



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
প্রধানমন্ত্রীর কার্যালয়
জাতীয় দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ
৪২৩-৪২৮ তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৮
www.nsd.gov.bd



নং- ০৩.১৪.২৬৯২.৮৭৮.১৪.০১২.১৯-৩৫২

তারিখ: ২১ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪২৭
০৬ ডিসেম্বর ২০২০

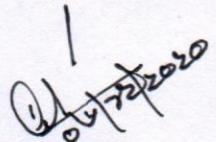
বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিষয়ঃ খসড়া জাতীয় দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন নীতিমালা, ২০২০ এর উপর মতামত।

এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, দেশীয় ও আন্তর্জাতিক শ্রম বাজারের চাহিদার পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে দক্ষ মানব সম্পদ সৃষ্টির মাধ্যমে দেশের আর্থ-সামাজিক অবস্থার সামগ্রিক উন্নয়নের লক্ষ্যে সরকার “জাতীয় দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ আইন, ২০১৮ এবং জাতীয় দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ বিধিমালা, ২০২০” প্রণয়ন করেছে।

০২। উক্ত আইন ও বিধিমালার আলোকে “জাতীয় দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন নীতিমালা, ২০২০” এর খসড়া প্রণয়ন করা হয়েছে। সর্বসাধারণের মতামত গ্রহণের লক্ষ্যে প্রণীত খসড়া নীতিমালাটি জাতীয় দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষের ওয়েবসাইটে আপলোড করা হলো। আগামী ০৫/০১/২০২১ খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে আগ্রহী ব্যক্তিগণকে নিম্ন ঠিকানায় মতামত প্রেরণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলোঃ

নির্বাহী চেয়ারম্যান (সচিব)
জাতীয় দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ
প্রধানমন্ত্রীর কার্যালয়
৪২৩-৪২৮, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৮।
ই-মেইলঃ ec@nsda.gov.bd


(দুলাল কৃষ্ণ সাহা)
নির্বাহী চেয়ারম্যান (সচিব)
ফোন: +৮৮ ০২ ৮৮৯১০৯১

অনুলিপিঃ

- ০১। প্রধানমন্ত্রীর মুখ্য সচিব মহোদয়ের সদয় জ্ঞাতার্থে তাঁর একান্ত সচিব, প্রধানমন্ত্রীর কার্যালয়, ঢাকা।
- ০২। প্রধানমন্ত্রীর কার্যালয়ের সচিব মহোদয়ের সদয় জ্ঞাতার্থে তাঁর একান্ত সচিব, প্রধানমন্ত্রীর কার্যালয়, ঢাকা।

Draft

NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT POLICY, 2020

National Skills Development Authority
Prime Minister's Office
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Dhaka, Bangladesh

18 October 2020

National Skills Development Policy, 2020 (NSDP 2020)

There has been a paradigm shift in the skills development domain with the enactment of the National Skills Development Authority Act, 2018 and the subsequent National Skills Development Authority Rules, 2020 which placed National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) as the linchpin of the skills ecosystem of the country. The skills development sector of the country requires effective coordination, competency-based skills training delivery mechanism and unified standard, curriculum and certification system. Moreover, due to the perceived low social esteem of the technical education, youths are discouraged from choosing skills development training despite high rates of unemployment among them. As a result, in one hand industries are suffering from shortage of skilled labour, and a substantial number of educated youths remain unemployed on the other hand. The gap is filled by the skilled foreign workers.

Bangladesh economy has enjoyed a sustained economic growth and achieved the GDP growth rate of more than 6% per annum during the past decade (BER 2018). During this time, the share of industry and service sectors has increased steadily in comparison with the agriculture sector. In 2018-19, the GDP growth of Bangladesh reached more than 8% (BBS). Such rapid transformation of the economy will contribute towards realizing its goal of becoming a developed country by 2041. For this, Bangladesh needs to sustain this growth momentum for another two decades. Since, there is a limit to the sector-led growth, the country needs to give emphasis on ways to increase productivity. It is proved that there is a strong correlation between the lack of skills development opportunities, low skill status of workers, low productivity etc. and low earnings of both formal and informal sector workers. Skilling of the workforce, therefore, will play a vital role in the future development of the country.

The world is under the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) which is based on the concept of smart factory where machines are integrated with humans through cyber-physical systems (CPS). Industries are experiencing transformation and evolution towards complete digitization and the intelligence of production processes to safeguard high efficiency. In this context, the new generation of workers need to acquire new skills in automation, digitization, and information technology to cope with the changing scenarios. To achieve the country's goals, the 8th five-year plan, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 2nd Perspective Plan (2021-2041) are linked, inter alia, to the smooth and effective transformation of the traditional skills development system into a competency-based modern system that ensures state of art training on the cutting-edge technologies. The National Skills Development Policy 2020 will be aligned with the provisions of the other important national policy documents and skill requirements of 4IR.

Pursuant to the NSDA Act, 2018 and NSDA Rules, 2020; this Policy is developed to establish a sustainable skills development ecosystem in Bangladesh. NSDA and all stakeholders will be responsible for implementation of this policy. This policy is subject to review and revisit as and when required.

Formulation of this policy document is led by NSDA established under Prime Minister's Office through the Act No. XLV of 2018. One of the main duties and functions of NSDA as mentioned in section 6(1) of the NSDA Act is: *“(a) to formulate national skill development policy, strategy and plan of actions.”*

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction and Country Context	1
1.1 <i>Introduction: Country Context of Skills Development</i>	1
1.2 <i>Definition of Skills</i>	1
1.3 <i>Key Principles of National Skills Development Policy</i>	1
1.4 <i>Skills Development Landscape in Bangladesh and Key Priorities</i>	2
1.5 <i>Vision, Mission and Objectives</i>	3
1.6 <i>Target Groups</i>	3
1.7 <i>Experience and lessons learned of the past initiatives</i>	4
Chapter 2: Demand-driven, Flexible and Responsive Training Provisions	5
2.1 <i>Skills Training for the Current and Future Labour Market Needs</i>	5
2.2 <i>Skill development for the emerging technologies including 4IR and digital skills</i>	6
2.3 <i>Skills Development Training relating to Climate Change Initiatives</i>	7
Chapter 3: Ensuring Quality of Skills Development Training	8
3.1 <i>Framework of Qualifications for Skills Development</i>	8
3.2 <i>National Skills Qualifications Framework</i>	8
3.3 <i>Skills Quality Assurance Mechanism</i>	13
3.4 <i>Competency-based Training and Assessment (CBT&A)</i>	13
3.5 <i>Skills Training Quality Assurance</i>	13
3.6 <i>Role of the Key Agencies</i>	14
Chapter 4: Improving Access and Outreach of Skills Training	15
4.1 <i>Improving Access and Outreach to Underserved Areas</i>	15
4.2 <i>Improving access of the Marginalized Groups</i>	15
4.3 <i>Provision of Apprenticeship for Employment</i>	17
4.4 <i>Entrepreneurship in Skills Development Training</i>	18
4.5 <i>Reskilling, Up-skilling and Lifelong Learning (LLL)</i>	19
4.6 <i>Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)</i>	20
4.7 <i>Skills Development for Overseas Employment</i>	21
4.8 <i>Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) with Global Partners</i>	21
Chapter 5: Industry Engagement in Skills Training	23
5.1 <i>Role of Industry sector in Skills Development</i>	23
5.2 <i>Strengthening linkage between Skills Training Provider (STP) and Industries through ISCs and Industry Associations</i>	23

Chapter 6: Improving Governance of an Effective, Flexible and Results-focused Skills System	25
6.1 <i>Skills Development is a Shared Responsibility</i>	25
6.2 <i>Effective and Flexible Institutional Management.....</i>	25
6.3 <i>Enhancing Implementation Capacities of the Key Agencies</i>	25
6.4 <i>Capacity Building for Skills Development Training</i>	26
6.5 <i>Establishing an Effective Monitoring and Evaluation System.....</i>	26
6.6 <i>Monitoring and Coordination of Projects and Programs related to Skills Development Training</i>	27
6.7 <i>Skills and Labour Market Data for Planning and Monitoring</i>	28
6.8 <i>National Skills Portal (NSP)</i>	28
6.9 <i>Promoting Skills Development Training.....</i>	29
6.10 <i>Participation in skills development training</i>	30
Chapter 7: Research, Survey and Study on Skills Development	30
Chapter 8: Financing Provisions for Skills Development Training.....	30
Chapter 9: A Forward-looking Skills Development Training Policy	31
Chapter 10: Implementation Strategy: Way Forward	31

