



National Symposium:

Education for Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Preface

Represented by the Organizing Committee of the National Symposium: Education for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the Ministry of Education will be conducting a National Symposium on Education for Entrepreneurship and Innovation from 22-24 September 2014 in the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. The National Symposium aims to create an entrepreneurial mindset through which learners, educators and other concerned individuals can adopt positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and foster their skills and knowledge pertaining to this area. It is hoped that the symposium will be a milestone in entrepreneurship education in the Sultanate.

International Efforts in Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Entrepreneurship education has been given greater attention in educational systems all over the world. This is due to a number of challenges; one of which is youth unemployment resulting from demographic pressures. Therefore, entrepreneurship has been promoted in educational systems to stimulate economic development and bridge the gap between educational outcomes and the demands of the labor market.

Consequently, International Organizations have started to raise the profile of entrepreneurship through a number of programs and initiatives; an example of one of these is the research chairs adopted by UNESCO. UNESCO is also working with partners to follow up the educational reforms carried out to meet the commitments arising from the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Within the framework of EFA, the International Community committed at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 to achieve six key goals; the

fourth goal stipulates that: "Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs". This specific goal is linked directly to Post Basic Education and its requirement to successfully meet the needs and demands of both young people and the community.

In the same area, the International Labor Organization (ILO) is responsible for managing the Youth Employment Network (YEN) which has been launched by the Secretary General of the UN. In 2003, the ILO incorporated entrepreneurship in career training, post basic education and higher education programs which have been delivered in more than 50 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Arab World.

Arab Efforts in Entrepreneurship and Innovation

At the Arab level, the League of Arab States in Damascus in March 2000 referred the implementation of Arab Regional Agenda for Improving Education Quality (ARAIEQ) to the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO). The Organization, in cooperation of the World Bank, has identified a strategic goal for the ARAIEQ Program that focuses on identifying quality educational outcomes that meet the demands of both the community and the labor market. ARAIEQ consists of five pillars each of which demonstrates one of the educational process areas; "entrepreneurship competences of learners" is one of these five pillars.

ALECSO is keen to develop a joint working plan in order to disseminate entrepreneurship education and incorporate career counseling in educational systems. In cooperation with the Arab Education Ministries, regional parties and organizations, ALECSO has started to incorporate entrepreneurship and 21st Century skills in curricula at all study stages.

National Efforts in Entrepreneurship and Innovation

In response to HM directives, the Sultanate of Oman, through its organizations, devotes great attention to youth welfare. HM the Sultan has stressed the continuous care of human resources and the role of the government in providing education, training, qualifications, and employment opportunities. He stated at the opening of the Council of Oman in 2011: "The forthcoming stage will witness, with God's permission, bigger attention and greater care to provide more opportunities

for the youth in order to consolidate their gain in knowledge, strengthen their talents in creation and production and increase their participation in the comprehensive development march."

To this end, the Ministry of Education in cooperation with public and private sector institutions are keen to execute HM directives concerning youth skills improvement and to establish solid ground for the promotion of entrepreneurship. This will be achieved through developing students' entrepreneurial knowledge and key skills so that the country will benefit from pioneering Omani entrepreneurs.

The Ministry of Education is aware of the importance of enhancing learners' skills needed in the labor market, therefore; the Ministry has issued a ministerial resolution (No.422/2012) in August 2012 to form two entrepreneurship committees (Main and Executive Committees). The latter aims at identifying knowledge, skills and values to be included in the curricula in order to enhance learners' abilities in entrepreneurship, and the educational programs provided by career guidance in the same area and implemented by career guidance specialists. In addition, the two committees are responsible for keeping pace with the international expertise in the field of entrepreneurship and benefiting from educational projects and programs, and contests supervised by regional and international organizations in entrepreneurship. The Ministry, with the cooperation of the Research Council, has designed a pilot program to promote innovation and entrepreneurship qualities in a number of schools of Muscat Governorate. This was to collect field data regarding the best practices followed to embed innovation and entrepreneurship skills in schools. Based on that, a number of activities on innovation and entrepreneurship have been drawn up to boost curricula.

As a contribution to component two, "Entrepreneurship Education", the Main and Executive Committees of the Entrepreneurship Committee in cooperation of UNESCO organized a discussion session in December 2012. Representatives from the private sector, parents, educators, job seekers, and general, technical, and higher education students participated in the session.

Furthermore, in January 2013, the Sultanate of Oman held a national SME Development Symposium in response to the Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said. This stressed the importance of the SME

sector and in developing youth entrepreneurial skills so that they can run their own business. The Symposium centered on a number of themes one of which was self-employment and entrepreneurship. At the end of the Symposium, a number of resolutions were agreed, one of which was incorporating entrepreneurship in the curricula and educational programs to promote an entrepreneurship mindset among youngsters.

Also, the Ministry conducted "Education and 21st century Competencies" Symposium from 22-24 September 2013. The Symposium aimed to identify the competencies that educational outcomes in the Sultanate should acquire to meet the labor market demands. One of the competencies that the Symposium came up with was Entrepreneurship. At this time, the Ministry is working on taking into account the Symposium recommendations to improve teaching methods.

The National entrepreneurship symposium constitutes one of many efforts exerted by the Ministry of Education represented by the Main and Executive committees to support the efforts of the government to ratify the SME Symposium's resolutions.

Symposium objectives:

- Embedding an entrepreneurship mindset among learners and emphasizing the role of SMEs in creating job opportunities
- Sharing local and international best practices in entrepreneurship
- Strengthening the role of the media and the Civil Community in promoting entrepreneurship
- Identifying the best practices , teaching and training methods in entrepreneurship and how incorporate entrepreneurship concepts in curricula
- Analyzing the present educational atmosphere and the extent to which it is geared up to enhance entrepreneurship

Symposium themes:

- Curricula role in supporting entrepreneurship:
 - Best educational practices in the area of entrepreneurship

- Enhancing the curricula to serve entrepreneurship
- Qualify teachers to boost entrepreneurship:
 - The role of teacher training institutions (pre-service training) in promoting entrepreneurship
 - In-service teacher training
- Educational programs and initiatives in the field of entrepreneurship:
 - Best practices and initiatives
 - Learners perspectives towards entrepreneurship
 - Women and entrepreneurship
 - Special needs and entrepreneurship
- The role of the civil community in promoting entrepreneurship:
 - Role of media in promoting entrepreneurship
 - Role of NGOs in supporting entrepreneurship

Activities on the sidelines of the symposium:

- Training workshops (students, parents and educators), held on a day prior the symposium
- An exhibition on entrepreneurial experiences and initiatives: presentations

Participating institutions:

(300) persons will take part in the symposium from both inside and outside the Sultanate:

- Representatives from International Organizations such as World Bank, UNESCO, ALECSO, the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States

- International companies and institutions as well as Specialists in entrepreneurship
- Concerned Ministries and public institutions
- Educators
- The Private Sector
- Teachers
- School Principals
- School Students
- College Students
- Public and private colleges and universities
- Career Guidance Specialists
- Parents
- Researchers
- NGOs

Dates of the symposium:

- 22-24 September 2014

Venue:

- The Ritz Carlton Hotel in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman,
Phone Number: (+) 968 24799666

Language:

- Arabic and English
- Interpreting services will be made available

For more information:

- *Suleiman Al-Bulushi*

Phone Number: (+) 96899506886

- *Kamil Al-Naabi*

Phone Number: (+) 96899250360

- *Ghareeb Al-Dhwyani*

Phone Number: (+) 96892415599

E-mail: nseei@moe.om

For more details, please access:

www.moe.gov.om