



Entrepreneurship Education in the Arab States: Component II

Synthesis Report (May 2012)

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education is about creating an entrepreneurial mindset/culture that fosters innovation, problem solving and active citizenship and where individuals have the self-confidence and belief in their ability to succeed in whatever they choose. The objective of entrepreneurship education is to assist young people become innovators and active participants in the labour market. Entrepreneurship education is made up of all kinds of experiences that give students the ability and vision to access and transform opportunities of different kinds. It is about increasing individuals' ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes and encourage individuals to develop and take initiative, responsibility and risks. Not every person who undertakes entrepreneurship training will become an entrepreneur and be self-employed, but the skills acquired, especially when linked with practical skills in demand, will surely make a contribution to personal empowerment and increase individual capacities for employability and citizenship.

Entrepreneurship education is considered a useful strategy for tackling demographic pressures and diminishing youth unemployment, since it provides the youth with knowledge and competencies that empower them to face socio-economic challenges and changes throughout their lives. It is closely linked to the promotion of human development and social justice in vulnerable communities, and it is expected that entrepreneurship education and training helps people to engage in decent income-generating activities that can lead them out of poverty and towards sustainable livelihoods.

Promoting and fostering entrepreneurship education contributes to the achievements of the Education for All (EFA) campaign, UNESCO's priority in the area of education. In recent years, there has been extensive consultation and rethinking about the concept of EFA and what is involved in achieving a basic education which prepares individuals for work and life. As more children and adults receive and complete elementary education, it is important to teach them skills for the world of work that enable them able to work in dignity, supporting themselves and their families as well as being respected and effective members of a community. Entrepreneurship education particularly contributes to the achievement of EFA goals 3 and 6 as they relate to life skills.

The project

Many programmes on entrepreneurship education are implemented at the non-formal level by NGOs, local communities and associations, aid agencies, and by the private sector. The joint activity 'Entrepreneurship Education in the Arab States' between UNESCO and the StratREAL Foundation aims to complement these existing activities. The aim is to support interested countries in the development of educational policies that aim to include the concept of entrepreneurship in their national development plans as well as in their formal education systems.

The project's overall objective is to contribute to the development of educational policies and programmes that integrate entrepreneurship education in the education systems of the Middle East and North Africa. It aims to support decision-makers in the region in the development of entrepreneurship education policies and programmes. The

integration of entrepreneurship education increases the pertinence and relevance, and therefore the quality, of education, and enables youth in the Arab region to fully participate in the socio-economic life of their communities.

Under component I (2009-2010), four case studies on entrepreneurship education in **Egypt, Jordan, Oman and Tunisia**, as well as a regional synthesis report, were published in Arabic and English. Both the case studies and synthesis report assess the status of entrepreneurship education in the respective educational systems in the involved countries. They furthermore identify examples of good practice that already exist in the region. The documents serve as an important input for countries in the Arab region that aim to develop strategic plans for the incorporation of entrepreneurship education into their educational systems and have been disseminated in the region and beyond.

In the context of component II (2010-2012) of the project, UNESCO has provided technical support to three countries, namely **Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco**. This report intends to summarize the activities carried out by the countries and aims to synthesize the experiences and lessons learnt throughout the project. A greater understanding on the expected challenges and lessons learnt is considered to be of great value to other countries within and outside the region who anticipate undertaking similar activities in introducing and/or integrating entrepreneurship education in their respective education systems.

Jordan

In the framework of component I (2009-2010) of the project, Jordan was among the four countries where a case study was conducted. The case study focused on the extent to which many aspects of entrepreneurship education (EPE) are handled in the different areas of the Jordanian education system. The Jordanian education system emphasizes a wide variety of entrepreneurial characteristics offered from basic education onwards to secondary academic and vocational education. In 2003, the education reform plan stated entrepreneurial life skills and mindsets as major goals of education in Jordan. The case study furthermore illustrated that while the policy framework for EPE is well developed, there is a need for improvements at the implementation level, and in particular regarding skills-oriented teaching and the imparting of initiative and entrepreneurial attitudes. This exercise provided a good understanding of the present situation in terms of existing entrepreneurship education policies and programmes, which further facilitated the successful implementation of various activities under component II.

Under component II (2010-2012), Jordan has successfully implemented various activities to promote EPE integration in the Jordanian education system. In particular, the activities involved the following: (1) review of policies and legislations; (2) development of EPE conceptual matrix; (3) survey pre-vocational subjects; (4) development of teacher's guidelines; and (5) organization of EPE seminar.

To facilitate the implementation of the various activities in integrating EPE in the education system in Jordan, a Steering Committee (SC) was established. The SC consists of representatives from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Technical Vocational Education and Training Council (E-TVET) and the UNESCO National Commission and UNESCO Amman Office. The SC's responsibility was to review policies for the integration of EPE, develop monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and liaise with the EPE Working Team, which was set up in parallel to realize the activities.