Glossary of Acronyms

BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BEF	Bangladesh Employers' Federation
BEZA	Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority
BIDA	Bangladesh Investment Development Authority
BMET	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
BNFE	Bureau of Non-Formal Education
BTEB	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
CAD	Course Accreditation Document
CBT&A	Competency Based Training and Assessment
COE	Centre of Excellence
CPS	Cyber-Physical Systems
CS	Competency Standard
DTE	Directorate of Technical Education
DYD	Department of Youth Development
FBCCI	Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and industry
GOB	Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
HRD	Human Resource Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISC	Industry Skills Council
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LLL	Lifelong Learning
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
MoEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MRA	Mutual Recognition Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

NHRDF	National Human Resources Development Fund
NSDC	National Skills Development Council
NSDA	National Skill Development Authority
NSP	National Skills Portal
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
STP	Skills Training Provider
TMED	Technical and Madrasah Education Division
TSC	Technical School and College
TTC	Technical Training Center
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Chapter 1: Introduction and Country Context

1.1 Introduction: Country Context of Skills Development

- 1.1.1 Bangladesh currently stands at important crossroads of economic, human and social development. Among other issues, strong focus on human resource development including skills training is an important part of this impressive economic and social transformation. It is well-recognized that knowledge and skills are important driving forces of economic growth and social development in any country. Therefore, a comprehensive and well-thought-out national skills development policy will guide skills development strategies and facilitate coordination of all skills training organizations in the country. Also, the policy document will align with other relevant national economic, employment, and social policies so that Bangladesh can achieve its goal of achieving a developed country status by 2041.
- 1.1.2 On one hand, the rapidly growing economy, particularly the modern manufacturing and services sectors, is experiencing acute shortages of skilled workers. On the other hand, there is high unemployment rate and joblessness among young people, particularly educated youth. This phenomenon of joblessness constitutes a major cause of concern for the planners and policymakers of the country. An overwhelming proportion of the labour force (about 85%) is engaged in informal employments (BBS, LFS 2016-17). More than 55% of the Bangladeshi expatriates are semi-skilled or low-skilled resulting in low-wage earnings (BMET, 2017).
- 1.1.3 Therefore, preparing the potential workforce for the labour market (both domestic and overseas) through appropriate skills training is of utmost importance. The national skills development policy has a clear-cut and well-informed vision about how the issues are properly reflected in it. This policy is based on the NSDA Act, 2018 and NSDA Rules, 2020.

1.2 Definition of Skills

The NSDA Act 2018 defines skill as follows:

Skill includes the knowledge and technique acquired for doing any specific work, or the capability and ability to produce goods and services as per required standard of industrial and professional demand of national and international markets.

1.3 Key Principles of National Skills Development Policy

- 1.3.1 The National Skills Development Policy, 2020 is based on the following key principles:
- Shared responsibilities among various actors and stakeholders in skills training design and delivery:** Various actors and stakeholders will be involved in the design and delivery of skills, re-skilling, up-skilling training and apprenticeship.
 - Matching of skills demand and supply:** The skills development system will be responsive to the labour market requirements through efficient coordination

between demands for and supply of skills.

- c) **Equal opportunities:** This policy will cover training opportunities across all segments of society including women, people living in remote rural communities, disadvantaged youths, and persons with disabilities.

1.3.2 Thus, the national skills development policy is intended to be results-focused, inclusive, performance-based and forward-looking aligned with and contributing to the country's long-term development goals envisaged in SDGs, Second Perspective Plan (2021-41), Vision 2041, and Delta Plan 2100.

1.4 Skills Development Landscape in Bangladesh and Key Priorities

1.4.1 The skills development system in Bangladesh is vast, diverse and operated by a host of actors, stakeholders and providers; namely public, private and NGOs. The Government ministries as well as departments, NGOs and private sector organizations deliver skills training. Thus, country's skills system can be categorized as follows:

- (1) Public (delivered by the Government ministries and departments)
- (2) Private (commercial training organizations)
- (3) Non-government and not-for profit organizations
- (4) Industry-based (organizations managed by industry and training delivered in the workplace including apprenticeships)

1.4.2 All the above-mentioned training providers offer a wide variety of formal, informal and non-formal trainings to different target groups using different approaches and modes of delivery, assessment processes, and certification. Such types of training are largely disjointed and diverse in nature. So, for the sake of efficiency and effectiveness, it is important to rationalize these skills training interventions by putting these under a common and well-coordinated system.

1.4.3 Besides, the existing skills training system needs to address the issues of quality and relevance. Available evidence shows that there is significant mismatch between skills training offered and skills in demand. Lack of coordination in skills training delivery leads to a competition for the same target group of learners, limited links between different training centers and no clear picture of what training is provided for which industry or occupation.

1.4.4 Areas for further improvements are as follows:

- a) Establishing a credible and real-time Labour Market Information System (LMIS) for analysis of skills requirements in different sectors.
- b) Developing a strong industry-institution linkage.
- c) Selecting demand-driven occupations for jobs required in industry.

- d) Preparing competency standards required for occupations identified.
 - e) Developing unified curriculums for skills development training.
 - f) Preparing course accreditation documents (CAD) for skills training delivery organizations to ensure infrastructure in terms of classrooms, workshops, tools, equipment, machinery, and qualified trainers.
 - g) Establishing skills assessment system to test competencies acquired by the trainees.
 - h) Establishing a national certification system for recognition of competencies acquired by skills trainees and enhancement of their employment opportunities in-country and abroad.
- 1.45 Necessary improvements will be made as mentioned above through a qualification framework.

1.5 Vision, Mission and Objectives

Vision

A demand-driven skilled workforce will be built for the socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

Mission

People's employability and competitiveness in the national and international labour markets will be increased for better earnings taking into account the importance of adaptability to the technologically changing world of work.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- a) to establish demand-driven, flexible and responsive training provisions;
- b) to deliver skills training and to assure quality through a framework of qualifications;
- c) to establish a unified skills certification system.
- d) to improve coordination of skills development training;
- e) to provide a wide access to skills development training for all;
- f) to strengthen industry- institute linkage for demand- driven skills development and job placement;
- g) to implement mutual recognition agreement (MRA) for skills development and job placement;
- h) to introduce RPL mechanism for formal recognition of skills;
- i) to establish a skills data system; and
- j) to operate an efficient monitoring and evaluation system.

1.6 Target Groups

A fundamental cornerstone of Bangladesh's development plan is to promote "whole of society" approach. To this effect, the country's skills development training system will allow

access to

- Young people including unemployed youth (male and female), working people, and self-employed workers;
- Marginalized groups: low-skilled people, persons with disabilities, transgender communities, internally displaced persons including those affected by climate-change, older workers, socially excluded groups of people, workers in small and medium enterprises, workers in the informal economy, persons engaged in small and medium enterprises, and people of remote and isolated areas.
- Migrant groups: Potential migrants and returnee migrants including female migrants.

1.7 Experience and lessons learned from the past initiatives

Since the adoption of the NSDP 2011 and its implementation, the country's skills system has undergone an expansion and transformation. This transformation has been supported by both government and development partners.. There has been a significant shift from supply-driven to demand-driven and market-responsive skills provision. Several new initiatives were launched concurrently with the reform of the national skill system since 2009 including launching of pilot initiatives. Government's strong focus on skills development has resulted in phenomenal increase of student enrolment in the technical and vocational stream - from 1% in 2009 to 15.2% in 2018.

Furthermore, to contribute to the current and future human resources needs of the country, the Government has set up a high-powered body namely National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) under NSDA Act 2018 and NSDA Rules 2020. The objective is to transform the country's skills development system into a well-coordinated and effective entity contributing to the goal of making Bangladesh a developed country by 2041.

