

POLICY BRIEF

SKILLS FOR TOMORROW'S JOBS

*Preparing Bangladesh for Industry 4.0***Bangladesh: Future of Work and Skills**

In the age of the 4th Industrial Revolution, skills development is important for Bangladesh more than ever to achieve a high-productivity growth and create more and better jobs. Technologies are drastically changing the business landscape and transforming the job market and skills demand. This Policy Note highlights critical skills gap in the face of rapid technological changes and proposes key strategies to reorient Bangladesh's skills development system for the future of work.

Is Bangladesh ready for the future of work?

Skills demand is changing and rising. Skills supply is weak and suppressed.

Modern technologies have been coming into the economic fabric of Bangladesh, creating new skills demand. Many industries are now using new technologies in their factories and offices to boost their productivity and competitiveness. Ready Made Garments (RMG) companies are leading in Bangladesh in adopting cutting edge production technologies and automation to enhance the quality of their products,

like robotics for automated assembly line, high-speed sewing machines, and computer-aided designing and manufacturing. Post-secondary education and training have a big role to play to prepare youth for this dynamic environment. Advanced new technologies at workplace means that business are constantly needing more workers with high-level skills and, more importantly, ability to adapt to future technological changes.



Bangladeshi labor force is under-skilled, and skills training opportunities are scarce. Tertiary education enrollment in Bangladesh (17% in 2016) is low in the region. Training opportunities for the workers are hard to come by, particularly for poorer workers (Figure 1). Enterprises of all sizes, especially medium and small size ones, are not active in providing training to their workers compared to peers in the region and around the world (Figure 2). Female workers are in particular at disadvantage.



Source: Bangladesh Job Diagnostics, 2017

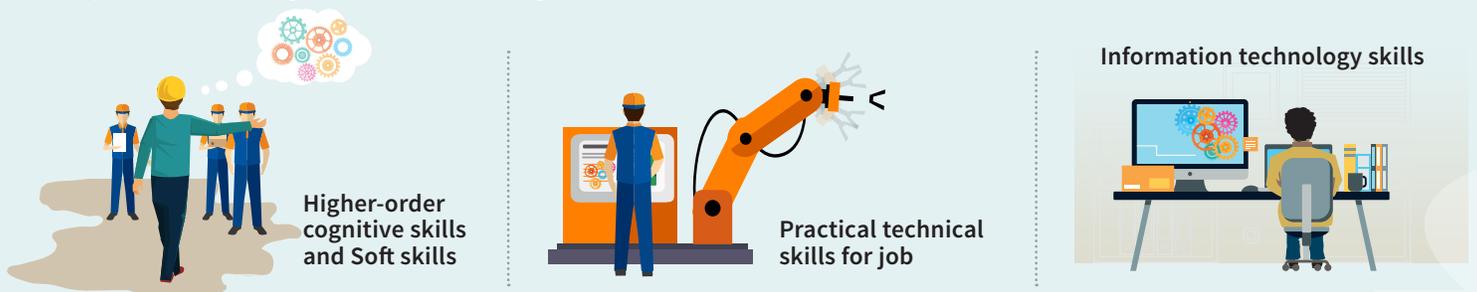
Figure 1: Share of Workers Having Skills Training in the Past 12 Months, by income quintile

