

PRODUCTIVITY

# SKILLS

GROWTH

## SABER Workforce Development

What is it?

How does it work?

What are the findings?



# What is workforce development?

“... the coordination of public and private sector policies and programs that provides individuals with the opportunity for a sustainable livelihood and helps organizations achieve exemplary goals, consistent with the societal context...”

\*Jacobs, R., & Hawley, J. (2008)



## Why do countries invest in workforce development?

A skilled workforce is a powerful asset for economic productivity and growth

If employers can find the right mix of skills...

...and workers have access to the information and training options necessary to succeed in the labor market

## Can countries measure how well workforce development systems are doing?

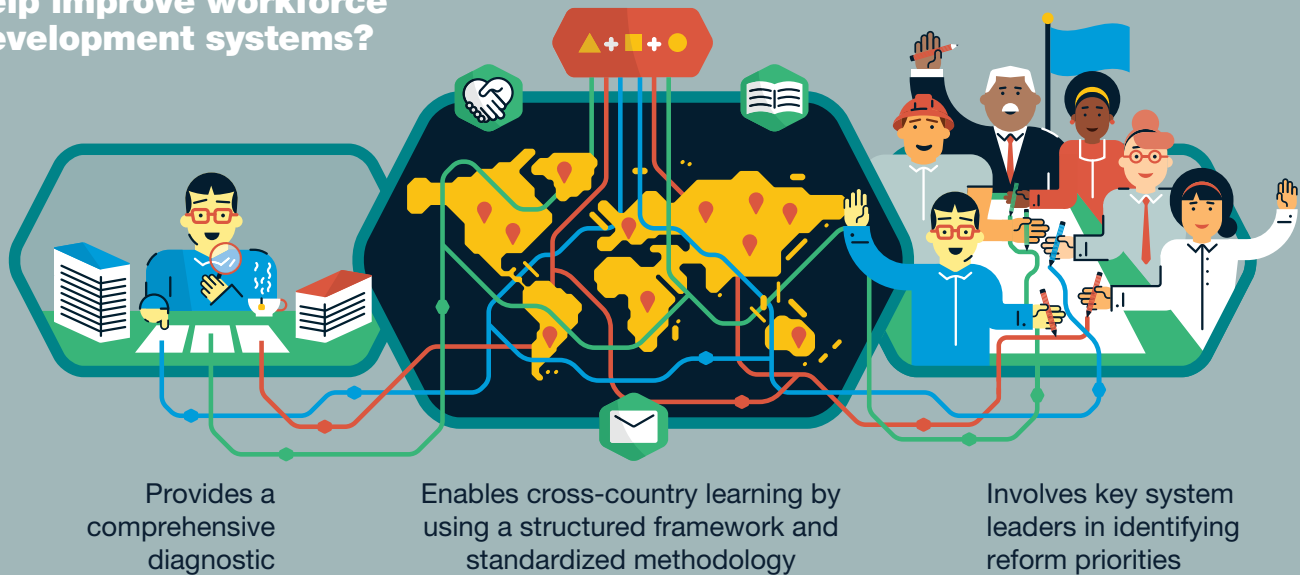
Strong systems perform key functions for strategy, oversight and managing schools and training providers. The Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER-WFD) initiative

provides a framework for benchmarking policy design and implementation in these areas against international good practice.

## What drives an effective workforce development system?



## How does SABER-WfD help improve workforce development systems?



## What countries have used SABER-WfD?



**MALAYSIA**

**Structural Transformation**

Recommendations incorporated into government skills roadmap for transition to a knowledge economy



**UGANDA**

**Policy Implementation**

Build stakeholder consensus on program implementation priorities under a new Business, Technical and Vocational Education Law



**MOROCCO**

**Strategy Development**

Take stock of recent system reforms to inform new employment strategy



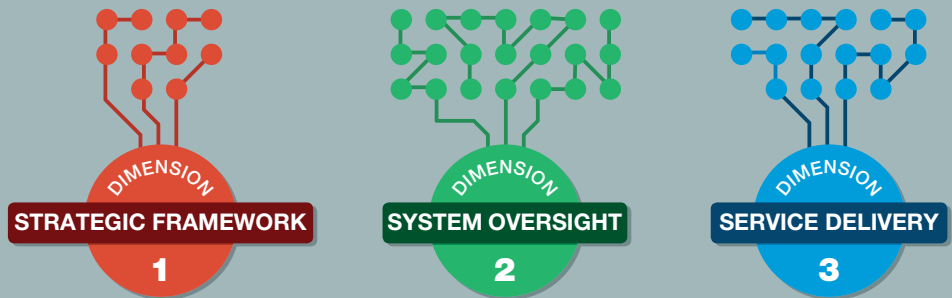
**BULGARIA**

**Policy Dialogue**

Structured dialogue among diverse stakeholders designing a new law on pre-university education