Despite the above positive developments, the scale of interventions has not been sufficient compared to the actual needs. For example, quality and relevance of the skills training are two very important areas requiring robust measures. Other major lessons learnt following the initiation and implementation of NSDP 2011 include:

- Capacity constraints of the training providers remained a major challenge and qualified and efficient training providers is prerequisite to the expansion of the demand-driven and market-responsive skills training system;
- Lack of proper coordination among the training providers in the public and private sectors resulted in varying quality of training and certification, particularly due to shortage of qualified trainers, insufficient equipment and workshop facilities. Coordination in training and certification across the private and public domain therefore needs to be a priority;
- Access to skills training by the marginalized and poorer groups, including those from the remote areas and at community levels, has remained limited. For the holistic impact of skills training throughout the nation, inclusion and access thus has to be maintained;
- Skills demand data for the domestic and overseas markets, particularly for the future skills needs, is scarce and this lesson could be the basis for initiating a skills data framework for better monitoring and evidence-based responses in this sector; and

- Public knowledge and perception of skills training were found to be inadequate. This could be results of inadequate advocacy and mass campaigning at the national and community levels.

Chapter 2: Demand-driven, Flexible and Responsive Training Provision

2.1 Skills Training for the Current and Future Labour Market Needs

- 2.1.1 Bangladesh's labour market is characterized by a rapid labour force growth rate of 3% per annum which is faster than the population growth rate of 1.37% per annum.² According to the BBS estimates, one-third of the country's entire labour force (BBS, LFS 2017-18 estimates) are young people (15 to 29 years). On an average 2.0 million people join the labour force every year. To take advantage of the country's demographic dividend, preparing the country's youth for the world of work, particularly through an effective skills development system, is one of the highest national priorities. Hence, the skills policy will specifically provide for the strategies needed to help these people with employable skills through increasing their access and participation in skills training.
- 2.1.2 On the demand side, Bangladesh has been experiencing a major transformation of its economy led by rapid growth of manufacturing and services sectors which require skilled workers. The Government has embarked upon several large-scale mega projects and is establishing 100 economic zones in phases where large scale investments are expected. If successfully implemented, these economic zones are expected to generate huge employment opportunities estimated at about 10 million new jobs by 2030. All these rapid economic transformations of the Bangladesh economy have already created or are likely to create huge demand for skilled workers in the future.
- 2.1.3 The industries in Bangladesh are undergoing transformation and evolution toward complete digitization and intelligent production processes to ensure high efficiency. The Fourth Industrial Revolution (known as 4IR) is based on the concept of smart factories where machines are integrated with humans through cyber-physical systems. So, the new workers who will face the future world of work under 4IR must have new skills in automation, digitization, and information technologies.
- 2.1.4 Alongside with the above priorities, there is need to focus more on research and innovation to support sectoral skills gap analysis, emerging skills requirements, labour market forecasting, and performance monitoring and reporting.
- 2.1.5 Another area of importance is demand forecasting and enhancing skill requirements for the overseas job market. It is the Government's expressed policy to raise the percentage of skilled workers for overseas employments. Currently, 55% of the

² GED: Planning Commission: *Seventh Five Year Plan, Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens, Chapter 1*, Dhaka, Dec. 2015, p.5

³ GED: Planning Commission: *Perspective Plan of Bangladesh, 2021-41*, Dhaka, Feb. 2020

workers going abroad on employment are either low skilled or semi-skilled (BMET Annual Report, 2017). As the nature of demand in overseas markets is changing with preference for skilled workers, Bangladesh needs to prepare its workforce through investing in human resource development. This will include mutual recognition of skills between Bangladesh and the destination countries. To this effect, Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment and BMET will take necessary initiatives and collaborate with NSDA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- 2.1.6 To meet the demand for skilled workers in the domestic economy and overseas labour market, Bangladesh's current skills system needs to respond to those emerging industry and labour market needs. Ministries and departments as well as the STPs in both public and private sectors will collaborate with each other for delivery of skills development training.
- 2.1.7 Also, the Government will adopt strategies for policy implementation including plan of action, evaluation of the KPI for STPs, develop uniform training curriculum, publish skills demand forecast and establish sector-wise skills data system.
- 2.1.8 Other important activities will be to:
- a. Develop and certify trainers and assessors, establish a certified trainer and assessor pool, conduct assessment and assure quality;
 - b. Take actions for certification, equalize international certificates and take actions for MRA;
 - c. Accreditation of assessment centre and support the establishment of Centre of Excellence (COE);
 - d. Form and strengthen Industry Skills Council (ISC), observe, monitor, advise and coordinate the activities of ISC and establish Industry linkage;
 - e. Monitor and evaluate the skills development system, monitor skills development project and programs taken by different ministries and agencies, and establish skills data system;
 - f. Conduct research, survey, census, study to match demand and supply of skills;
 - g. Support the use of NHRDF for the financing of skills development;
 - h. Provide Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL);
 - i. Classify jobs;
 - j. Provide award for the development of teaching aids, content, machinery and quality improvement methods by arranging competition;
 - k. Establish forums, committees, working groups and task forces for skills development;
 - l. Coordinate the activities of STPs; and
 - m. Develop awareness about skills development.

2.2 Skills development for emerging technologies including 4IR and digital skills

- 2.2.1 An important objective of the Government is to develop a digital system to ensure that services are delivered efficiently in an effort to transform the country into a knowledge-based society by 2041 (*National ICT Policy 2018, Sections 2.1 & 2.2*). For this, the Government would like to build up ICT-based skilled human resources

through training and by generating employment opportunities. As manufacturing and services sectors are growing rapidly, Bangladesh adopts the new technologies and production processes including the use of digital technologies in the various sectors and sub-sectors.

2.2.2 Therefore, NSDP 2020 will include provisions for promoting training on digital skills and other emerging skills areas for promotion of youth employment, both domestic and overseas. In this regard, the following measures will be adopted by the skillsdevelopment system:

- a. Identify and assess the skill requirements including anticipation for future skills requirements and develop a digitized skillsdatabase;
- b. Develop curricula and training courses to incorporate ICT-related skills in the trainingcourses;
- c. Upgrade the digital skills and knowledge of the teachers and instructors including competency required for delivery of online training whereappropriate;
- d. Building capacity of the STPsto deliver training on the digital and emerging technologies, online training, other kind of distant learning methods;and
- e. Use of digital technologies for monitoring and assessing performance of STPsand tracking of skills graduates.

2.3 Skills Development Training relating to Climate Change Initiatives

2.3.1 Bangladesh has been ranked high in the risk of being affected by extreme weather events. Aware of country's climate change related vulnerabilities, the Government has adopted the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009 and the recent and updated long-term Delta Plan 2100. Adaptation and mitigations measures to meet the challenges of climate change include, inter alia, use of new and alternative technologies including promotion of green skills. Some examples of green skills related activities include energy saving production methods and green factories, installation and maintenance of solar home systems, bio-gas, waste management and recycling, effluent treatment plants, eco-tourism, organic production practices, and other emerging areas.

2.3.2 In this regard, NSDA and the key stakeholders including Ministry of Environment and Forest, Department of Environment and Forest, NGO and civil society groups, international and UN organizations, and other stakeholders will identify emerging green skills which are in demand. Depending on the assessment of demand for emerging green skills, training courses will be developed and introduced in the various trainingcentres, where possible.

Chapter 3: Ensuring Quality of Skills Development Training

3.1 Framework of Qualifications for Skills Development

3.1.1 Experience shows that a sound skills system requires a framework of qualifications that will contribute to the improved quality of training and better employment outcomes of the trainees. As already mentioned, the systematic skills training initiatives by the various agencies with a quality assurance mechanism and training overlaps due to the lack of coordination are two major obstacles towards achieving quality and relevance of skills training. Therefore, a qualifications framework needs to be put in place for development of skills training system and quality assurance mechanism. This qualifications framework is subject to review as and when deemed to be necessary by the competent authority in consultations with the other stakeholders.

3.2 National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF)

3.2.1 Through the adoption of NSDA Act 2018 and NSDA Rules 2020, NSDA has got the mandate for skills development in the country by way of coordination, quality assurance, and assessment and certification. Pursuant to the said Act and Rules as well as this policy, skills development training and quality assurance will be guided by a framework. This framework is subject to the endorsement by Executive Committee of NSDA. The Executive Committee will decide on its review and updating as and when required.

