

## E-discussion on YOUTH – summary of preliminary results

### Day 5:

**Which skills achieved through non-formal and informal learning including in youth work projects can be relevant to support the transition school / training – employment? How are personal and social competences to be built? How can skills and competences acquired in non-formal and informal settings be validated and recognised and which support measures are needed? How can the impact of non-formal and informal learning be made better visible?**

With regard to VSD it was reminded that the skills learned have to be relevant for the requirements of the labour market and the main reason to do VSD is learning trade-specific skills with the objective to bring participants in a job. Even if the SDC definition on education in its strategic aim N°5 outlines that education should teach people also soft skills it should not be primarily subject of (in particular short) VSD training but of the compulsory education system. SDC's vocational skills development definition confirms the fact that the main aim of VSD is to ensure that graduates are integrated in the world of work, while at the same time the importance of technical, social and personal competences is highlighted. But, there is no black and white and no clear line can be drawn between 'hard' und 'soft' skills. According to a survey on soft skills in VSD projects most projects judged soft skills as being important. E.g. in Bangladesh around 10% of total training time is dedicated for developing the mentioned soft skills. The essential question is how far VSD can and should deal with problems that are 'produced' elsewhere (e.g. democratic deficits) and provide (soft) skills which are of lesser relevance for the labour market. At the end of day the question is: who should do what? If we are successful in getting the private sector involved in training delivery the role of VSD projects change and the focus may shift towards delivery of personal and social skills in order to facilitate the delivery of technical skills by partner companies. But it might depend also on the sectors and the demand of future employers, thus it is necessary to assess the target sectors before we start designing training programs.

The 6 strategic orientations of the [SDC Education Strategy](#) on basic education and VSD can be used as building blocks and according to context and specific training formats, prioritizations will have to be made and maybe not all strategic orientations can be integrated to the same extent. The weight given to one or the other strategic orientation may differ from context to contexts and depending on specific project or programmatic goals. The building of citizenship and human rights education, value-based education as well as education for conflict resolution and a culture of dialogue is rather a focus of basic education. However, in trainings of long duration or in case of a special project/program focus, there might be more room for building such competences, whereas in shorter trainings, even if social and personal competences are still highly relevant and also demanded by the labour market, possibly greater emphasis will be on developing technical skills and focus on direct employability. Nevertheless, approaches from youth work can be valuable means for reaching the goal of labour market integration. VSD usually combines theory and practice and includes formal and non-formal VSD.

Regarding how skills and competence acquired in non-formal and informal settings can get validated and recognized, in Bangladesh a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system has been built in the National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF).