



General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 January 2018

Seventy-second session

Agenda item 23 (c)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2017

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/72/424/Add.3)]

72/235. Human resources development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/196 of 18 December 1997, 54/211 of 22 December 1999, 56/189 of 21 December 2001, 58/207 of 23 December 2003, 60/211 of 22 December 2005, 62/207 of 19 December 2007, 64/218 of 21 December 2009, 66/217 of 22 December 2011, 68/228 of 20 December 2013 and 70/220 of 22 December 2015,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Stressing that human resources development lies at the heart of economic, social and environmental development and that health and education are at the core of human resources development,



Stressing also that human resources development is vital to the efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals, and to expand opportunities for people, in particular for the most vulnerable groups of the population,

Welcoming the considerable efforts made over the years, yet recognizing that many countries continue to face formidable challenges in developing a sufficient pool of human resources capable of meeting national economic and social needs and that the formulation and implementation of effective human resources strategies often require resources and capacities not always available in developing countries, and recognizing also the need for new ways to address human resources development,

Stressing that climate change is a significant development challenge and that improving educational and institutional capacities to tackle climate change is closely linked to human resources development efforts to ensure that populations can lead healthy and prosperous lives,

Recognizing that the benefits of human resources development are best realized in national and international environments that support equality of opportunity and treatment, access to education and non-discrimination and maintain an enabling environment for job creation,

Recognizing also that despite evidence of an uneven and fragile recovery, the ongoing adverse impacts, particularly on development, of the world financial and economic crisis continue to diminish the ability of many countries, especially developing countries, to cope with and address human resources development challenges and to formulate and implement effective strategies for poverty eradication and sustainable development,

Acknowledging the important nexus between international migration and development and the need to deal with the challenges and opportunities that migration presents to countries of origin, transit and destination, recognizing that migration brings benefits as well as challenges to the global community, recognizing also the role that migrants returning to their country of origin can play through the utilization of their skills, and stressing that the brain drain continues to be a severe problem in many developing and transitioning countries, undermining efforts in the area of human resources development,

Recognizing the need to align science, technological knowledge and innovation systems with national development objectives, fully integrated with national human resources development, labour needs and poverty eradication strategies and supported by appropriate institutional and policy frameworks, which can lead to positive transformations in people's lives,

Acknowledging that science, technological knowledge and innovation policies should take into account the specific features of the economy in developing countries, including the size of the traditional sector, the importance of indigenous knowledge, the limited access to skilled labour and capital, weak infrastructure and inadequate institutional frameworks, in order to generate solutions that address the specific challenges of those countries and to foster synergies between modern science and technology and indigenous and local knowledge,

Stressing that technological changes and breakthroughs are expanding at a rapid pace and impacting the world of work and that, in this regard, the development of human resources needs to keep pace and be supported by proactive strategies, investments and normative frameworks to address emerging issues relating to the future of work, education and training,

Reaffirming that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations conferences, and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services, including health,

Recognizing that education is the key to promoting the development of human potential, equality and understanding among peoples, as well as to sustaining economic growth and eradicating poverty, and recognizing also that, to achieve those ends, it is essential that quality education be available to all, including indigenous peoples, girls and women, rural inhabitants and persons with disabilities,

Stressing that Governments have the primary responsibility for defining and implementing appropriate policies for human resources development, and the need for continued support from the international community for the national efforts of developing countries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;¹

2. *Calls upon* the international community to place human resources development at the core of economic and social development and to develop short-, medium- and long-term strategies to effectively enhance human resources capacities, as educated, skilled, healthy, capable, productive and adaptable workforces are the foundation for achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and development;

3. *Encourages* giving appropriate consideration to human resources development strategies in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;²

4. *Stresses* the need for Member States to emphasize and integrate human resources development into national development strategies, including national development policies and strategies to eradicate poverty and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in order to address structural and multidimensional challenges to enhancing national productive capacities and to ensure that human resources development implications are taken into account by all national development stakeholders;

5. *Recognizes* that comprehensive approaches to human resources development that address poverty eradication and the creation of a skilled workforce are also critical in reducing unemployment and brain drain and in promoting greater social inclusion;

6. *Also recognizes* that the future of work, impacted by progress in science and technology, requires adaptability and faster learning of new skills, which, in turn, require a shift towards early childhood education, lifelong learning and a comprehensive life-cycle approach to education and training, enabled, inter alia, through increased investment in teacher training and improved access to digital learning resources, especially in developing countries;

7. *Takes note with appreciation* of the establishment of the Global Commission on the Future of Work by the International Labour Organization;

8. *Encourages* States, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders to take appropriate steps, in accordance with their plans and policies, to help individuals

¹ A/72/292.