National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF)

NSQF LEVELS	Descriptor			Job Classification
	Knowledge	Technique	Occupational Responsibilities	
NSQF Level 10	Acquire mastery of theme and innovation; analyze, compare and summarize critical understanding and thinking of the work and theme; think situations differently; provide innovative and creative contribution to knowledge and process of work through observation, study, research and motivate up keeping mission and vision.	Facilitate appropriate techniques to develop strategic plan/policies; carry out extensive research and study; show performance to provide creative and innovative contribution and future planning.	Responsible for decision making in complex and innovative situations. Carry out and or guide on work and technical activities in unpredictable situations; responsible for short, medium and long term future plan.	Specialists
NSQF Level 9	Provide information for innovative, creative and dynamic solutions; apply critical thinking and intellectual talent on personnel management in a broader context; maintain value system to control organization as a whole.	Apply appropriate techniques to develop strategic plan/policies; Apply effective communication techniques with external and internal periphery; represent organization as a whole; facilitate to develop innovative and dynamic solutions for specific and abstract problems in multiple sector; practice intellectual talent to evaluate and control whole organizational activities; prepare and apply techniques for budgetary control.	Responsible for whole organization. Directs, evaluate and control the organization as a whole to implement short, medium and long term future plan. Control resources, expenditures and budget.	Chiefs

	Descriptor			
NSQF LEVELS	Knowledge	Technique	Occupational Responsibilities	Job Classification
NSQF Level 8	Use information for innovative creative solutions in a wider range; apply principles of management in a broader context; maintain value system to control behavior of teams; maintain a pervasive, consistent, and predictable behavior.	Apply effective communication and presentation techniques in a wider context; apply techniques to develop creative and innovative solutions for specific and abstract problems in multiple sector; practice intellectual independence; control managerial activities; apply techniques to implement strategic plans to achieve objectives.	Responsible for multiple departments or whole enterprise. Exercises executive functions in a wider range. Directs and motivates managers to achieve goals and objectives; control resources and expenditures.	Senior Managers
NSQF Level 7	Use information for innovative solutions; apply principles of management; maintain value system to control behavior of the team; maintain a pervasive, consistent, and predictable behavior.	Apply effective communication and presentation techniques; apply techniques to develop creative solutions for specific and abstract problems; practice intellectual independence; control workplace activities in a smart way; apply motivational techniques to achieve objectives.	Responsible for a department or whole enterprise. Exercises managerial functions. Supervise and motivate employees to achieve goals and objectives. Provide direction of the progress of an organization. Control resources and expenditures.	Managers
NSQF Level 6	Present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas, or quality of work based on a set of criteria; organize values into priorities; resolve conflicts at workplace; analyze, compare, relate and evaluate values.	Use wider range of techniques according to situation; suggest critical and creative techniques perform job/tasks in a range of situations.	Execute work plans. Disseminate information to lower management. Inspire and provide guidance to low-level management and teams. Diagnose and resolve problems within and among work groups;	Mid Level Manager

	Descriptor			
NSQF LEVELS	Knowledge	Technique	Occupational Responsibilities	Job Classification
NSQF Level 5	Scrutinize and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Make inferences and find evidences to support generalizations; maintain workplace values with more complex state of commitment.	Apply techniques to perform duties with complex situation; practice critical and creative thinking to guide the performance of the team under his/her jurisdiction; use information and communication technologies; maintain communication to achieve time bound objectives.	Bridge between higher level management and skilled employees. Give instructions and/or orders to lower level staffs. Responsible for the work and actions of team members.	Supervisor
NSQF Level 4	Possess a range of cognitive, affective requirements; solve problems to new situations by comparing and applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way; maintain professional values.	Apply wide range of innovative and creative techniques to perform works in response to workplace requirements; lead a team for effective performance as per workplace requirements.	Work efficiently with team and lead the team. Apply techniques and traits in response to workplace requirements.	Highly Skilled worker
NSQF Level 3	Recognition of facts and ideas by organizing, interpreting, giving descriptions, and stating main ideas; maintain workplace values and culture.	Apply techniques to perform works using appropriate tools and equipment by recognizing the requirements of workplace settings and upholding the values and culture of the workplace.	Work efficiently through exercising considerable independent judgments. Discharge duties with responsibility. Possess a thorough and comprehensive knowledge and techniques of the occupation s/he employed.	Skilled worker
NSQF Level 2	Interpret and apply occupational terms and instructions; maintain awareness, attentiveness, responsiveness and punctuality.	Communicate at workplace with required clarity; apply technique for calculations, show performance to do the job; work in a team; and exchange views and feedback of others.	Do work generally of defined routine nature with necessary skills for proper discharge of work assigned and little judgments. Work under supervision with limited scope of manipulation.	Semi Skilled worker

	Descriptor			
NSQF LEVELS	Knowledge	Technique	Occupational Responsibilities	Job Classification
NSQF Level 1	Interpret common occupational terms and instructions; state required occupational tools, materials and their use; maintain awareness, willingness to hear, responsive to selected attention etc.	Apply techniques to perform specific works showing competencies using required tools and equipment by interpreting occupational terms and instructions applying OSH within guided work environment/ under supervision.	Limited range of responsibilities to carry out tasks under supervision.	Basic Skilled worker

3.3 Skills Quality Assurance Mechanism

3.3.1 The benefits of a skills quality assurance mechanism are obvious. Establishment and functioning of such a mechanism is to ensure that the skills training providers meet the standards related to the workplace requirements. Over time, all the agencies delivering skills training will become accredited under the set criteria so that learners can receive formal recognition of skills acquired through the NSQF-determined learning outcomes. This will ultimately lead to the credibility of the certificates and better employment outcomes of the jobseekers at home and abroad. Ultimately, the skills training will be systematic and effective.

3.3.2 Thus, an effective quality assurance mechanism will include the following:

- a. registration of STPs;
- b. preparation of competency standards, CAD, curriculums, instructor's manual, etc;
- c. a skills framework having units of competencies and qualifications;
- d. accreditation of training and assessment programs;
- e. certification of trainers and assessors;
- f. auditing of training providers for compliance with quality standards;
- g. validation of assessment tools against units of competencies (e.g. standardized examinations and practical tests); and
- h. development and publication of quality procedures and manuals and its effective implementations.

3.4 Competency-based Training and Assessment (CBT&A)

3.4.1 The CBT&A system is intended to support the introduction of demand-driven skills development training keeping the relevant stakeholders in the loop. It represents a shift from the traditional theory-based approaches to the practical skills through competency-based training required by industry. Two key principles of the CBT&A system include:

3.4.1.1 Progression or graduation through the training delivery that will determine whether the trainees have met the set standards or competencies required by particular occupations; and not by the time spent in training sessions; and

3.4.1.2 Achievements of the trainees are measured against the job-related competency standards.

3.4.2 Under the CBT&A, a close collaboration with industry is needed to develop clear descriptors of knowledge and technique constituting skill for performance of specific tasks at workplaces. The units of competencies or competency standards set the performance criteria that will be assessed in STPs in line with the existing skills development qualifications framework.

3.5 Skills Training Quality Assurance

3.5.1 Improved quality of training will increase the productivity and competitiveness of the skill graduates. Good quality training will enhance the employability of the graduates

and make skills development a more attractive option for the young people and thus benefits the community at large. Improved quality is also necessary so that the employers at home and abroad can be assured that qualifications assessed truly reflect the standard of skills that they claim.

- 3.5.2 Skills development training will be assessed against a framework of qualifications so that learners can receive formal recognition of their skills acquired. NSDA will lead the implementation of the skills qualifications framework and initiate actions to review the framework as and when required.

3.6 Role of the Key Agencies

- (1) **National Skills Development Authority (NSDA):** This was established under the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) Act 2018. It started its journey from February 2019 and has a broad-based membership in its Governing Body that includes almost all the government ministries delivering skills training and selected representatives from the private sector and organizations of employers and employees. The NSDA Act 2018 empowers this new Authority with a wide-ranging responsibilities and tasks with regard to coordination, quality assurance and certification.
- (2) **The Government Ministries and Departments:** There are 23 ministries and 35 departments under these ministries providing skills training of various types (*TVET Institution Census 2015*). Notable among these are: Finance Division, Technical and Madrasah Education Division, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Ministry of Youth and Sports, ICT Division, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Industries, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Ministry of Jute and Textiles, Rural Development and Cooperative Division.
- (3) **Industry Skills Councils (ISCs):** The ISCs have been established to ensure industry collaboration in skills development. ISC will establish Centre of Excellence (CoE) which will practice and promote the best model of skills in the industry sector. It will also be a research hub for conducting research and survey to provide information on skills demand, priority occupations, technological transformation and scope of job opportunities. Furthermore, ISCs will help in strengthening industry linkage, apprenticeship program, up-skilling and re-skilling, RPL, standard and curriculum development, assessment of trainees, trainers and assessors. To this effect, separate guidelines will be developed for implementations.
- (4) **Non-Government Organizations (NGO):** NGOs will provide skills development in collaboration with NSDA and the relevant stakeholders.

