensus and modernization of the legislation system. Based on such traditions, various methods are used to incorporate the opinions of citizens and service users into policy and practice. Depending on the specific policy and practice issues involved, the following are illustrative examples of the methods used: (a) interaction with Qatar's consultative assembly, civil society/NGOs and local government representatives (b) evidence/opinion generation through involvement of experts in local/international academic, research and consultancy (c) career development stakeholder engagement platforms, education/labor market driven meetings and focus group discussion for parents, counselors, students and relevant others and (d) opinion generation surveys, formal evaluation feedback systems and suggestions/complaints boxes administered for citizens and service user opinions/ views, etc.

9. Is there a framework for ethical practice in career development? How does this framework balance the interests of the individual with the demands of policy and signals from the labour market?

A framework for ethical practice is yet to be developed in line with competency framework for the practitioners involved. Nonetheless, and to support a culture of quality career development programs and services, there exists an informal/customary code of ethics that guides practitioners' behavior. This is, generally speaking, supported by codes of ethics governing the professional behavior of public and private sector employees. Also, such a code of ethics is expressed in terms of ethical responsibilities to service users such as: (a) provision of equal opportunities for all involved (b) clarification of practitioner's roles and responsibilities and those of the clients (c) respect for the dignity and human value of all clients (d) sensitivity to the total and interactive sets of client's needs and aspiration and (e) other ethical aspects such as confidentiality, independence, need-based services and accuracy as well as clarity of information, feedback, follow-up, etc.



In your country...

10. Which ministries or jurisdictions are responsible for career development programmes and services? Clarify what programmes and services each ministry or jurisdiction has responsibility for.

Although Qatar lacks a national level career development regulatory body, and does not have comprehensive career development framework, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education is responsible for delivering career guidance services to K-12, and the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs is responsible for addressing the career development needs of public sector employees and students who opt for pursuing civil service careers through government funded scholarship program.

On the other hand, private sector schools, higher education institutions, including the national HE institutions, partner universities of Qatar Foundation and other western tertiary establishments deliver career development programs to their students and alumni. Also, such services are provided to selected sets of audiences targeted by, for example, national talent development committees in energy, health and aviation industries in addition to undergraduate and graduate programs with mandatory internships, particularly in TVET fields. In addition, entrepreneurship centers and youth empowerment centers provide diverse sets of career development programs including career management, life-skills and employability skills programs for young adults in education and labor market as well as for adults who are in transition.

11. What leadership, co-ordination and collaboration approaches exist within the career development system to ensure collaboration across different sectors and different types of clients. For example, how are career development systems within the education system connected to those within employment, health and youth work?

Leadership, collaboration and coordination among public and private sector providers of career development services and programs in Qatar are yet to be developed. Currently, each of the approved providers is mandated to manage its own services and programs. To overcome problems associated with such an unhappy situation, an informal, national level, career development stakeholder engagement platform has been operational for the last two years. The platform has, thus far, provided the foundations required for national level leadership, coordination and collaboration. Also, four projects centering on developing a well-interconnected career development system are proposed, discussed and planned for implementation.

12. What are the main challenges to leadership in the field and the main obstacles to effective collaboration?

(a) unavailability of national level entity responsible for regulating, monitoring and developing career development programs and services across various sectors (b) lack of national career development framework, standards, policies, competencies, strategy and other aspects central to the process of effective management of career development programs and services (c) lack of coordination

mechanisms among career development providers in schools, colleges, universities and employers in public and private sector organizations (d) insufficient and inadequate utilization of ICT in the design, delivery and assessment of career-related programs and services (d) weak career development culture among key stakeholders like employers, educational institutions, employees, young adults, students and their parents (e) professionalization of career development in terms of, for example, qualifications framework, professional development programs, formally endorsed code of ethics and professional association are yet to be envisioned, developed and implemented (f) relative absence of adequate links among educational institutions, labor market and career service providers to fine tune the demand for, and supply of, national human resources (g) unavailability of well-integrated and easily accessible labor market, education and career development information systems.

13. What kind of cooperation (if any) is there between the career development services and stakeholders like employers, trade unions, the media, NGOs, professional organisations etc?

There exists a career guidance stakeholders engagement platform, which is an informal “cross-sector collaboration network” in Qatar. Its overall purpose is to encourage collaboration and coordination among all stakeholders. It operates in a form of reflective processes for collaboration, innovation, exchange of knowledge, research findings and best practices in order to advance and support career development as a powerful means for personal, social, educational and economic success of the Qatari people and society.

The platform is organized on the basis of biennial focus group meetings for Qatari youth, their parents, career development practitioners, researchers, policy and decision makers and others who have stake in career development. Also, each meeting is organized around a specific theme or a set of themes. In addition, and in view of its overall purpose, each meeting constitutes an invaluable opportunity for all stakeholders to share ideas and to discover other relevant perspectives and views on how best to further develop career development in such ways that can help Qatari people to discover, develop and use their talent to jointly satisfy their “needs and aspirations” and those of the Qatari economy.

14. How is the professionalism of career development workers developed and maintained whilst working with other professionals?

Development of a national level framework for professionalization of career development practitioners in Qatar is in progress. Nonetheless, various career development providers adopt various criteria for developing and maintaining the professionalism of their practitioners. Examples of such criteria include minimum formal education certificates, work experience-including relevant employment pathways, police clearance certificate, continuing compulsory training on regular basis, completion and maintenance/up-grading of professional certification requirements and membership of professional organizations. This is in addition to adherence to HR-related codes of conduct and depiction of professional behavior via such traits like competency, politeness, respect, honesty, integrity and accountability. It should be noted that while adoption of such professionalism

methods varies from one institution to another, the energy and industry as well as some international schools and universities figure out prominently as leaders of the process involved.

