Report on Study Visit to CNCP, Paris
India EU Skills Development Program
(28.06. 2016-30.06. 2016)

As part of MoU signed between National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) and CNCP, the parties of the MoU shall meet at least once in every six months to review the progress made under the collaboration. CNCP had sent an invitation to NSDA to participate for the joint meeting to be held from 28th-30th June 2016. In this regard, Mr Anant Prakash Pandey, PS to Chairman, NSDA and Ms Nidhi Gautam, Consultant, NSDA participated in a three day visit to CNCP, Paris from 28th -30th June 2016.

The key objectives of the meeting are as below:

- Contribute to a better understanding of the French qualification system
- Identify the areas of possible cooperation regarding sectoral committees, the Register of qualification, research on qualifications
- Develop an understanding of the integration of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) within the French system of qualifications.
- Develop an action /activity plan for the next 6 months

I. Meeting with CNCP, Ms Brigitte Bouquet
28.06.2016

Brief description about the organization-CNCP **was** set up under the law on 17 January 2002 and is the national commission for professional certification under the authority of the French minister in charge of vocational training. The commission is made up of 43 members, which includes representatives of ministers, representatives of the regions, social partners, representatives of the consular chambers, and qualified persons. Under the authority of its chairperson, the CNCP relies on the work carried out by a specialized committee, a permanent secretariat and a network of regional correspondents. It contributes to work at an international level on transparency of qualifications.

The key function of CNCP is to regulate the quality of qualification while National Commission of Employers on VET regulates the quality of VET as training.

French Qualification System consists of 5 levels. Level 1 being the most complex one and level 5 being the simplest one. Employers and states recognize qualifications. The qualifications pertaining to the critical areas are submitted by the state to the CNCP for approval, training providers can route such qualifications through the State. The French Qualification Framework does not have level descriptors however, competence means knowhow to perform a specific task. France don't have credits, credits are only for higher education.

Salient points

1) **Two ways of registration of qualifications on the National Register**:

    a. **Register by law**: Qualifications awarded by the State following an opinion from the advisory bodies on which Employer and Employee organisations sit, are automatically registered on the National Register of Vocational Qualifications. In all such cases a regulatory act formalises the state's commitment. The relevant ministries draft descriptive summaries, which are then either registered directly in the Registry via a special access or transferred to the CNCP secretariat, which publishes on the web site.

    b. **Qualifications registered on request**: Wider set of qualifications whose principles and methods of creation do not formally involve state and social partners. Ministries, Chambers, industry, public, semi-public and private establishments and sectors may create these vocational qualifications. The registration under this category is of two types- one having qualifications with levels known as per the Qualification framework while the other having qualifications without levels known as inventaire (inventory). Qualifications such as microsoft certification, driving license forms a part of inventaire as these skills are not qualification but a part or module of job profile. There are nearly 15, 000 registered qualifications in France.

2) **New Skills Agenda:** CNCP is working on New Skills Agenda, which aims to make VET to be the first choice and the focus is on improving the quality and relevance of skills formation, making skills and qualifications more visible and comparable, as well as improving skills intelligence and information for better career choices.

3) **Sectoral Framework:** France will be coming up with Sectoral Framework, however, its linking on EQF is not very sure.

4) **Europass:** It is an European programme introduced in 2005 which is an initiative to increase transparency of both qualifications and skills. It aims to make every European citizen's qualifications and skills clearly understood everywhere in Europe. It consist of five documents accessible online or issued by the competent bodies. The supplement describes the content of vocational qualifications in terms of acquired skills, professional activities covered, level and means of access.

Similarity in roles of CNCP and NSDA: CNCP is the approving authority of qualifications in France and share the similar roles and functions with NSQC of NSDA. However, NSDA has been mandated to handle some of the other functions such as research, monitoring and evaluation etc. CNCP has well-established network of regional offices in other parts of the country, which cater to the demand of regional level. Regional training partners submit their qualifications to the regional offices which after first level of scrutiny send the qualification to CNCP for further proceedings.

CNCP has 8 case instructors working at the national level. These case instructors (just as consultants in NSDA) are engaged in critical scrutiny of qualification files (dossier in case of France).

Any submitting body need to download the documents available on CNCP's website and fill them online. After which a user id and password is provided to the submitting body. The submitting body needs to submit all the files with relevant information and support documents in hard copy to CNCP.

The case officer while scrutinising the file can demand information as and when needed on any aspect of the file. Case officer can demand certain information or support documents which is uploaded by the submitting body.

Case officer prepares an observation report which is a neutral report hence does not reflect approval or disapproval of the file. On the basis of observation report senior officer write a report which takes into cognizance of points highlighted by case officers at central and regional level.