Source: World Bank Enterprise Survey Bangladesh, 2013

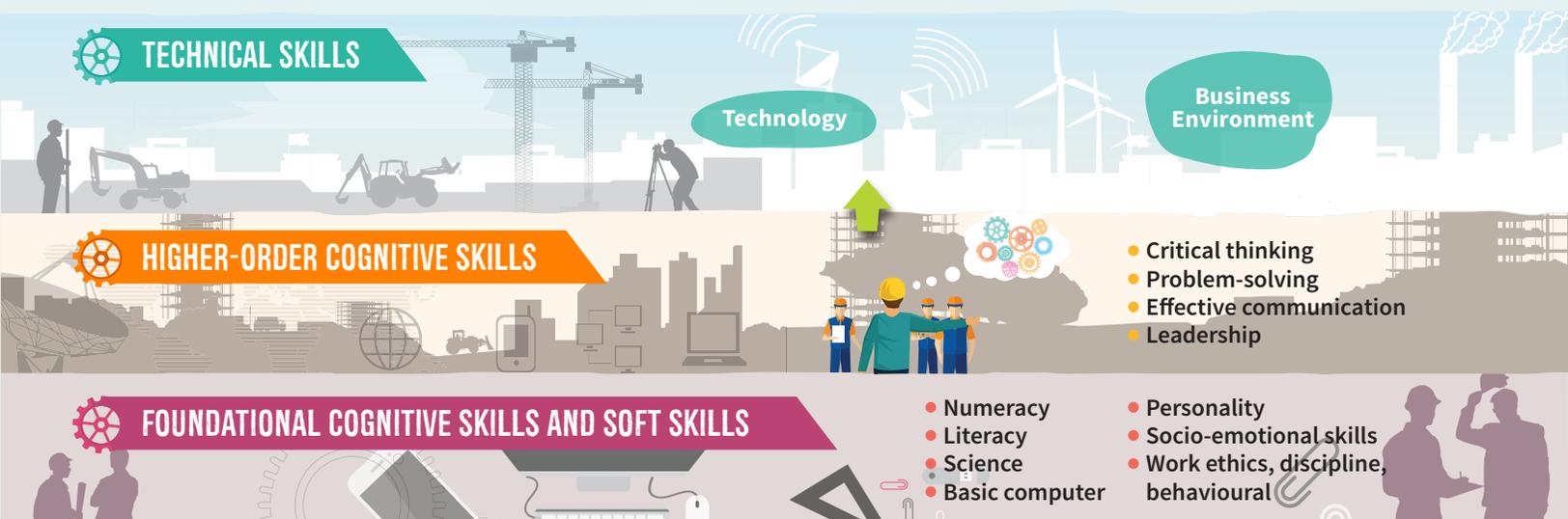
Figure 2: Share of SMEs Offering Formal Training Program for its Employees

What skills are employers looking for?

Employers are not satisfied with skills of Bangladeshi youth. Skills of young Bangladeshi workers are falling behind what are required to cope with the current and future business environment and changing technologies. To thrive in the dynamic economy, Bangladeshi employers are demanding workers who are strong in:



In addition, for students, skills to navigate job market are lacking. These are essential skills for Bangladeshi youths to thrive in the future of work of the 4th industrial revolution and what post-secondary education institutions need to equip them.



Source: Adapted from Pierre et al. (2014). STEP Skills Measurement Surveys.

Higher order cognitive skills and soft skills are essential to keep up with the needs of the job market and sustain high performance in a fast changing economy.

Three key strategies for skills development to prepare you for tomorrow's jobs

1

Re-orienting skills supply to prepare youths for unpredictable skills demand and uncertain economic environment:

There is an urgent need to integrate the training of higher-order cognitive skills and soft skills in post-secondary education and training. Active teaching methods like project based learning are known to enhance these skills. We also need to assess and monitor the levels of these skills among students, and there are promising good practices in measuring soft skills. Moreover, there is a need to re-orient technical programs in post-secondary education to ensure ICT learning and make STEM more practical and hands-on. Greater investment in lab facilities and professional development of teachers will boost the acquisition of these skills. Job placement centers need to be activated at all institutions to improve job search skills and reduce frictions in job market.



2

Mainstreaming involvement of the demand-side of skills - private sector participation in skills development:

Private participation and partnership in skills development is a vital element of workforce development and building the brand of skills. Private sector-led skills trainings are a potential 'high impact' area for improving the quality of skills training in Bangladesh. There have been some success cases in public partnership with private employers in providing market demand based skills training and those need to be substantially expanded. Partnership to set up professional training programs at post-secondary institutions for company employees have been piloted and should also be expanded. Partnership to expand apprenticeship and dual training programs must be mainstreamed.

3

Improving institutional capacity for better linkage between supply and demand sides of skills:

Strengthening labor market responsiveness through job market information and graduate feedback system is crucial. The operationalization of National Skills Development Authority in strategic move to establish more sector-wide program approach in skills development sector is a huge step forward in the right direction. Furthermore, it is critical that the qualification framework for skills training and quality assurance system in higher education be implemented in full.



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Read the full report titled 'Bangladesh Skills for Tomorrow's Jobs: Preparing Youth for a Fast Changing Economy' available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/home>



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