As there was already a good understanding of the existing policies for entrepreneurship education, the Working Team (WT), also consisting of representatives of all bodies concerned, was able to execute various activities on the institutional level, involving the executive stakeholders, such as teachers and educational supervisors. The WT held informal and formal meetings and managed successfully to: (1) adopt a definition for EPE; (2) establish a EPE conceptual matrix; (3) conduct an analysis on pre-vocational education textbooks and survey the entrepreneurial skills; (4) develop a work plan; and (5) organize 3 induction workshops for stakeholders, involving school principals, educational supervisors, curricula specialists etc., to facilitate implementation according to work plan and share EPE conceptual matrix.

In this first year of integrating EPE into the Jordanian education system, the involved institutions and stakeholders have successfully achieved to develop new guidelines for the integration of EPE skills. In this effort, the SC has established a wide network consisting of relevant government departments, international (TVET) agencies, NGOs and the private sector. This network can further facilitate the integration of EPE into the education system in Jordan.

Whilst the first phase of the project has been successful in many ways, time and funding constraints were significant challenges throughout the project. It was realized that whereas multiple institutions run programmes on EPE, these initiatives are mostly run outside of the formal education system, and therefore difficult to coordinate. Challenges were also faced around the concept of entrepreneurship. In spite of these challenges, there appears to be a great desire among stakeholders to learn and teach entrepreneurship.

Lebanon

Under component II (2010-2012), the pilot project in Lebanon consisted of 8 different phases and commenced with the establishment of a coordinating 'supreme' committee. The committee consists of the President of the Educational Center for Research and Development (ECRD), the Director of Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) and associated consultant, a representative of the Association of the Lebanese Industrialists, and an executive committee coordinator. The responsibilities of the coordinating committee were the following: (1) determine policy and strategies to integrate EPE in Lebanese education system; (2) setting mechanisms for implementation; (3) monitoring and evaluation of the project.

A second step in the project was the establishment of the Executive Committee (EC), consisting of the same stakeholders concerned, and their respective responsibilities included: (1) acquiring information about EPE programs in Lebanon and abroad; (2) determining means to integrate EPE into existing programs; (3) determining plan for integration; (4) liaising with the coordinating committee and other stakeholders involved.

After the two committees were established, 10 general secondary schools and 10 TVET schools, both in the public and private sector, were selected on the basis of pre-determined requirements, taking into account geographical balance. At the selected schools, 3 awareness workshops were organized for teachers and principals. The workshops aimed to introduce the EPE concept and provided teachers/principals, as key executers in the project, an opportunity to share their concerns regarding the project. The workshops were attended by a total of 60 principals and teachers. In collaboration with education specialists, the general education curricula have been modified in such a way that the concept of EPE is integrated both on the basic education level and the secondary education levels, using the EPE resources developed by UNESCO and ILO. Further training for trainers in entrepreneurship is planned to take place in the summer of 2012. To facilitate communication between the different stakeholders who are executing the pilot project, a web portal will be soon established, which at the same time promotes exchange with countries in the region.

The emphasis of the project in Lebanon has been on teachers and principals, as they are considered key in transferring the skills and concept of entrepreneurship to students. This pilot project has been successful in setting the basics of integrating EPE in education and facilitates the development of a national EPE curriculum. The success and continuation of the project is depending on various aspects. Whilst flexibility is necessary, proper executive planning and establishing the appropriate administrative arrangements are crucial to the sustainability of the project. At the same time, actively organizing workshop and training sessions in the execution and the active engagement of stakeholders will permit for successful integration of EPE in Lebanon's education system.

Morocco

In the case of Morocco, the focus of component II (2010-2012) has been on enabling education and training institutions to embrace entrepreneurship education and integrate it in the formal education system. On the level of educational policy and coordination, a working team was formed consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Greater Casablanca Academy, the Rabat Sale Zemmour Zair Academy and the L'Ecole Normale Supérieure de l'Enseignement Technique (a UNEVOC Centre). The following steps have been undertaken in the context of the pilot project: (1) review of EPE presence in the Moroccan education system; (2) organization of study day to develop road map for incorporation of EPE; (3) organization of training day for national team of experts; and (4) identification of relevant stakeholders and knowledge sharing.

The first step included conducting a review regarding the extent to which entrepreneurship education is present in Morocco's education system. In this context, two committees were set up to review and design the road map of implementing EPE in the education system. A diagnosis of the EPE system in Morocco concluded that competency based education can facilitate EPE across a range of curricula; that decentralization is likely to foster more flexibility towards EPE integration; and that awareness of EPE should be widely promoted, while advocating for the concept of entrepreneurial culture and spirit.

