

“Education Innovations for 21st Century Skills”
Live Blog: Session Keynote Address: Schools for 21st Century Learners

Main takeaway points

Skills have become the key to 21st century societies; skills change life and drive economy.

1. Production of new skills

- There should be a relation between skills and life.
- More education doesn't mean better skills.
- The types of skills demanded for 21st century are changing from routine manual skills to non-routine analytical and interpersonal skills.
- New skills: we have to have different ways of thinking, ways of working, tools of working and living in the world skills.

2. Strong leadership

- There is coming transition of schools in their functions.
- Quality assurance through continual assessment with formative feedback is essential for school improvement. There should be a strong focus on processes and outcome management.
- School autonomy does not necessary result in higher performance. Autonomy in the context of transparency is important. Balancing autonomy and accountability and make it transparent.
- Ensure quality and equity. Knowledge and skills that drive economic and social outcomes are learning environment, resilience in education (i.e. more equitable education system).

3. Effective teaching and teachers

- Learning process is central.
- Demanding to every student without overloading.
- Ensure learning is social and collaborative.
- Promote connections across subjects and activities and beyond school.
- Student achievements tend to be higher in places where value of teaching (as perceived by teachers) is high.
- Teachers have to have a deep understanding of what is learning.

4. Innovative learning environments

- Learning environments and teachers networks are important.
- Learning should be central which encourages engagement and responsibility and fosters lifelong skills-oriented learning
- Teaching is core of skills of 21 century.
- Innovations in teaching should be used.

Questions for further discussion

1. How to narrow down multiple reform needs when too many reforms should be done?
 - ⇒ Prioritization of reforms with short-term and long-term agenda is important.
 - ⇒ For successful curriculum reforms, it is important not to overload students, to ensure that teachers understand and see the values of changes.
2. What can be done by teachers in big classes?
 - ⇒ Many countries with large classes are successful. We need to have different strategies for large classes, e.g., using ICT, targeted provision of remedial classes.
3. How to balance cognitive and social-emotional skills for economic development?
 - ⇒ There has not be enough research on the impact of social emotional skills on economic growth at macro level, but we know that skills contribute to productive and creative economy and quality of life. There is an effort now to develop a new test to measure global competences.
4. What are new tools for social-emotional skills assessment?

⇒ A most common way is self-reporting by students.