

E-discussion on YOUTH – summary of preliminary results

Day 2: How do young people today learn? What is the role of new technologies in learning processes? What are chances and risks of new media? Which role does informal and non-formal learning play besides formal learning?

- **How do young people today learn?**

In *Bangladesh* main means for skills development are short courses. Apprenticeship is rare even if there are efforts to enhance the apprenticeship system. In small and marginal businesses 'informal' apprenticeship is very common (often exploited by employers, no wage, no certification, no clear learning path, no opportunity of progress).

- **What is the role of new technologies in learning processes?**

Youth today are much more connected (phones, internet, new technologies) and this affects their learning. Impressive to see how young people use mobiles to communicate with peers and access learning content. Mobile technologies become a normal part of daily life, in communication and also in learning. But, many VET schools do not use new technological possibilities; they have a rather restrictive approach to new media. And there are still regions that do not have good internet coverage. In *Bangladesh*, media, particularly social media and internet are highly used. Individual training providers, projects and learners have their own facebook pages and internet pages for giving notices, providing information and exchanging opinions. Monitoring is also done online, through Training Management or Training Tracking Systems. Mobile phones are used extensively by both, young people and training providers, but people don't use mobile sms so much.

- **What are chances and risks of new media?**

Main risk is to raise too high expectations when using new media. Though attractive initially, they ultimately are not helpful with regard to livelihood or income. Only a very few can use these tools in business successfully. Access to excellent learning material is quite easily possible, but also access to destructive content in the internet. Communication with peer learners and tutors can be enriched and extended in many ways, but many young people develop harmful behaviour in using these devices. One helpful approach in handling chances and risks is to invite young people to reflect on their behavior, to develop guidelines how to use them and to prepare and coach online learning carefully. Young people should definitely be trained and guided in the big ocean of information provided by the internet - these are skills they miss.

- **Which role does informal and non-formal learning play besides formal learning?**

Mobile devices have a great potential to combine formal learning with non-formal learning, e.g. using mobiles not only for formal coaching programs but also for informal exchange of ideas and socializing. Some initiatives build on new realities and try to apply new ways of learning. The development of technical skills, personal or social skills has been neglected in the past, but extracurricular activities would provide valuable inputs for personal and social skills. Technological skills, critical media use as well as soft skills could be acquired by informal or non-formal learning.