

# INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION AND WORK

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PRETORIA

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# INTRODUCTION

- ◇ Since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, technology has transformed the world of work
- ◇ The global world of work is characterised by unprecedented, rapid speed technological advances since the early 1970's
- ◇ For technology-ready societies, this change promises to “empower the poor, reduce inequality, and create solutions that will rescue the environment.”
- ◇ For developing countries, the opposite is true
- ◇ Not enough research on the dangers of ill-prepared, insufficiently-equipped system of education
- ◇ SA country context application

# THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

- ◆ (Sahlberg, 2006) Investing in both primary & secondary education significantly contributes to economic development & growth
- ◆ Students need various skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- ◆ Quality of education, not just school attainment is related to economic growth (Wang & Wong, 2011)
- ◆ A well designed system of education should prepare youth for their rightful place in the labour market and for meaningful participation in the economy

# SA SCHOOLING SYSTEM LANDSCAPE

- ◆ SA education remains separate and unequal - impact of racial policies of apartheid
- ◆ Estimation that 80% of SA's 25 000 public schools are dysfunctional
- ◆ Deficiencies (quality, infrastructure, subjects, extra-curriculum) perpetuate inequality of opportunity
- ◆ 78% of grade 4 learners illiterate
- ◆ Further disparities in public-private, rural/urban/sub-urban
- ◆ Current learning not meeting new challenges of the changing world of work (technological advancement)
- ◆ Meaningful participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution curtailed

# SA SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE

- ◆ As many as 7 000 graduates unemployed
- ◆ Millions of SA labour force need new skills to enter LM
- ◆ Others in employment need to improve current skills or learn new ones
- ◆ 5,8 million unemployed, most with little training & few skills
- ◆ More than 50% of matriculants don't possess required skills to get into jobs
- ◆ Skills development environment constantly shifting (Primary vs Secondary & Tertiary Industries)
- ◆ Skills shortages, low productivity, weak knowledge economy
- ◆ SA has 31% difficulty in filling jobs (Manpower Group's Talent Shortage Survey, 2015)

# THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

- ◆ 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr LFS 2017: Almost 6 million of 22 million S.Africans in the Labour Force are unemployed
- ◆ EUR 36%. Youth account for 63% of the unemployment rate. Blacks 30%, Whites 6,7%
- ◆ SA problem : mass unemployment; skills mismatch
- ◆ “Lack of structured linkages between educational pathways and employment due to policy failure to create meaningful pathways from school to work” (Kraak, 2008)
- ◆ This problem to be aggravated by inability of schools to prepare young people for the world of AI, robotics, entrepreneurship, nanotechnology etc.
- ◆ The economic future is therefore at risk

# CLOSING THE GAP

- ◇ Life-cycle approaches to building, maintaining and improving skills are necessary both during schooling and at the place of work
- ◇ Acquiring foundation skills in literacy and numeracy are absolutely essential for acquiring further skills and competencies & to prepare society for further learning and productive work
- ◇ The foundations for advanced skills need to be laid at an early age - writing, reading, maths and science are the core subjects on which learning should be built
- ◇ Ensure that national skills policies focus not only on the demand side, but also address the problems related to underlying deficiencies on the supply side that impact the economy negatively e.g. Inability of TVET Colleges to provide critical intermediate skills required in the economy

# WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- ◇ Ensure education provided to today's pupils is not only acquisition of learning skills and knowledge but is useful for gainful employment and full participation in society
- ◇ Ensure L &D is sufficient for current and future demand
- ◇ Heighten the level of urgency for policymakers, various practitioners, teachers, civil society and researchers to craft viable solutions
- ◇ Employ strategies that deliberately prepare current & future workforce for automation (39% of core skills required for different occupations shall have changed by 2020)
- ◇ For SA to be more competitive in the global economy (currently ranked no.61 out of 137 economies)

# PROPOSED FUTURE STEPS

- ◇ All learning should have as its primary focus, long term prospects of current and future generations
- ◇ Researchers should:
  - ◇ examine factors that lead to barriers in achieving success in the new technological era
  - ◇ identify factors that contribute to success in the new technological era
  - ◇ determine improvement strategies for greater impact on the future of work
  - ◇ based on the findings, construct recommendations
- ◇ Practitioners must:
  - ◇ comprehend the potential impact of training and development and develop a clear L & D strategy accordingly
  - ◇ become performance improvement experts with a range of processes, tools and techniques
  - ◇ Reinvent practice as a centre of excellence leading debates on technology, innovation and development
- ◇ L & D strategy for every sector in the economy is very critical for sustainability of organisations and the relevance of practitioners

# PROPOSED FUTURE STEPS

## ◇ Policymakers must:

- ◇ realise that the negative impact of poor schooling, education, skills development and training on the future of work and the economy is a humanitarian and economic crisis
- ◇ investigate policy considerations and solution necessary to yield better outcomes for the future of work in South Africa
- ◇ seek to strengthen the link between social policy and economic policy in order to prepare youth for the future of work
- ◇ ensure that policy development creates an enabling environment for required outcomes to be realised

**THANK YOU!!**