Chapter 4: Improving Access and Outreach of Skills Training

4.1 *Improving Access and Outreach to Underserved Areas*

Expanding outreach and improving access of skills training are two important areas of focus of this policy. It will strengthen the institutional capacity for increasing access and coordinate with local and community-level organizations for delivery of skills training. Specifically, these may include interventions in the following areas:

- a. Expansion of workplace-based skills training like apprenticeship, on-the-job training and industry attachments;
- b. Support to the existing training providers or establishment of new ones which will work to improve access to the marginalized groups and to reach out to the people of geographically isolated communities;
- c. Increasing the outreach of the skills system to remote areas and underserved communities;
- d. Providing necessary support to STPs through need assessment;
- e. Working with the various government agencies which expands network of training at the district or upazila levels for example DTE, Department of Youth, Department of Women Affairs and Department of Social Services as well as local NGOs and private sector training providers;
- f. Strengthening capacity of the existing STPs to deliver training following appropriate curriculum and learning materials; and
- g. Support to the area-based skills demand data collection and deliver skills training focusing on the needs of the marginalized communities.

4.2 *Improving access of the Marginalized Groups*

4.2.1 **Marginalized People:** It is important that marginalized people are provided with greater access to appropriate and quality skills development training. To ensure this, the national skills development system will provide:

- a. Pathways for the marginalized people into the formal training system including apprenticeships and RPL;
- b. Offer specially-designed courses such as IT-related skills, job-related skills development, and entrepreneurship skills leading to gainful employment opportunities after training;
- c. Introduce flexible shifts for the delivery of courses;
- d. Allow reasonable adjustment to procedures related to assessment and RPL;
- e. Ensure safe and congenial learning environment; and
- f. Support STPs to introduce courses for the marginalized people during and after training such as career counseling, job placement and other post-training services.

4.2.2 **Women:** Participation of women in skills development is low. Given the current slow

progress in participation of women in skills development, special efforts and pro-active measures are necessary to correct this gender imbalance, particularly in formal training system. To address this, the Government has adopted a strategy for gender mainstreaming in technical and vocational education and training. Specific measures to increase female participation in the skills programme will include the following:

- a. Offering a broader range of traditional & non-traditional skills training programs that could improve the employability of women;
- b. Reviewing programs and their delivery modes to make them gender friendly;
- c. Increasing enrollment rates for females in skills development programmes through pro-active measures such as hostel facilities, stipends for the students from the poorer families, relaxing admission criteria, and providing a gender friendly environment for female students;
- d. Providing separate wash rooms for male & female trainees;
- e. Employing female instructors where possible;
- f. Implementing a workplace harassment prevention policy in training institutions;
- g. Ensuring all instructors and managers undergo gender awareness, workplace harassment prevention and equal employment opportunities in training; and
- h. Providing a system where all trainees have access to counseling services.

4.2.3 Persons with Disabilities: The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013 calls for action to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities through increasing their access and privileges and participation in skills development programs. The Government approved a national strategy for inclusion of persons with disabilities in skills development training. There are also examples where private sector employers have pro-actively come forward to support training and employment of persons with disabilities. For increasing access of persons with disabilities in skills training, specific measures may include the following:

- a. Strategy for inclusion of persons with disabilities will be implemented;
- b. Institutional facilities will be upgraded to provide access to training for the disabled trainees;
- c. Managers and instructors of training institutions will receive training on how to work with trainees with disabilities;
- d. Efforts will be made to advocate for, engage and encourage the ISCs and private sector employers to have special provisions for persons with disabilities in employment through appropriate job-oriented training;
- e. Customized curriculum and delivery methods will be developed for people with disabilities in priority occupations and skillsets;
- f. Reasonable accommodation will be made in delivery and assessment; and
- g. Persons with disabilities will have access to counseling on training and employment options; and familiarization training on the employment.

4.2.4 People in Less Developed Areas and People in Rural Communities: The Government recognizes that many citizens often have limited access to skills development programs due to their physical isolation or lack of access. To increase participation of the marginalized groups in the socio-economic development

activities, the Government pro-actively encourages greater access of these groups, namely people from *haors* (wetlands), *chars* (shoals) and poverty-stricken areas, to such developmental activities including skills development training. Given the large rural population in Bangladesh, efforts will be made to improve the quality of skills development training in rural communities, and where relevant, strengthen links between formal and informal skills training. To achieve this, the community-based training for rural economic empowerment will:

- a) target the key rural industries such as agriculture, livestock, fisheries and handicrafts, as well as provide skills relevant to rural infrastructure and the development of a range of community services;
- b) develop specially designed courses for increased employment opportunities for the under-privileged groups in their localities;
- c) provide linkages to formal skills training institutions to upgrade or gain further training;
- d) include a support mechanism for trainees during training and post-training periods that will address future employment and training options; and
- e) create gender-friendly environment.

4.2.5 **Informal Workers: STPs** will include the informal economy workers for their skills development in a flexible manner. The workers beyond the purview of STPs will fall under the RPL mechanism for skills certification. Quality assurance and certification will be ensured for these workers.

4.3 *Provision of Apprenticeship for employment*

4.3.1 Apprenticeship is a well-known and time-tested workplace-based training modality. It is an effective way for preparing people for the world of work and addressing unemployment. The NSDA Rules 2020 defines apprenticeship as follows: *“Apprenticeship” is a particular method of skills training through which an employer signs a contract to employ one or more persons as apprentice (s) and train them in systematic way in an industry or training institution in any occupation for pre-determined period of time.*

4.3.2 Apprenticeship increases quality of training as training is delivered hands-on at the workplace under the supervision of the industries’ staff and employers. Therefore, this type of workplace-based training improves the employability of trainees and supplies the industries with steady flow of skilled workers. Currently, the legal provision for apprenticeship is provided in the *Labour Act 2006 (section XVIII)* and its amendment in 2013.

4.3.3 Apprenticeship training has been supported by the Government under several development projects. However, the experience of implementation of the apprenticeship has shown that such efforts have been piecemeal in the past and the scale of expansion of apprenticeship by the agencies has remained insignificant compared to the vast needs of the country and millions of jobseekers.

4.3.4 Measures for expansion of apprenticeship will cover the following areas:

- a) Support strong institutional development for management, registration,

supervisions, and certification of apprenticeship;

- b. Link apprenticeship initiatives with employment opportunities in the Government entities, STPs, ISCs, industry associations, NGOs and other stakeholders;
- c. Develop and implement appropriate mechanisms and incentives to encourage and increase apprenticeships by the employers;
- d. Sensitize young people to the idea of taking up apprenticeships;
- e. Follow the Competency Based Training & Assessment (CBT&A) system for apprenticeships during training delivery occurring both on and off the job;
- f. Explore the potentials of making apprenticeships available at all levels of the skills qualifications framework through ISCs and industry associations in all industry sectors; and
- g. All state-owned enterprises will include apprenticeships in line with their apprenticeship provisions.

4.3.5 Furthermore, to promote expansion of apprenticeships, necessary support will be provided to ISCs, NGOs and industries. A guideline will be developed to:

- a. Set out agreed minimum rates of pay, working conditions and duration of the apprenticeships;
- b. Lead to mutually-understood contracts between the employers and the apprentices
- c. Identify the skills or competencies to be gained on the job; or at a training centre or a combination of both during the apprenticeship periods;
- d. Maintain a skills logbook to record the competencies gained through apprenticeship at workplaces where training is delivered; and
- e. Award apprentices with certificates after assessment.

4.3.6 To this effect, the apprenticeship provisions of the relevant agencies will be reviewed and be updated, if required, through mutual consultations.