15. Do other types of professionals (e.g. teachers and social workers) deliver career development? How is a professional service ensured?

Some teachers in public secondary schools deliver life/soft skill development programs, which constitute an essential component of envisioned sets of career management skills programs. Also, social workers in, for example, social development and youth empowerment ministerial, government, NGOs and private sector institutions deliver various types of career development workshops, lectures, and consultation/advising services.

In both cases, professionalism of the service delivered is usually insured in different ways- depending on the type of institution and the level of service concerned. Examples of such ways include formal processes of selecting the persons involved, training-the-trainer courses, coaching, mentoring and service delivery guides, assessment of the service delivered and seeking to improve clients' experiences with the services delivered.



Theme #4 - Leading innovative change for the future.

In your country...

16. What are the key innovations or ways that career development programmes and services have changed over the last 10 years? This could include changes relating to technology, practice, management and governance and the use of new theories and evidence.

Throughout the last 10 years, Qatar's career development programs and services have changed in important ways like: (a) supporting conventional career education programs with experiential learning, e.g. summer and winter career camps (b) edutainment-based career orientation for 5-12 years children (c) implementation of tailor-made online career planning system, online public sector employment portal and electronically driven employability skills learning materials (d) generation of research evidence to support the design and delivery of career development programs and services and to contribute to the development of the career development profession (e) offering youth and women career empowerment programs and programs for parents as career coaches for their children (f) organization of local and international internships, student employment and education-labor market transition programs for school and university students (g) organization of national level career guidance stakeholders engagement platform as a cross-sector collaboration forum and (h) launching of a series of career development magazine as career guide intended to help parents, students, counselors and other stakeholders to have access to, for example, new career development ideas, practices and innovations.

17. How do national policies and initiatives, where they exist, ensure and support the development of innovation in career development services provision?

Despite the fact that Qatar's national level policies considers career development only minimally and as part of national human capital development, there are many important ways through which innovation in career development is supported at sector/institution level. Examples of these include:

(a) Seeking to adopt a holistic approach to the development of education, training, employment, productivity and career pathways in the government sector, (b) attempts at developing innovative approaches to coordination among education, labor market and employment sectors and provision of requisite fund and specific coordination protocols in order to move from quantity to quality workforce Qatarization needed to meet national development objectives, (c) emphasis on developing national workforce in light of lifelong learning and balancing work and non-work spheres to support modernism and preserve socio-cultural values, (d) expanding and extending access to programs and services through moving from labor-intensive to ICT-based career interventions on lifelong basis, (e) focusing on careers and not on jobs/employment, (f) adoption of multi-learning career development interventions and (e) paying special attention to career development approaches to parents, families, women and people with special needs.

18. What new, innovative and promising interventions in career development programmes and services is your country planning for the future? How are such innovations making the most of open data initiatives, online technologies, artificial intelligence and other forms of innovation?

(1) Planning to apply an artificial intelligence powered engine and machine learning algorithmic models to data-mine, analyze and profile- on one hand the current education skills supply and labor market skills demand, and on another those of the future, identifying and filling as such the existing gap between the two realities, which would allow Qatar to overcome the disruptive challenges of the fourth industrial revolution that is fusing the physical, biological and digital realms and impacting all disciplines and industries (2) Developing a bespoke proprietary Digital Career Planning System that will incorporate and integrate all relevant components of the career guidance, planning and development process (3) Digitizing relevant current QCDC resources and initiatives and making them available on different virtual platforms, devices and operating systems. In fact, some of QCDC's programs and materials have been already digitized, such as the 'Career Guide' magazine which has been available in print as well as digital interactive formats

19. How is the training and continuing professional development (CPD) of careers professionals encouraging innovation and taking account of new evidence as well as changes in technology and the labour market?

CPD opportunities reflect emphasis on, for example, context specific training, innovation, education and labor market realities. The following are illustrative examples of such a wide range PD effort:

(a) need-based PD opportunities to help practitioners to innovatively adapt and deliver career development orientation, assessment and advising to various groups (b) reflection -in action types of workshop series offered on the basis of developing career practitioners' theoretical backgrounds,

advising skills and collaboration with stakeholders (c) week-long series of workshops centering on learning, training, technical assistance and ICT skills related to the process of admissions to universities outside Qatar (d) training and development opportunities based on research evidence and focus group discussions (e) training programs delivered by flying instructors and centering on adaptation of international career development theories, principles and best practices (f) technology-based learning including use of online career planning platforms, developing profession related ICT skills (e.g. based on personal self-development plans and initiatives, many professionals have experience with on-line, self-paced PD, podcast credits/certificates and simulations offered by overseas providers (g) encouragement of professionals to pursue post-graduate career development diploma and master's degree programs among (h) need-based train-the-trainer courses offered to school career counselors to deliver "life skills training and employability skills programs to mainstream students and advising as well transition skills to students with special needs.

Final reflections

20. Is there anything else that you could like to address through participating in this symposium?

The following set of national level policy issues need to be addressed in order to support the role of career development in developing high quality national workforce in the State of Qatar. These issues center on how best to develop and implement : (a) a well-integrated, cross-sector, policy and implementation approach to link the needs and aspirations of Qataris with those of the country (b) national level career development policy, framework, standards and strategy (c) a career-focused, and not employment-driven, approach to increase the supply of graduates of STEM and TVET specializations and improving their technical, employability and career management skills (d) inject a career development input into the current process of restructuring Qatar's labor market (e) mobilize families to increase their roles as career coaches for their children (f) integrate ICT into career development programs and services and develop sound labor market information system.