In the context of the project, a study day was organized for teachers, administrators, social and economic actors, as well as members from the business sector and civil society. During the study day, two workshops were held, which were focused on the elements that should be considered when incorporating EPE, touching upon competency-based learning, development of necessary tools and frameworks, and the importance of cooperation and partnerships among the various stakeholders. In the context of the project and the current educational context, the development of a national framework for EPE is considered crucial to serve as a foundation for EPE integration in Morocco and to further facilitate successful implementation by the responsible education and training authorities. A training session was also organized towards the establishment of a national team of experts, consisting of regional inspector coordinators, school managers, and representatives of teacher training centres. The training session focused on the finalization of the national strategy for EPE integration, as well as the formulation of the national framework for EPE. Considerable efforts have also been put into identifying and linking up with other relevant bodies/institutions, both in Morocco and in the region.

The pilot project confirmed that the integration of EPE in the Moroccan education system is desirable and genuine efforts have been made to accelerate the development of a national strategy. Lessons learned included: integrating of EPE should happen across different education levels; curricula need to be revised and incorporate entrepreneurial culture; the successful implementation of the project depends on a well-developed framework and appropriate training and coaching of the various stakeholders.

While many things have been achieved in a short space of time, various challenges have been faced. The concept of EPE continues to evolve depending on the context, and remains scarcely defined, even on international levels. On a more national level, the lack of embedded structures in the Moroccan education system prevents good coordination of the project. The lack of experienced specialists in the country, and the challenge of involving all different stakeholders also appear to be a major constraint in the Moroccan context. Finally, challenges are faced in terms of mobilization of resources to facilitate the implementation of the project.

Conclusions and Follow-up

In the context of component II of the project 'Entrepreneurship Education in the Arab States' three different countries, in cooperation with UNESCO-UNEVOC and the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, have initiated efforts to incorporate entrepreneurship education (EPE) in their respective education systems, namely **Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco**. In all three countries, there is a strong and genuine desire, both on the governmental level, as well as in the private sector, to incorporate the EPE concept into the education system and to establish curricula for skills-oriented teaching. Under component II all three countries carried out a review of existing policies and frameworks, as well as a mapping of existing initiatives on EPE in the respective countries. In the case of Jordan, a good understanding of the present situation of entrepreneurship education in the country was already established under component I of the project, while for Lebanon and Morocco, the mapping of existing policies and frameworks were among the first activities under Component II.

The establishment of coordinating bodies (i.e. Steering Committee, Working Groups) has been critical in contributing to a more sustainable project. Good coordination is key in determining the successful implementation of this project. The coordinating bodies have managed to involve a wide range of actors and promote knowledge exchange among the different stakeholders. While it was relatively easy to identify and involve actors already known, it was difficult to gain a thorough insight into other stakeholders which act outside of the formal (education) system.

In all three countries, the development of an action plan that laid out the necessary mechanisms for implementation was initiated. This was particularly crucial for Morocco, as there was no pre-defined framework for EPE yet. It was realized that, while commitment on the policy level is clearly evident, well established mechanisms on the implementation level need to be further developed to ensure effective implementation. In all three cases, efforts have been made to define these mechanisms in close collaboration with the stakeholders involved and experts in the field. In the case of Morocco, identifying these national experts have shown to be a challenge, however initiative has been taken to establish a national team of experts.

The importance of involving teachers in the project has showed to be critical, as they are key drivers to successful incorporation of entrepreneurship education. In Lebanon particularly, the focus of the pilot project was on the active engagement of teachers. As teachers are the primary executers, it is important to develop teacher's guidelines and

provide regular training seminars for teachers and other implementing stakeholders. Overall, due to the nature of entrepreneurship education, it is a prerequisite to actively engage actors in the public and private sector, to encourage the linkages between skills-based learning and entrepreneurial activities.

The pilot project has been successful in placing the integration of EPE in the education system at the forefront of the government agenda, and many initiatives have been taken to further develop the concept and ensure effective implementation. However, challenges were faced in terms of time and financial resources. In all three countries, delays were faced at various points in time. As the project is highly dependent on the political processes and political will, delays are difficult to avoid and a high level of flexibility is therefore desired. At the same time, while EPE is ill-defined, not only in the context of these three participating countries, but also on an international level, the integration of EPE requires dedicated time and commitment from all of the actors involved.

The pilot projects in Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco have illustrated the existing similarities between the different countries in terms of the objectives for entrepreneurship education and the opportunities for collaborations with stakeholders from the public and private sector, as well as the necessity to develop guidelines for teachers and other implementing stakeholders. The experiences that were gained through these pilot initiatives are of great value for the further development of national policies and frameworks. At the same time, the sharing of these experiences across the entire Arab region can be further facilitated to contribute to further insight into good practices in entrepreneurship education in the Arab context and the exploring of opportunities for collaboration between countries in the region.

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