4.4 Entrepreneurship in Skills Development Training

4.4.1 An area of immense importance is skills development for entrepreneurs, particularly for the young people. As the number of formal jobs is limited compared to the number of job seekers, alternative occupations in the form of entrepreneurs (mostly for self-employment) is now a widely accepted option for the young people. A good example is the freelancing modality and start-ups using online platforms and digital technologies which has become an emerging area with high growth potentials. So, the skills development system will include necessary components for entrepreneurs training.

4.4.2 To this effect, the Government has adopted several policies of which important ones include *National Industrial Policy, 2016*; *National Youth Policy, 2017*; *National ICT Policy, 2018*; and *SME Policy, 2019*. The skills development policy will be supportive of the relevant provisions of these important national policies.

Thus, skills development for entrepreneurship will include:

- a. collaboration among the relevant bodies like the Ministry of Industries, BSCIC, SME Foundation, employer associations, and private sector in delivering training related to entrepreneurship development;
- b. components for entrepreneurship competency;
- c. collaboration between the two sets of training providers namely those providing skills training and those engaged in entrepreneurship development; and
- d. possible change in the curricula to have some units of competencies of entrepreneurship in the existing skills development training.

4.5 Reskilling, Up-skilling and Lifelong Learning (LLL)

- 4.5.1 Rapid technological changes including use of digital technologies, ever-increasing trends of remote work, digitization of businesses and commerce, and spectacular growth of technology-based occupations will make profound impact on the labour market including on the skills requirements for the old as well as new workers. A research by ILO reveals that change is a constant feature of the world of work as new technologies are introduced in the industries, businesses, offices, communication networks, financial services, and other manufacturing and service activities. There is an ever-increasing trend towards holding permanent jobs; rather doing temporary or precarious jobs, and casualization of work in the global supply chain. As a result, demand for existing skills sets are constantly being replaced by new skills sets. There are redundancies of skills among the already employed workers and there is need to prepare the young people with the emerging skills.
- 4.5.2 In addition, the Covid-19 has left an adverse impact on the socio-economic development. Due to the unprecedented disruptions caused by the disease, the entire population has been affected such as hundreds of thousands of lives lost and many more severely affected. Millions of jobs have been lost, hundreds of thousands of businesses and factories have been shut down, and overall production process and economic activities have been severely affected due to lockdowns.
- 4.5.3 Bangladesh is no exception to these trends. However, some new opportunities have been created through technology-based occupations including those related to use of digital technologies, e-commerce, more and more use of digital financial services, and greater use of online and distant learning using digital technologies. As a result, new types of skills and learning methods have become ever more important for the existing workers who have become redundant in terms of their existing skills and those entering the labour market as part of the overall human resources development. Thus, reskilling and up-skilling of the existing workers have become important as a part of their lifelong learning. For successful implementation of an effective lifelong learning ecosystem, active engagement and coordinated efforts of governments, employers and workers as well as educational institutions is required.
- 4.5.4 To address the reskilling and up-skilling needs and to institutionalize the lifelong

learning at national level, Bangladesh's skills development training needs to prepare and organize itself with necessary resources, staff capacity and policy options. To start with, one important step will be to identify the groups of workers in need of reskilling and up-skilling. Usually, they include low-skilled workers of all ages, old workers who are newly unemployed, informal workers, including women, minority communities, returnee migrant workers or internal migrants, refugees, people with disabilities etc.

- 4.5.5 To respond to the above situations, the stakeholders will adopt specific measures as follows:
- a To conduct survey and needs assessment to find out the reskilling and up-skilling requirements of the various groups;
 - b To identify the target groups requiring reskilling and up-skilling;
 - c To identify and anticipate the types of labour market opportunities available to prioritize groups, and to identify the gaps between the skills held and skills needed ;
 - d To provide career counseling and guidance;
 - e To institutionalize reskilling, up-skilling and lifelong learning among the selected institutions;

4.6 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- 4.6.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has proved to be an effective means to raise access of the working poor and disadvantaged groups to the skills development training. RPL is also relevant for the returnee migrant workers. The scale and expansion of RPL has been constrained by inadequate institutional capacity, limited number of assessment centres, shortage of assessors, and poor affordability of the cost by the low-paid workers.
- 4.6.2 A newly-emerging area where RPL is relevant is to support the country's large number of freelancers and startups through a nationally-recognized assessment. The freelancers are mostly self-employed young people engaged in e-commerce and other kinds of services using digital technologies and online platform. A national research organization (namely South Asian Network on Economic Modelling) estimates that there are about half a million freelancers in the country (2020 estimates). This number is likely to increase as the economy thrives and the demand for such technology-based services continues to increase. Assessing and certifying the freelancers through RPL mechanism will ensure formal recognition of their skills and competencies gained; and thus pave the way for the development of their entrepreneurship potentials. As a result, the prospects for job creation for the young people will grow and the country will benefit through increased exports of such services.
- 4.6.3 As per the NSDA Act (Section 6(1) (d), and based on the successful examples and implementation modalities by the past initiatives, RPL will be scaled up to reach out to the greater number of workers, migrant workers and returnee migrants. Appropriate guidelines will be prepared in collaboration with the partner agencies and training providers to ensure that:

- a. People will have the opportunity to have their skills formally recognized. The recognition process will include assessment of the incumbents' job-related knowledge and demonstrated skills gained through formal or informal trainings, through paid or unpaid works, or via life experiences or a combination of these;
- b. The recognition will be conducted against the competencies and qualifications described in the existing qualifications framework for skills certification;
- c. Reasonable accommodations will be made to cater to those who are illiterate, have a disability or low education levels, provided that they demonstrate their skills at the required levels; and
- d. The certificate holders will have the opportunity to enter the formal training programs for enhancement of their skills.

4.6.4 Guidelines will be developed as and when required for smooth and proper implementations of the RPL mechanism.

4.7 Skills Development for Overseas Employment

4.7.1 Overseas employment constitutes a significant part of Bangladesh's economy. More than 0.7 million Bangladeshis went abroad in 2019 (BMET). This is equivalent to more than one-third of the annual entrants to the labour force. Overseas workers remitted US\$18.3 billion in 2019 which constitutes about 5.8% of the country's GDP (BMET & World Bank estimates). For the future, the government would like to increase the flow of overseas employment with greater proportion of skilled workers and maximize remittance earnings.

4.7.2 An issue of concern for policy makers is the relatively high percentage of low-skilled migrant workers from Bangladesh. Specific measures in this regard will include: collection of accurate information on demand for the skilled workers in the overseas labour markets; expansion of RPL to cover migrant workers including female migrants; strengthening capacity of the STPs to deliver quality training that meets the requirements of the overseas employers; and make concerted efforts by the various agencies for recognition of certificates by the overseas employers.

4.8 Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) with Global Partners

4.8.1 The main objective of MRA with Global Partners is to adopt best practices across the world. This kind of agreement will immensely benefit domestic training programs by enhancing their quality through learning from successful international models of skills development training. The Governments, corporate bodies and agencies from abroad will be encouraged to collaborate in design of competency standards, curricula, CBLM and delivery of training. Exchange and capacity building programs for trainers, administrators and trainees will be facilitated. The scheme will also institutionalize the process of skills development of emigrant workers and to equip them with the basic knowledge about laws, language, and culture of the destination countries.

4.8.2 Besides skills, Bangladeshi workers face other problems like inadequate information and lack of knowledge of basic language. Often they have to work in adverse circumstances because of unfavorable terms of employment. As the nature of demand in overseas markets is changing with

preference for more skilled workers, Bangladesh needs to prepare its workforce through investing in human resource development. This will include mutual recognition of skills between Bangladesh and the destination countries.

4.8.3 Furthermore, to contribute to the increased percentage of skilled workers for overseas jobs, the relevant agencies will:

- a. Carry out stakeholder consultations with government institutions, multinational employers, and in-country officials of Embassies of key labour destination countries. Such consultations will help the Government of Bangladesh to understand the dynamics of labour migration patterns, employment trends, employment prospects of the high-demand occupations, key challenges and bottlenecks associated with hiring skilled workers from Bangladesh and international recognition of skills certification;
- b. Help promote an improved skills development training to enable training and placement of more skilled workers on overseas jobs. In this regard, Bangladesh will take the advantage of growing skills shortages to be faced by the ageing population of the developed world and will tap potentials to supply skilled workers to the overseas labour markets; and
- c. Conduct research for continuous identification of countries; trades and occupations where skills shortages exist or are likely to develop.

