KEN Forum 2013 Recommendations  
- Proposed by Thematic Tables -

A: Education and Training for Innovative Society

1. Authorities need to insist on improving quality of education and training (including relevance of contents) for all generations, and making it more flexible and easily accessible.

2. Higher quality of teachers/professors, their advanced pedagogical skills, and motivation to perform better depend on competitive remuneration and working conditions. Without fulfilling these conditions it is not realistic to expect progress.

3. Curriculum development should benefit from inputs of representatives of stakeholders and social actors from various domains. These should include entrepreneurs, employers and trade unions, and NGOs.

4. While learning “some content” is necessary, training youngsters “how to think with imagination” is essential.

5. Education should capitalize on gaming, social media and Internet: Educational programmes need to include social media, gaming, and Internet activities at all levels at teaching, learning and research, as well as in assessment of education outcomes.

B: Inclusive Innovation – Innovation for All

1. As the backbone of knowledge society, inclusive innovation - involving all social and economic actors - requires systematic promotion of creativity and all types of innovation. Dedicated innovation days are one of the effective tools for achieving this target.

2. In order to encourage and mobilize creativity and knowledge within communities, the outreach projects and developmental interventions by NGOs, universities and government agencies should be focused on empowering communities to resolve issues by themselves (if needed with support from external specialists and resources).

C: Cities and Knowledge Societies

1. Cities should not exclude significant peri-urban and rural communities, as they are essential for development of inclusive knowledge societies.
2. Urban agglomerations offer concentrations of knowledge and sources of innovation and entrepreneurship, but to be able to contribute to the development of their broader environment they need to produce enablers acting as knowledge management tools, create a balanced link between push and pull effects, and actively contribute to social cohesion.

3. Cities are important in building knowledge economy to the extent they manage to create conducive environment for market and development opportunities. National and regional authorities should encourage the role of cities in aligning policies across relevant spheres of government.

D: Entrepreneurship – A State of Mind

1. Entrepreneurial education should start as early as possible, and parents should be an active contributor in nurturing entrepreneurial values during early stages of their children’s socialization.

2. Developing an entrepreneurial culture – characterized by creativity, self-confidence, proactive attitude, and risk-taking - is extremely important for societies determined to become innovative, knowledge economies. An effective, business-friendly environment has to be sustained through all kinds of instruments, including tax system, access to capital, celebration of entrepreneurial success, and acceptance of failure as learning process.

3. In business studies academic mentorship is very useful, but it is to be encouraged that mentors should have at least some practical business experience. Practice and other extra-curricular activities in real-life environment play an important role.

E: Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Ethics

1. Development of case studies and sharing of CSR best practice among and within countries should be encouraged. Governments in partnership with business must create a platform for collaboration and dialogue between the private sector and government entities.

2. CSR education initiatives should be aligned with government priorities so as to enable shared value in the creation of knowledge society and thus raising the effectiveness and sustainability of CSR education through partnerships. Mutually beneficial multi-stakeholder mechanisms must be established to ensure alignment between government priorities and corporate strategies, so as to create shared value. This would also mitigate the risk of unethical business practices.

F: Business Academia Collaboration and Partnerships

1. Constructive dialogue among stakeholders is key for improving collaboration and partnerships; acknowledging different interests and goals, addressing miscommunication, and developing consensus on fundamental principles that will govern collaboration and partnerships. The outcome of this dialogue depends on mutual trust among partners.
2. Although best practice should be considered in improving business-academia collaboration and partnerships, countries should **adopt and customize their own models** which suit their traditions, interests and needs, as well as create favourable conditions to encourage partnerships.

**G: Social Innovation, especially Non-Technological Innovation**

1. **Policy support is necessary** (e.g.: tax incentives, regulations and standards, work-life balance at company level) in order to encourage the pursuit of entrepreneurial activities.

2. **Inclusive dialogues are needed** (co-existence of top-down and bottom-up communication systems and channels) on priorities and needs are necessary at community, company and government level.

3. **End users need to be involved early in the process**: there is a need for market-driven innovations; people should be skilled and empowered for social innovation, and best practices need to be articulated and shared.

4. It is in the general interest that **technological and non-technological innovations are encouraged in order to perform optimally and in a mutually supportive manner**.

**H: Building Effective and Sustainable International Knowledge Partnerships**

1. **Best practice and partnership models should be studied globally and learnt from**: the capacity to cooperate should be established prior to start partnerships (set mutually beneficial agenda, being open about priorities, co-create cooperation patterns, commit co-funding, enhance coordination to achieve credibility, focus on people and identify leaders).

2. **General business environment should be improved and trust established** among those who want to partner with each other.

3. **Governments need to build learning models, involve private sector, consult it already in the planning stage, and keep the priority on building human capacity** as critical for developing any type of partnership.

**I: Traditional Knowledge and Technologies for World Market**

1. Notwithstanding the criteria of best practice assessment the **IKS should be researched on their own terms and within their own methodologies**.

2. **Boundaries of knowledge generation should be shifted** by creating institutional, systemic and sustainable mechanisms in order to include grassroot innovation and to identify and nurture innovation talents. To this purpose, **curricula should be**
developed interfacing IKS with other knowledge systems to create unique human capital and adequate incentives to attract private sector partnership through high quality research, tax incentives, and attractive business models.

J: Design – A Driver of Innovation

1. In order to create economic and social value, as well as to link design and usage processes, design thinking and education should be encouraged at all levels. This will facilitate and enable synergies between the four interrelated pillars of Knowledge Economy: education, R&D, Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

2. Current static and inflexible models of education should be challenged, and design-led education, building on diversity, and encouraging the potential of the individual, should be advocated.

K: Role of Technology Transfer Agencies

1. The alignment between the different actors in the value chain should be enhanced through closer integration and coordination, which can be supported by TT Agencies. This will allow for the identification of gaps in the value chain and present opportunities for improvement, particularly in simplification of funding applications, evaluation, and granting procedures.

2. A central, comprehensive and easily accessible repository (single entry point) for innovators, entrepreneurs and financiers / funders / organisations, seeking technology solutions, should be developed. The availability of such a repository could also provide support to addressing other innovation and TT challenges.