



KEY ELEMENTS OF QUALITY APPRENTICESHIPS

A JOINT UNDERSTANDING OF THE B20 AND L20

JUNE 2013

Youth employment is of highest priority for Employers and Workers. High quality apprenticeships are of critical importance in this regard. Apprenticeship systems that combine workplace-based as well as off-the-job training have proven to be successful in promoting learning and skill formation as well as facilitating employment by building bridges between the worlds of education and the world of work. Apprenticeship systems also facilitate the emergence and growth of new industries, based on technological and organisational innovations. Moreover, they also provide an opportunity to strengthen the skills required for a transition towards a low-carbon economy. Thus, they provide a source of skilled labour for an economy as a whole.

During the Mexican G20 Presidency, the B20 and L20 therefore jointly asked the G20 Governments to endorse action on urgent approaches to increasing apprenticeship numbers. Moreover, the B20 and the L20 actively and constructively contributed to the work of the G20 Employment Task Force on apprenticeships. Against this background the B20 and L20 jointly emphasize the following principles to be key in making apprenticeships work.

- 1** There must be a shared responsibility between governments, employers and trade unions adequate to national circumstances. Apprenticeship systems should have the active involvement of employers and trade unions in their overall governance. The aim is to ensure that the curricula of the apprenticeship systems are based on the real world of work and correspond to the needs of businesses as well as the interests of apprentices so that a smooth transition from training to work is guaranteed. Facilitating the acquisition of key skills and competencies by apprentices should be a key component of Vocational Education and Training systems in order to avoid skill shortages on the labour market.
- 2** High quality vocational schools, with highly qualified and motivated teachers and up-to-date equipment are an indispensable prerequisite for effective learning. VET institutes need to have at their disposal the latest technology and learning tools.

3 Effective entries into apprenticeships should be available, not only for young people but also displaced adults who either need to move into a new industry, or need to update their skills for the evolving needs of business.

4 Strategies for lifting the status of apprenticeships should be developed, so that they are positively seen as a pathway towards a satisfying career. Positive support of apprenticeship programmes by Employers` Organisations and Trade Unions can be effective in this regard.

5 Apprenticeship systems need their own contractual arrangements consistent with national law and practice. While there can be no one size fits all approach across national and local settings with regards to how such systems may be defined or operated, compliance with core labour standards, appropriate remuneration and linkage with social benefit and occupational health and safety systems should be important elements of any apprenticeship programme.

6 Apprenticeship systems must be workplace centred: A significant part of the training should be conducted in companies to ensure the work-based character of the systems. Apprenticeship systems thereby benefit from a combination of classroom and on-the job training. Apprenticeship programmes should reflect gender equity objectives. They should facilitate training of both male and female participants in apprenticeship programmes including in non-traditional gender occupations vocational education.

7 Apprenticeships should encourage entrepreneurship and innovation through the development of skills and general business knowledge as well as responsible business conduct.

In adopting these principles we will work with our members to follow up their implementation.