

## **PEAC 2017 Philippine Education Conference: Achieving the Promise of K to 12**

### **Report on Concurrent Session Workshop: Vocationalisation of Secondary Education**

by

**Professor Rupert Maclean and Mr Jose Maria T. Policarpio**

Following a keynote presentation by Dr Rupert Maclean on *Trends Concerning the Vocationalisation of Secondary Education and Integrating TVET into Secondary Schools*, a 2 hour workshop was conducted by Professor Maclean with Mr Jose Maria T. Policarpio as Moderator. This workshop, which was attended by 420 participants, gave an opportunity for teachers and administrators from schools throughout the Philippines to express their views to each other on the pros and cons, and organisational patterns and arrangements best suited, for the vocationalisation of secondary education in the Philippines.

In his 10 minute introductory remarks, which set the scene for the group work to follow, Professor Maclean provided background information regarding the trend towards the vocationalisation of education. He noted that there is a worldwide trend towards the greater vocationalisation of education, both secondary and higher education. With the popularisation of post primary education, and a growing attention to human capital formation, preparing individuals for work, education and schooling is often equated to vocational preparation. Previously, for many students the aim of secondary education was to provide for general, liberal education and general knowledge, with most students only undertaking employment-related programmes at the post-secondary level.

Professor Maclean defined the vocationalisation of secondary education as being ‘a curriculum which remains overwhelmingly general or academic in nature, but which includes vocational or practical subjects as a portion of the timetable. The greater that portion becomes the more vocationalisation shades into technical and vocational education and training (TVET)’ (Lauglo and Maclean, 2005, *Vocationalisation of Secondary Education Revisited*, Springer, page 3)

With regard to the increasingly important second level of education, Professor Maclean identified six key issues concerning the vocationalisation of secondary education, these being:

1. Whether it is best to have separate schools, streams or courses at the secondary school level
2. Best balance between vocational and general subjects
3. The role of workplace learning
4. Access to tertiary learning
5. Teachers and teaching and the provision of infrastructure
6. Certification and the assessment of learning

Participants were organised into 28 round table discussion groups with 15 participants in each group. Each group was asked to elect a Chairperson and a Rapporteur to record their deliberations. The groups were required to undertake a SWOT Analysis, a period of 1 hour

being allocated for this activity. (A SWOT Analysis is a structured planning method that evaluates four elements of an organisation or project in terms of: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.)

In terms of the six issues identified, each group, through undertaking a SWOT Analysis, were required to create a hypothetical secondary school in the Philippines, indicating their preferences regarding how each of the 6 issues could, in their view, be best addressed. They were asked to do this with particular reference to the following key questions:

1. What is the place of school-based education within a country's National Skills Qualifications Framework?
2. How much choice should be left to school students to decide on the balance of general and vocational education in their learning programme?
3. What proportion of the vocational education curriculum should be devoted to general education?
4. How can sufficient numbers of teachers of good quality be found to teach a growing number of vocational students?
5. What can be done to ensure that teachers of vocational subjects and experts are up-to-date in their areas of knowledge and practice?
6. What is the role or purpose of work experience for school pupils?
7. How beneficial is careers guidance for school pupils?
8. What contribution to vocational education can be expected from employers, particularly those in Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's)?
9. What form should assessment take, how can it be best carried out, how can quality assurance be achieved, and what should be the relationship between this and general education?
10. How can the responsibility for vocational secondary education be allocated between various levels of government?

Because there was insufficient time for each of the 28 round table discussion groups to report on their deliberations, to all participants at the workshop, Moderator Mr Jose Maria T. Policarpio selected, on a random basis, 7 groups to report back, for 5 minutes each, on the outcomes of their SWOT analysis. After all groups had reported back their deliberations, there was a general and wide ranging discussion amongst all participants. Professor Maclean and Mr Jose Maria T. Policarpio then provided a short summation of the main ideas that emerged from the group work presentations and discussion.

What emerged from the reporting back session was that is considerable variation amongst participants about how the vocationalisation of secondary education is currently occurring in the Philippines, and views on the best models and patterns to adopt in this regard.