Once the report is prepared it is placed for advice of specialised committees (10 permanent representatives from ministries appointed by PM and 10 representatives by social partners) and national commission. The case officer presents the file in front of the committee while submitting body is not allowed to present the file. On approval a qualification becomes a part of register through a proper legal notification.

Review of Qualifications: France follows the same mechanism for review of qualifications as adopted for the first time approval of qualification. Review of qualification also takes into account the comments received by CNCP by general public over the mails.

Key Learnings in Indian context

Strong link between qualification and employment: France has successfully established strong link between its qualifications and employment, as each qualification has to prove that it corresponds to an occupation.

Qualifications are pre-tested on ground before seeking approval from CNCP: In France, qualifications are submitted before CNCP only after they have been run successfully (80% employment) for last 3 years on ground. However, in India, the qualifications offered by SSCs are first being approved without having been tested about its utility in terms of employment. This is leading to approval of large number of qualifications to be the part of national register without meeting the actual training & employment needs.

II. **Meeting with Cereq**
   28.06.2016

Brief about the organization: The Centre for research on education, training and employment (Céreq) was set up in 1971. Its studies and statistical surveys on the

training-employment relationship are intended to assist the public authorities (notably at the national and regional levels), the occupational branches and the social partners in developing and implementing their policies on vocational and educational training and human resources management.

In 1985, Céreq became an autonomous public institution placed under the dual authorities of the French Ministries of Education and Labour. Since then, it has enlarged the scope of its research to include the acquisition and certification of vocational skills as well as job mobility. It co-operates with a wide variety of research institutions as well as professional groups and local governments. It has also developed a growing network of associated regional centres and is continuously expanding its activities at the European level.

Cereq has 50 in-house researchers and over 100 associated researchers. The key research areas for Cereq are school to work transition of young, life long learning and the evolution of jobs. It is granted an annual budget of 11 million Euro out of which 7 million Euro come from Ministry of Labour, rest by projects, national publication, bidding process etc.

Salient points

1) **Support in policy decision-making:** Functioning of Cereq is closely linked with national policymaking, decision support on public policy, experimentation and implementation of policy on ground that provide help in decision-making on VET.

2) **Strong structure with all related stakeholders:** Cereq has different associated centres across the country located in different universities so as to have strong academic linkage that is essential to build a strong research establishment.

3) **Statistical Expertise:** Cereq has integrated network of statistical expertise namely surveys and tracking tools. It publishes two surveys namely Generation Surveys and Survey by saved month DEFIS on government money.

4) **Strong network of international collaboration**: Cereq has experience of working in different countries and contributing significantly to their VET ecosystem. The organization works on bilateral cooperation to promote comparative analysis. Some of the key initiatives taken by Cereq include work done in African countries & extended help to build online research platform such as establishing oneq in Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Mozqmbquie. Building network of peer centres in Germany, Poland, Netherlands and Latin America.

Key Learnings in Indian context

Learnings from Cereq to be incorporated for operationalizing NSRD: Cereq was established in 1970s and has been providing key research inputs for French VET system while India is in process of establishing National Skills Research Division (NSRD) which will also have similar role in Indian context. NSRD can gain much from the experiential learnings of Cereq in terms of structure, type of research undertaken, funding pattern etc.

III. Meeting on the French System of Qualifications
29.06.2016

Brief about the meeting: In case of French system of Qualifications, link between certification and employment carries an important role. Verification of trained & placed candidates is done during the process of registration of qualification. Apprenticeship can only be financed if a registered qualification is being run or government finance can only be availed if a qualification is a part of French register.

Qualifications which are part of inventory are not linked to levels but linked to competencies e.g., electric ability, language course. France has nearly 50,000 training providers in private sector out of which less than 2000 training partners have given qualifications for registration with CNCP.

Salient points

1) **Qualifications are backed by law:** France has a law that regulates the qualifications framework. The law was created in 2002 that has been amended in 2009 then again in 2014 so as to enforce qualifications framework successfully. Soon a new law is forthcoming for enlarging the scope of regulation.

2) **Duplication of qualifications**: Duplication of qualifications can exists if training partners are able to justify that candidates got job, assessment and courses are unique. Hence, different curricula can lead to same learning outcomes as CNCP registers learning outcomes. Duplication of qualifications is avoided by bringing coherence among all the stakeholders through the process of collective bargaining.

IV. Meeting with the Representatives of Handicrafts Sector (APCMA)
29.06.2016

Brief about the organization: The organization is taking care of apprenticeship and training needs in France. It is in-charge of exchange programs for trainers and apprenticeship etc.

Salient points

1) **Role of industry in the Qualifications Framework of France:** In France, industries are levied 1% tax on their income for trainings and development. However, the tax rate varies according to the size of the company. This corpus is known as mutualised fund for a sector which is nearly 8 billion Euros. Further, there are 15-20 sectoral funds so as to meet the training needs of different sectors.

   In case where industry trains directly by spending their money they are eligible for tax benefits. Normally, industry can approach CNCP in case there is a requirement for training in some sector from the list of registered qualifications and training is imparted by training providers.

   In France, chambers are the umbrella organizations which represent the industries. There are 3 big chambers namely craft chamber, agriculture and cultural chamber in France. These big chambers further comprise of regional and departmental chambers, as there are more than 10 such chambers in France. An organisation can become a member after paying minimum fee. Some of the biggest sectors in France are construction, production and services. Chambers also indulge in training of trainers and accreditation.

   APCMA is the umbrella organisation of skilled craft chambers that represent companies. These chambers have been given mandate by government so as to carry trainings for skilled craft sector. They are also responsible for creating curriculum. The chamber has a network of 500 or more professionals which takes into account big as well as small organizations having less than 3-4 employees. As soon as the organizations expand and get bigger they switch to bigger chambers. Chambers also run their own training centres for which funding comes from companies and government.

2) **Process of development of regional qualification:** For instance, development of brewing beer qualification

Step 1: People will approach the chamber and show their desire for the development of regional qualification.

Step 2: Once the chamber is agreed upon it will lead to testing phase of qualification and the qualification will be run for 2-3 years

Step 3: Qualification should be tested on the basis of employment where at least 70-80% of candidates should be placed.

Step 4: There will be 2 major committee (monitoring and developing committee) where experts from site will develop the qualification. Another committee will take care of assessment so as to provide dynamic and innovative assessment strategies.

Key Learnings in Indian context

> **Mutualized Funds**: In France, industries are made liable to participate in skilling activities by levying tax and formation of sectoral or mutualized funds. While in India industries are not participating actively to meet the training needs and most of the finance is borne by government. Hence, India should also try to bring industries on board by making them contribute financially.
>
> **Inclusivity of training needs of small industries**: Training needs of small industries are also met from the corpus of mutualized or sectoral funds which helps in inclusion of training demand of these small enterprises. Hence, India should also attempt to meet the training needs of small industries that mostly struggle from lack of skilled workforce.
>
> **Industry as owner of qualification:** As in France, industry chambers represent as owners of the qualifications, SSCs in India should also reform their structure and systems so as to serve the big and small enterprises of their respective sector.
>
> **Need to strengthen stakeholder relationship**: French system follows a strong stakeholder relationship between industry chambers, organizations and academia where all stakeholders submit qualifications in collaboration.

V. Meeting with Representative of Small and Medium Firms
29.06.2016

Salient Points

1) Apprenticeship has good response in France since 1987 as it is offered for all qualifications at all levels. The country has observed increase in the rate of apprenticeship for high level jobs as compared to jobs at low levels. However, major responsibility in their case still lies with ministry of education.

2) Certification can happen through four ways namely, initial, RPL, diploma and apprenticeship.

3) Certification through RPL and apprenticeship will not be differentiated

4) Partial certificate is there but they are not counted

Key Learnings in Indian context

Apprenticeship is highly successful model of vocational training and Industry involvement is key to success of apprenticeship scheme of training.

VI. Meeting with CNCP
30.06.2016

Brief about the meeting: The meeting highlighted the components of dossiers (Qualification File in our case) and the key criterias adopted for registering a qualification in register. Only the summary of files is available for public in their register.

Salient Points

Structure of Qualification File (dossier)

The Qualification File or dossier is composed of 13 sections based on 4 key criteria. The four key criteria are relevant job, evidence of need, grid and recognition of prior experience. The structure of file with other key sections are explained as given below;

French Qualifications System follows 4 broad criteria namely,

1. **Relevant job or employment** for which candidates have been trained

2. **Evidence of need**: It involves discussions with professionals, meetings, conference, study, research etc.
   They follow general argument for qualifications like engineer while specific or unique qualifications follow a detailed argumentation for specific qualification like naturopathy etc.

   The key observation should be that the submitting body is in touch with the professionals in the field.

   Each file is treated as different entity: Different files should be supported with different details and evidences, critical view of case officer is very important and national perspective of each file is very crucial for success of training.

3. **Grid or system of reference about certification**: The Dossier has 4 columns what concerns the qualification where a list of activities under a qualification needs to be specified. For e.g., what a taxi driver does and the skills needed to become a taxi driver should be enlisted in this grid.

4. **Validation of prior experience (RPL in our case)**: In France, approximately 30,000 candidates are certified through RPL every year, partial certifications are not being taken for statistics. Submitting body needs to provide a well formal document to justify arrangements in place for recognition of prior experience.

5. **Process of RPL in French system**

In France, an applicant has to fill a form where portfolio of evidence should be given like employment details, dates and facts of acquired skills which can be verified, documentation which has to be verifiable in order to avail evidence of recognition of prior experience. Applicant has to pass before the jury of experts or demonstrate skills in real situation.

Jury can give three answers: yes, part diploma (partial) or a no to recognition of prior experience.

The cost for RPL is borne by the training providers and states. States pays for qualification by right while training providers pay for qualification by request.

The critical competencies on which RPL needs to be conducted depends on training providers. Out of total key activities, activities which are more in direct relation will be used for assessment. This decision is left for the discussion for assessors which depends on every provider to evaluate which one is most important in their case.

6. **Higher degrees through Recognition of Prior Learning**: PhDs are also given through RPL in France. The type of validations in such case depends on fields evidence like articles in international journals, patents etc.

7. **Assessment Strategy**

The submitting body needs to specify the assessable outcomes and assessment methods as assessment of skill/knowhow is regarded crucial than assessment of knowledge in French system.

One of the crucial assessment strategy adopted by the French system is putting person in real situations or simulations such a taxi driver would be asked to drive or subject to real life situations to test the acquired skillsets.

Another assessment strategy is case study method where evaluation can be done in individual or in group, answers in form of research report from trainee.

8. **Levels**

France does not have level descriptors in their qualifications framework. The criteria for levelling qualifications are more based on discussions rather than clear descriptors as in our case.

9. **Progression**

In this section, information about the autonomy/position of this job role in the firm is sought from the submitting body. This provides a picture of the importance or relevance of this job in the firm.

10. Industry engagement (file ask about the link with industry partners)

In French system of qualification, state registers qualification by law taking opinion from advisory bodies on which employer and employee bodies sit. In case of qualification by request, the qualification has to prove the acceptance of industry by giving data on the employment against the qualification. Hence, French system is state regulated as well as market driven.

11. Classification of Sector

There is no set definition of sector by law, sectors are based on historical tradition where employers decide for production and field of study based on dialogue. Hence at some point of time France had more than 500 sectoral branches and currently they are looking forward to merge, as some branches have no economic relevance. Sectors are classified on the basis of collective bargaining.

CNCP mostly work with important branches or sectors once that are able to create qualification and build tools to analyse the evolution of training. In France, sector and branch are interchangeable terms.

Key Learnings in Indian context

> **Observation reports by case officer:** The case officer in France prepares observation report on basis of possible question that can be asked by the approving committee. NSDA can also start this practise of preparation of observation report for the qualifications submitted by the submitting body.
>
> Evidence on similar qualification being run successfully: The approving authority in France asks the submitting body to provide a database of similar qualification being run or implemented such as table of trainees with what jobs they are doing etc. Similarly, NSDA can also ask the submitting body to bring such evidence and submit a database of persons employed against the job-roles being brought as QPs or qualifications existing in small, medium and big organizations.

VII. Meeting with Representative of French Metal Industry (UIMM)
   30.06.2016

Brief about the organization: UIMM is one of the major sector in France represented by 64 local associations. It has its own training centres. It is serving the needs of some of the key sectors such as IT, electronical and optical products, Electrical equipments, Machines and equipments, Automotive, Other transport

material, Metal products and Other manufacturing industries. It comprise of 43000 companies and provide employment to 1.5 million employees.

Salient Points

Sectoral branches are indulged into anticipative management of jobs to analyse how the job is evolving or moving over the time. In order to have a bottom to top approach the metallurgy sector has representation from various joint regional committees.

France does not have sector skill council they have chambers focussed on sectors. There is an agreement between employers organisation and employees org such as trade unions to represent the holistic view of the sector.

CPNE: CPNE is the commission having representatives of employers and employees which work on following up and monitoring the terms of agreement between both parties so as to meet the training needs of the sector.

OPCAIM: is the government body comprising of metal industries, employees, which manages the training fund charged from metal industries and jointly decide on spending strategy.

At the end of every year each company evaluate the training needs of the competencies needed in the coming year and then they approach to UIMM for training.

Whereas job centres/employment centres assess the training needs of unemployed and send the candidates to UIMM in case they have interest however, individual candidates can't approach UIMM for training.

UIMM offers certificate based on specific need and on national consensus. The specific need based certificate will not be sent to CNCP for registration while certificates given on demand based trainings are sent to CNCP for registration.

Process of development of qualification: It is done on the basis of PDCA which stands for plan, do, check and act. Observational job analysis is being done by UIMM for companies at national and regional level. The process of writing certification standard activity (Occupational Standards in our case) is done in many firms and then common activities are taken out. The funding for this activity is borne by the companies only.

Some common issues and challenges

1) France is also facing problem of labelling tasks (like job roles in our case) rather than the scope or qualification

2) Chambers also face difficulty in conducting RPL as in case of India.

3) France also faces challenges for validations as it is difficult to engage working people for training as they are not willing to leave their work for trainings