# How does **SABER-WfD** work?

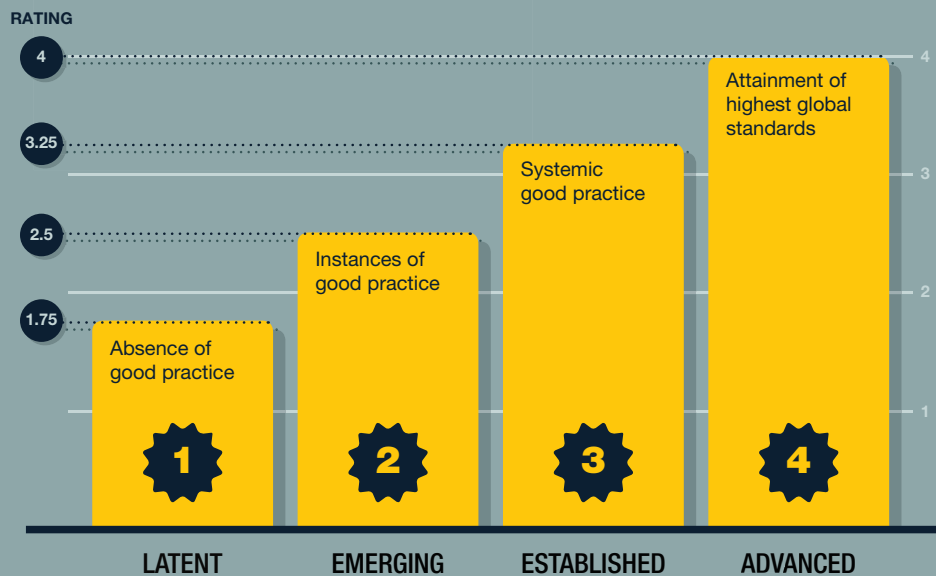
**Examines**  
three dimensions of workforce development systems



**Collects**  
information on these dimensions through desk research, interviews and stakeholder workshops to establish.



**Evaluates**  
levels of system development  
by coding collected information to produce a rating between 1 and 4



**A framework for analyzing** workforce development systems

DIMENSION

**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

1

High-level leadership to align workforce policy to national priorities

**Policy Goals**

G1

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

- Range of workforce leaders and their actions to shape the skills agenda

G2

**DEMAND-LED**

- Availability of high quality information to determine skills gaps
- Quality of employer and industry representative engagement in policy making

G3

**COORDINATION**

- Government structures that enable critical coordination for policy implementation

DIMENSION

**SYSTEM OVERSIGHT**

2

Governance arrangements that determine funding, quality assurance and learning pathways

DIMENSION

**SERVICE DELIVERY**

3

Diversity, regulation and management of training provision to deliver market- and job-relevant skills

**Policy Goals**

G4

**FUNDING**

- Efficiency of public funding for education and training
- Focus on equity in public funding procedures
- Mobilization of resources from private sector partners

G5

**STANDARDS**

- Comprehensive-ness and robustness of competency standards
- Credibility of testing and certification
- Protocols for setting, enforcing and incentivizing accreditation of training programs

G6

**PATHWAYS**

- Arrangements for progression and transfer in the pre-employment education system
- Promotion of continuing education and training and career development services
- Availability of programs for disadvantaged groups

G7

**DIVERSITY AND EXCELLENCE**

- Regulatory environment for non-state institutions
- Measures to incentivize the performance of public institutions

G8

**RELEVANCE**

- Links with industry
- Provider connections with research institutions
- Attention to quality through trainer recruitment and professional development

G9

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Reporting of administrative data
- Periodic in-depth analyses of system performance
- Use of data to drive system improvement

DIMENSION

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1

Policy Goals

G1

Setting a STRATEGIC DIRECTION

G2

Fostering a DEMAND-LED Approach

G3

Strengthening Critical COORDINATION

What do we look at?

- Advocacy for workforce to support economic development
- Strategic focus and decisions by the wfd champions

- Overall assessment of economic prospects and skills implications
- Critical skills constraints in priority economic sectors
- Role of employers and industry
- Skills-upgrading incentives for employers
- Monitoring of the incentive programs

- Roles of government ministries and agencies
- Roles of non-government workforce development stakeholders
- Coordination for the implementation of strategic workforce development measures

Why do we look at this?



**Strategic framework** aligns the workforce development system to the socio-economic goals of the country by setting the overall agenda for skills policy. This directs and helps coordinate the efforts of others in the system.

Country Ratings for Dimension 1



# Findings

## DIMENSION

### STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1

3 Number of countries  
1 at each level of development

F1 G1

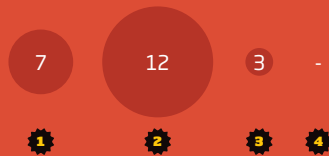
**Most countries have workforce development strategies in place**



But the leadership needed to generate ownership and take action on key strategic initiatives is often lacking

F2 G2

**Mechanisms to involve employers in setting strategy are fragmented, often resulting in weak engagement**



8

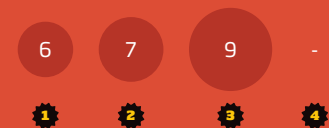
Only eight countries in the sample have routine formal meetings where employers provide input on policy direction



Only Malaysia has put in place robust incentives for employers to invest in upgrading employee skills

F3 G3

**Implementation of strategic initiatives lack effective coordination**



In strong systems responsibilities for the public and private sector are clearly defined...