Chapter 5: Industry Engagement in Skills Training

5.1 *Role of Industry sector in Skills Development*

- 5.1.1 For the sake of increasing the greater employability of the skills graduates, industry participation in the skills development training needs to be increased. Such industry participation includes, inter alia, formation of Industry Skills Councils (ISCs), expansion of apprenticeships, contributions to competency-based curriculum development, establishing centre of excellence, public private partnership, and demand forecasting for skills.
- 5.1.2 The ISCs will be established and registered under the Company Act 1994. The role of ISCs will cover the following:
- a. To develop linkage between industry and STPs;
 - b. To support identification of occupations in demand by the industries;
 - c. To contribute to the development of competency standards, CAD and curriculums;
 - d. To forecast the industry's demand for skills;
 - e. To support skill-gap analysis periodically that will guide the STPs in re-skilling and up-skilling of the existing workforce;
 - f. To support expansion of apprenticeships; and
 - g. To promote public private partnerships in skills development.
 - h. A guideline will be developed for operationalization of ISCs.

5.2 *Strengthening linkage between Skills Training Providers (STPs) and Industries through ISCs and Industry Associations*

- 5.2.1 Ideally, a sound skill development system actively promotes close collaboration between the skills training institutions and industries. In this regard, necessary measures will be adopted to facilitate such industry-institution linkage through mobilizing the ISCs and Industry Associations.
- 5.2.2 Also, a sound skills development system promotes skills development training that takes place in the training institutions and the specialized on-the-job training in the industries.
- 5.2.3 Strong industry-institution linkage is a necessity to ensure a steady flow of skilled and productive workers. Such linkage is not a one-sided affair. On the contrary, it is a kind of partnership to work for a common goal of developing human resources. It is not only confined to provide on-the-job training by the industry experts but also to include industry cooperation right from the planning stage to the job placement of the trainees.
- 5.2.4 In this regard, MoUs between STPs and industries is necessary as the STPs will be sure of its trainees being absorbed in the industry. This would benefit the trainees of the institutions in obtaining effective training in reputed organizations. It will expose the trainees to the latest technologies. Trainees will gain experience in a real work environment that will raise their prospects of finding jobs after training.
- 5.2.5 Besides training in the institutions, it is important to allow young people the

opportunity to learn skills on the job. For this reason, linkages between training institutions and industries are critical in determining the outcomes of skills development training. Benefits of institution-industry co-operation include:

- a. job placement of the skills graduates;
- b. information exchange between institutions and industries on current practices;
- c. on-the-job training, work experience and apprenticeships;
- d. career guidance, counseling and job placement support; and
- e. supply of skilled workers for quality production in industry.

Chapter 6: Improving Governance of an Effective, Flexible and

Results-focused Skills Development

6.1 Skills Development is a Shared Responsibility

- 6.1.1 Skills development is a shared responsibility among a number of actors playing their respective roles towards a well-functioning national skills development training. The actors include NSDA, various Government Ministries and Departments delivering skills training, public sector training providers, private sector training providers and not-for-profit or NGO training providers, ISCs, trade bodies and, employers' organizations like Bangladesh Employers Federation and employees associations.
- 6.1.2 Appropriate measures will be in place to ensure that all the agencies play their due role towards a sound skills development system that:
- a. aligns with the national goals and objectives;
 - b. promotes jobs for the country's youth; and
 - c. supports rapid human resources needs of the rapidly growing economy.

6.2 Effective and Flexible Institutional Management

- 6.2.1 Institutional framework and governance structure of the skills development training have undergone a major reshuffle with the adoption of the NSDA Act 2018 and NSDA Rules 2020. An effective institutional framework is required for a demand-driven and inclusive skills development training. Important tasks are:
- a. Enhancing capacity of the training providers to improve their managerial capacities and to respond to emerging needs of the labour markets such as collecting and generating accurate and credible skills data;
 - b. Promoting a flexible approach to training delivery to suit the needs of the various target groups, local economy and the isolated rural communities;
 - c. Specifying provisions for transparency and accountability of the training providers (public and private sectors) in line with the stated objectives of the skills development policy; and
 - d. Assessing the key performance indicators (KPI) for skills development training.

6.3 Enhancing Implementation Capacities of the Key Agencies

- 6.3.1 Many of the key challenges facing skills development in Bangladesh derive from the current structure and management of the skills development system including the STPs; public and private sectors and NGOs. These are: limited inter-agency coordination, poor linkages between the STPs and the labour markets, insufficient capacity of the various agencies, piecemeal regulations and quality assurance, and

limited planning and delivery of training including at local and community levels.

- 6.3.2 To address the above challenges, KPIs will be developed for the STPs to measure their compliance with the pre-determined performance indicators. Other important measures will include the following:
- a. Prepare, implement and follow up on a skills development action plan;
 - b. Coordinate the provisions of skills development delivered by different Government Ministries, private sector providers, and NGOs;
 - c. Promote decentralization of skills training delivery and introduce specific mechanisms to improve coordination of skills development training at Division, District and Upazilla levels;
 - d. Support establishment of Skills Development Consultative Committees at each Division under a guideline.

6.4 *Capacity Building for Skills Development Training*

- 6.4.1 Skills development eco-system aims to establish a skills-based and technologically-oriented competent society to ensure that every person has access to skills training that will provide necessary knowledge and techniques to meet their occupational needs in a competitive world of work.
- 6.4.2 To this effect, a consultative forum comprising of the industry as well as private sector experts and technical training managers will be built up to support the analysis of skills gaps, selection of need-based occupations, development of standards, curriculums, competency-based learning materials, assessment tools and quality assurance mechanisms. A small group of master trainers will be formed from the consultative forum. This small group of master trainers involved in curriculums and CBLM development will subsequently support the capacity building of the trainers and assessors for smooth and effective training delivery and quality assurance.
- 6.4.3 If required, arrangements will be made for certification of the master trainers.

6.5 *Establishing an Effective Monitoring and Evaluation System*

- 6.5.1 As skills development needs to respond to the dynamic and ever-changing requirements of the rapidly changing economy, it is of immense importance that the national skills development policy will undergo periodic reviews and revisions to maintain its relevance. This is even more important considering the fact that (a) the number of training institutes, particularly in the private sector, has expanded rapidly (about 43% between 2008 and 2015) and (b) currently, there are about 13,163 training institutions in the country (estimates of TVET Institute Census 2015 by BBS). About 87% of these institutes are in the private sector and quality of training in most of these institutes requires improvements through monitoring & evaluation.
- 6.5.2 For improving the current situations, the national skills development system in the country will carry out following tasks relating to monitoring and evaluation:
- a. Prepare Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for STPs;

- b. Establish a sound system of regular monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the skills development initiatives;
- c. Undertake a good assessment of the performance of the STPs;
- d. Monitor activities of ISCs;
- e. Carry out regular monitoring and evaluation;
- f. Develop an online system for tracking the skills graduates; and
- g. Monitor the implementation progress of skills development action plan.

6.5.3 Review of implementation progress of the various initiatives under this policy will be carried out. For smooth conduct of such review, regular consultations with the stakeholders will be organized to obtain feedback and make improvements.

6.5.4 **Assessment:** Assessment will be undertaken to ensure that the targets are met well within the set time frame. For this purpose, indicators will be developed and used in the assessment process.

6.6 Monitoring and Coordination of Projects and Programs related to Skills Development Training

6.6.1 **Need for a holistic approach for the national skill development training:** A number of skills development training projects operate in the public and private sectors. Quite often, the projects are implemented in a disjointed manner; and, on many occasions, overlap stake place. Thus, (i) information on the national and international labour markets demand for skills remains fragmented; (ii) there is a lack of consistency in the training quality; and (iii) priorities for implementation of the skills initiatives are determined on a piecemeal rather than systematic basis. This policy is, therefore, expected to ensure that appropriate measures are in place for a holistic approach to skills development training.

6.6.2 **Improved coordination of skills development training initiatives:** To avoid the pitfalls of the current system, Section 6(1)(e) of the NSDA Act, 2018 mandated NSDA “to monitor and coordinate projects and programs related to skills Development training.” In this regard, the steps to be taken are:

- a. To issue a circular to all the concerned stakeholders mentioning the details of how to monitor and coordinate the projects and programs and what actions are needed at the time of initiating and designing new projects on skills development training;
- b. To implement a monitoring, evaluation and coordination system for performance measurement and further improvements; and
- c. To formulate and implement a set of comprehensive guidelines for monitoring and evaluation of the activities related to the effective use of NHRDF.

6.7 Skills and Labour Market Data for Planning and Monitoring

- 6.7.1 Quality data are crucial for effective management, planning and delivery of a sound skills development training. Without accurate data for skills demand, the Government, employers, training providers and other stakeholders find it difficult to take informed decisions about what skills are required and what programs should be delivered, when and where.
- 6.7.2 Accurate skills training data are also important to assess new opportunities for workers whose skills sets may be affected by the technological changes. Quantitative and qualitative forecasting of skills demand will be linked to the broad national development strategies with systems put in place to track sectors and regions having high growth potentials, new employment prospects and skills requirements.
- 6.7.3 The skills training development data system will be strengthened to provide timely and accurate information to all stakeholders. The system will:
- a. Address the data needs related to the supply of skills, the demand for skills, and the matching of supply and demand in public and private sectors;
 - b. Address the data needs related to the demand for skills by trades/occupations in key international labour markets;
 - c. Identify skills shortage and potential demands for skills both at the international, regional and national levels;
 - d. Increase the use of tracer studies to track the employability of the skilled graduates;
 - e. Provide information on the training courses and programs offered by STPs; and
 - f. Raise awareness on labour rights and obligations.
- 6.7.4 To make it efficient and useful, the skills training data system will collect information and inputs from the industry sector, skills training providers both at public, private and NGOs, BBS, ministries and agencies providing skills development training.
- 6.7.5** For the overseas employment-related information, MoEW&OE/BMET is responsible for coordination of international skills demand data. The MoEW&OE/BMET will share the data with the relevant stakeholders for decision-making on skills development training.

6.8 National Skills Portal

- 6.8.1 As per section 6(1)(c) of NSDA Act 2018, developing and commissioning a robust National Skills Portal (NSP) is very important. The NSP will contain national and international skills demand and supply related data with monitoring and reporting provisions under dynamic formats. It will have a number of important modules that will contain the following information: registration of institutes, training course accreditation, trainee's enrollment, training delivery mechanism, assessment process, certification, pool of trainers and assessors, training materials like curricula, competency standards, guidelines, skills demand, job placement, and graduates

tracking system.

- 6.8.2 To ensure that, the NSP will be updated and customized depending on its requirements for augmentation and exclusion. Potential trainees, job seekers, national and international employers, public and private agencies, and NGOs will benefit from NSP. Furthermore, the unemployed workforce, especially young job seekers and disadvantaged groups, will be able to do job matching with their skills and be able to actively engage in the mainstream national economy.

6.9 Promoting Skills Development Training

- 6.9.1 The value and status of skills development training need to be upgraded and enhanced. In Bangladesh, there is an oversupply of general education university graduates and a shortage of workers with skills and qualifications required in the world of work. Skills development training needs not to be considered an alternative option for choice of career.
- 6.9.2. To raise the status of skills development training, partnerships between Government, employers, workers and the private sector is the imperative. The actors will work together for popularization of skills development training.
- 6.9.3 Representatives of the Government, employers and labour organizations need to jointly promote the development and recognition of skills development training and the need for necessary investment in this area.
- 6.9.4 The Government will initiate dialogue with the partners and stakeholders to raise awareness of skills development among people.
- 6.9.5 Advocacy and social marketing of skills development training may include the following:
- a. Organize campaigns and competitions involving all stakeholders to increase enrollment in skills development training;
 - b. Participate in the national and international conferences, meetings, workshops and seminars;
 - c. Organize skills fair and introduce national awards for skilled workers;
 - d. Organize workshops and seminars at the local level with the parents, community leaders and local employers, civil society organizations, and labour organizations to popularize skills development training; and
 - e. Observe World Youth Skills Day;
- 6.9.6 Specific measures for popularizing skills development training and ensuring greater participation of people will include the following:
- a. Strengthen local training capacity and institutions (both public and private) to enable them to introduce demand-based skills training courses and include wider section of population in these courses;
 - b. Ensure better co-ordination of skill development training at the local level;

- c. Popularize and expand RPL mechanisms and apprenticeships at the national and local levels and undertake necessary measures such as (i) identification of occupation-wise population groups; (ii) assessment of qualifications of the skilled persons at the local level; and (iv) ensuring participation of industries in these initiatives;
- d. Greater participation and access to skills development training for the disadvantaged people to promote wages and self-employment;
- e. Increase the level of awareness on NSDP, 2020 at the local level will be organized with support of the local authorities. In addition, electronic and print media may be used to reach out to the various groups of stakeholders;
- f. Extend financial support to poorer groups including women, unemployed youth and people in the rural areas; and
- g. Flexible training delivery system needs to be introduced to ensure participation of women, freelancers and rural people in skill development training;

6.10 Participation in Skills Development Training

It is important that the country's skills development training needs to (a) reach out to a greater number of the population than before; and (b) include a broad-based participation by the members of various socio-economic groups including the freelancers and the marginalized groups.

Chapter 7: Research, Survey and Study on Skills Development Training

It is important to focus on research, survey and study that will reveal the trends in the labour market, skills in demand in the domestic and overseas labour markets, and adoption of the new and emerging technologies and integration and use of ICT in the skills development training. Collaboration among the various stakeholders and agencies will be pursued:

- (a) to identify prospective areas of research, study and assessment;
- (b) to prepare manual and guidelines for research; and
- (c) to develop a regular system to publish and disseminate the key findings and recommendations of the reports of the surveys, researches, studies etc. in an effort to popularize and raise awareness among the people about skills development training.

Chapter 8: Financing Provisions for Skills Development Training

8.1 The provision for financing the skills development training plays an important role in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the trainings. Funding for skills development training will be provided from the budgetary provisions of the STPs.

- i) ***NSDA's Fund Provisions:*** According to the NSDA Act, 2018; the Authority has a fund consisting of the following sources:
 - a. Grants received from the Government;
 - b. Loans borrowed from any source approved by the Government;
 - c. Money received as registration fees;

- d. Interest of money deposited in the bank; and
 - e. Money received from any other valid sources.
- ii) ***NHRDF Provisions:*** There is a fund, known as NHRDF which has been set up by the Finance Division, Ministry of Finance under the Company Act 1994 to provide support towards the skills development training. NSDA has been tasked with selecting candidates for NHRDF disbursement by Finance Division under policy guidelines.

Chapter 9: A Forward-looking Skills Development Training Policy

The NSDP 2020 will be a forward-looking policy responding to the rapidly changing socio-economic scenarios of Bangladesh and its transition towards a knowledge-based society. These changing scenarios are: demographic transition and its impact on the labour markets characterized by ever-increasing number of young jobseekers; emergence of new technologies and production processes including 4IR that will necessitate reskilling, upskilling and lifelong learning opportunities for the population; increased trade and investment generating demand for skilled workers at both home and abroad; and response to climate change and future of work requiring knowledge and skills for adaptation to new technologies.

Necessary adjustments are needed to address the emerging trends. The Government has committed to Sustainable Development Goals and targets towards becoming a developed country by 2041. To achieve the objectives, the skills development training needs to address the following areas:

- ***Focus on ensuring quality and relevance of skills development training and strengthen linkage with the industry and private sector in design and delivery of skills development training:*** It is necessary to match demand and supply of skills and improve labour market data; and maintain the employability of workers.
- ***Alignment with the sustainable development goals:*** It will include quality and relevance of skill development training.
- ***Technological change, reskilling, upskilling and lifelong learning:*** In line with SDG-4 on “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”, focus will be given on reskilling, upskilling and lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- ***A well-functioning and results-focused skills development training:*** This can be achieved through a realistic action plan for implementation of this policy with a monitoring and evaluation system put in place.

Chapter 10: Implementation Strategy: Way Forward

A strategic and time-bound Action Plan involving all stakeholders will be formulated for smooth and proper implementation of NSDP 2020.