Fisheries Sector and Development of Maldives: Can Vocational and Technical Education Help?

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ABSTRACT
Global experience confirms that ‘family business concept’ was the domain in the establishment of fisheries sector. Apprenticeship of family inheritance was only the training provision available for the fishermen earlier. While fishermen used to receive a little amount of training through family apprenticeship, light of education to become a qualified citizen for modern world was unreachable to them. Things have incredibly or marginally been changed in a few countries where public policy took necessary parameters in order to institutionalize this sector aligning with the long term developmental vision and mission of the state. However, most of the countries still follow the orthodox model since professionals working with this sector are less capable to put forward their voices in the elite podium where public policy of a country is designed and constitutionalized. Maldives is country where more than 80% of the population are directly and indirectly or by hobby are involved with the fisheries sector providing a major local contribution towards Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Despite this contribution, the sector experiences significant amount of shortfalls. The purpose of this study is to map and identify those shortfalls in order to offer an elucidation.

Key words: Maldives, fisheries sector, education, development, policy, VET

INTRODUCTION
Global pattern indicates that heavy industries always provide more income to the employees and to the countries in general compared to livestock, fisheries and agriculture sectors. Consequently, developed countries always concentrate on heavy and technology based industries (ADB, 2007). This either allows or forces the developing countries to work with the sectors that are left by the industrialised countries. Realising this realities and facts, many developing countries are mainly involved in agriculture, livestock and small manufacturing industries. This helps the countries to have some kind of employment for their people with a very indispensable income to sustain (ADB, 2012). Some of the developing countries are also trying to explore the avenues of tourism using their nature beauty. However, life remains in hardship in developing countries with continuous indentation since global competition in living standards; increasing need to access the products manufactured by industrialised countries and some other factors of globalisation help the