...and procedures to coordinate and monitor policy implementation are formal and routinely used



**IRELAND**  
NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS COUNCIL

Reports to Taoiseach on key competitiveness issues facing the Irish economy including skills

Includes a large number of business leaders from major sectors and trade union representatives

DIMENSION

SYSTEM OVERSIGHT

2

Policy Goals

G4

Ensuring Efficiency and Equity in FUNDING

G5

Assuring Relevant and Reliable STANDARDS

G6

Diversifying PATHWAYS for Skills Acquisition

What do we look at?

- Efficiency of public funding for education and training
- Focus on equity in public funding procedures
- Mobilization of resources from private sector partners

- Comprehensiveness and robustness of competency standards
- Credibility of testing and certification
- Protocols for setting, enforcing and incentivizing accreditation of training programs

- Arrangements for progression and transfer in the pre-employment education system
- Promotion of continuing education and training and career development services
- Availability of programs for disadvantaged groups

Why do we look at this?



**System oversight** defines the rules that influence the activities of the workforce development system’s main participants – individuals, training institutions and employers – in seeking skills and supplying training to ensure access, equity and system efficiency.

Country Ratings for Dimension 2





# Findings

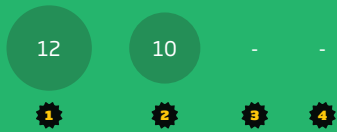
## DIMENSION SYSTEM OVERSIGHT

2

3 Number of countries  
1 at each level of development

F1 G4

**Public funding for workforce development programs does not do enough to promote efficiency or equity**



**!** This is true even for programs targeted to the poor and disadvantaged

**★** In strong systems, budgeting processes direct resources toward providers and programs that achieve targets for efficiency and equity



**TURKEY**  
TURKISH LABOR AGENCY

Directing more public funds to private providers shown to achieve better labor market outcomes

Integrating quality and performance criteria into selection criteria when contracting private training providers

F2 G5

**Quality assurance procedures are relatively well developed but vary in terms of coverage and reliability**

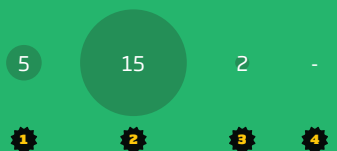


**⬡** Formal frameworks are commonplace but vary widely in coverage

**?** Testing and certification in major occupations is often seen as reliable but competency-based standards are often not yet system-wide

F3 G6

**Support for continuing and on-the-job learning is weak**



**!** Recognizing prior non-formal learning so that workers' get credit for the skills they have is especially weak

**✍** Recognition of formal pre-employment education is more developed

**📄** In many countries students in the formal benefit from relative open pathways to higher levels of education

DIMENSION

**SERVICE DELIVERY**

3

**Policy Goals**

G7

**Enabling DIVERSITY AND EXCELLENCE in Training**

G8

**Fostering RELEVANCE in Public Training Programs**

G9

**Enhancing Evidence-based ACCOUNTABILITY for Results**

**What do we look at?**

- Regulatory environment for non-state institutions;
- Measures to incentivize the performance of public institutions

- Links with industry
- Provider connections with research institutions;
- Attention to quality through trainer recruitment and professional development

- Reporting of administrative data
- Periodic in-depth analyses of system performance
- Use of data to drive system improvement

**Why do we look at this?**



**Service delivery** produces the skills needed for productivity and growth. The quality of regulation, management and monitoring of public and private providers has a strong influence on the quality and relevance of education and training delivered.

**Country Ratings for Dimension 3**



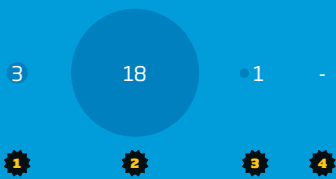
# Findings

## DIMENSION SERVICE DELIVERY 3

3 Number of countries  
1 at each level of development

F1 G7

**Vibrant markets for private education and training exist in most countries**

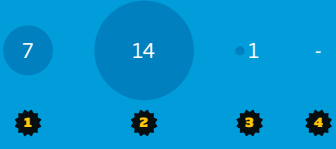


**!**  
But regulation of these markets is often weak

**A R**  
Agencies managing public providers struggle to strike the right balance between institutional autonomy and accountability for results

F2 G8

**Staff quality receives modest attention despite its importance for delivering industry relevant education and training**

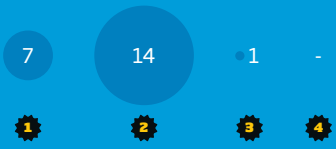


**!**  
Strong systems attract instructors with industry experience

**!**  
Regular in-service training – often done in partnership with industry – keeps instructors' technical and teaching skills up-to-date

F3 G9

**Few countries collect more than basic administrative data from education and training providers**



**!**  
In many systems even this is not yet done reliably

**?**  
**?**  
**?**  
Few countries are able to effectively monitor, analyze and improve workforce system performance



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Systems Approach  
for Better Education Results  
—  
Workforce Development



+ INFO  
SABER Workforce Development