² Resolution 70/1.

to make well-informed choices in education, training and careers, develop an integrated system of quality education and training that responds to constantly evolving needs, promote employer recognition and career development based on skills and mastery and foster a culture that supports and celebrates lifelong learning, in order to provide opportunities for all to develop their fullest potential throughout life, regardless of their starting points, thereby improving their chances of staying gainfully employed, and calls for more effective support for developing countries in this regard, including from the United Nations system;

9. *Encourages* Member States to adopt and implement comprehensive human resources development strategies premised on national development objectives that ensure a strong link between quality education, training and employment, help to maintain a productive and competitive workforce and are responsive to the needs of the economy;

10. *Stresses* that human resources development policies should focus on supporting the emergence of a sufficiently wide and flexible pool of skilled human resources, especially among women and youth, to support all sectors of the economy and be matched with present and future workforce needs, which requires well-sequenced investments in basic education, vocational training, on-the-job training and more advanced managerial, engineering and scientific education to increase the supply of technological knowledge that can be absorbed by national innovation systems;

11. *Emphasizes* the need to adopt cross-sectoral approaches and mechanisms to identify human resources development needs in the medium and long term for all sectors of the economy and to formulate and implement policies and programmes to address those needs;

12. *Recognizes* that comprehensive and flexible science, technological knowledge and innovation strategies that encompass all sectors of the economy are critical to ensuring that skills are matched with labour market demand and ready to adapt to and benefit from a constantly evolving technology landscape;

13. *Emphasizes* that, when science, technological knowledge and innovation and human resources development approaches are mutually reinforcing, they can lead to a virtuous circle of economic growth, human progress and sustainable development;

14. *Stresses* that investment in human resources development should be an integral part of national development policies and strategies, and in this regard calls for the adoption of policies to facilitate investment focused on physical and social infrastructure, including education, in particular skills upgrading and vocational training in areas such as science and technology, including information and communications technology, as well as in capacity development, health and sustainable development;

15. *Encourages* Member States, as appropriate, to continue to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including social protection floors, to adopt policies that strengthen existing safety nets and protect vulnerable groups and to take other appropriate actions, including boosting national economic performance, recognizes that social protection floors, defined according to national priorities and the individual circumstances of States, can provide systemic approaches to addressing poverty and vulnerability and can contribute significantly to successful human resources development strategies, acknowledges, in this regard, that many developing countries lack the necessary financial resources and capacity to implement such countercyclical measures, and in this regard recognizes the need for

continued mobilization of additional domestic and international resources, as appropriate;

16. *Encourages* States to consider policies consistent with the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and their obligations under all relevant ratified conventions of the International Labour Organization, and recalls the importance of promoting decent work for all and of increasing quality jobs, including through measures aimed at ensuring occupational health and safety and through working relationships based on effective social dialogue;

17. *Stresses* that human resources development strategies should include measures aimed at reducing unemployment and underemployment among young men and women and the long-term unemployed, who have been disproportionately affected by slow growth in jobs recovery, and to integrate underutilized human resources into the labour market through policies that promote skills development and productivity and reduce barriers to employment, including gender barriers, including by providing incentives, as appropriate, for recruiting, retaining and retooling, assistance in job-finding, job-matching and vocational and on-the-job training, and by promoting, *inter alia*, youth entrepreneurship, noting in this regard the call for action by the International Labour Conference in 2012;

18. *Also stresses* the need for Member States to retain and further enhance national human resources by boosting job-rich recovery and promoting decent work, including by adopting policies and incentives that enhance labour productivity and stimulate private investment and entrepreneurship and strengthen the role of labour administration and institutions in order to foster job creation, address the gender wage gap, reduce occupational segregation and increase the participation of vulnerable groups, including workers in the informal economy;

19. *Emphasizes* the need to address the interlinkages among human resources development, energy and food security, agriculture and rural development, and encourages countries to strengthen capacity in agriculture and rural development;

20. *Encourages* Member States to facilitate access to and apply environmentally sound technologies, and welcomes the launch of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism established in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda,³ based on a multi-stakeholder collaboration among States, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, United Nations entities and other stakeholders, in order to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;

21. *Stresses* that sustainable development is dependent, *inter alia*, on healthy human resources, calls upon Governments to continue their efforts to strengthen national health systems, urges the further strengthening of international cooperation in the area of health, *inter alia*, by considering the promotion of universal health coverage and through the exchange of best practices in the areas of strengthening health systems, access to medicines, expanding and transforming the health workforce, recruitment, training and development of health personnel, transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms and production of affordable, safe, effective and good-quality medicine, and in this regard also stresses that international cooperation and assistance, in particular funding, need to become more predictable and to be better aligned with national priorities and channelled to recipient countries in ways that strengthen national health systems;

22. *Calls upon* the international community, including the relevant entities of the United Nations system, to support the efforts of developing countries to address

³ Resolution 69/313, annex, para. 123.

the adverse effects of HIV and AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases and to halt the spread of epidemic diseases, as well as the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases in Africa, Asia and other regions, and their effects on human resources;

23. *Encourages* Governments to facilitate investments in education, skills and decent job creation in the health and social sectors by taking note of the recommendations of the Secretary-General's High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth and to avert the shortfall of 18 million health workers by 2030, building the human capital required to accelerate universal health coverage and global health security, recognizes that these actions are not only essential to the achievement of the health-related Sustainable Development Goals but will also generate benefits across the Goals, including the creation of decent jobs, the reduction of youth unemployment, the enhancement of women's economic empowerment and participation and inclusive growth;

24. *Calls upon* relevant United Nations entities to support national efforts to build institutional capacities to address long-term national human resources development needs in addition to providing training to individuals;

25. *Calls upon* the international community to assist developing countries in the implementation of national human resources development strategies and encourages the international community, including the private sector and relevant civil society actors, to provide and mobilize financial resources, capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and to supply expertise from all sources, as available;

26. *Calls for* steps to integrate gender perspectives into human resources development, including through policies, strategies and targeted actions aimed at promoting women's capacities and access to productive activities, and in this regard emphasizes the need to ensure the full participation of women in the formulation and implementation of such policies, strategies and actions;

27. *Stresses* the important contributions of the public and private sectors, respectively, in meeting national training and education needs to support the efficient functioning of enterprises and matching the needs of a rapidly changing economy, and encourages the integration of those contributions, including through the greater use of public-private partnerships and incentives;

28. *Calls for* actions at the national, regional and international levels that will give high priority to improving and expanding literacy, as well as science proficiency, including by providing tertiary, technical vocational and adult education, and stresses the need to ensure that, by 2030, children everywhere, girls and boys alike, will be able to complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;

29. *Encourages* Governments to consider appropriate measures at the national level, such as upgrading human skills, better aligning educational and training systems to labour market needs and strengthening labour institutions and regulations to respond to economic downturns;

30. *Encourages* countries to maintain or consider enhancing measures to boost job-rich recovery, such as policies and incentives to enhance labour productivity and stimulate private investment, in addition to efforts to reduce budget deficits in the long term, as appropriate;

31. *Encourages* efforts by Member States and the international community to promote a balanced, coherent and comprehensive approach to international migration and development, in particular by building partnerships and ensuring coordinated

action to develop capacities, including for the management of migration, and in this regard reiterates the need to consider innovative measures to maximize the benefits of migration while minimizing the negative effects of the migration of both highly skilled and low-skilled workers from developing countries;

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, at its seventy-fourth session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fourth session, under the item entitled “Eradication of poverty and other development issues”, the sub-item entitled “Human resources development”.

*74th plenary meeting
20 December 2017*
