Soaring to Success: Capacity Building in Tunisia's 4C Career Centers

EFE – TUNISIE | COLUMBIA SIPA

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Agenda

- Introduction
- Findings
- Roadmap
- Acknowledgements

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A primer on our client's role in Tunisia

efe Tunisie
التعليم من أجل التوظيف
education for employment

Overview

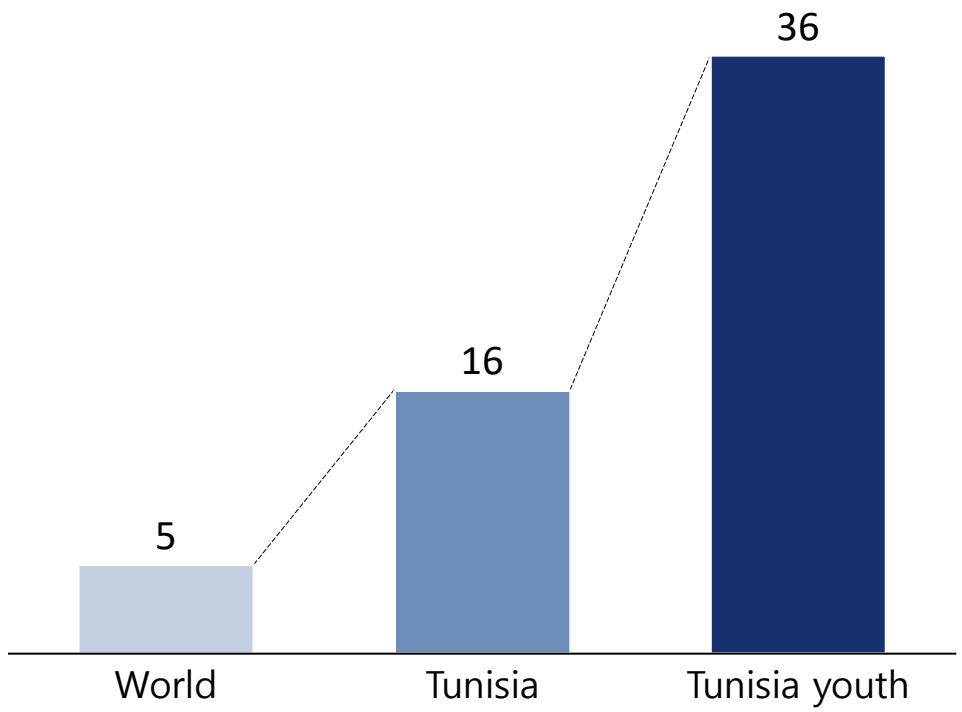
- Education For Employment is an **NGO that trains youth and links them to jobs** across the MENA region
- EFE develops and implements **demand-driven training programs** for university graduates
- In Tunisia, EFE implements programs in partnership with diverse organizations, including **university-based career centers**

Outcomes

100K	Youth connected to the world of work
73%	Job-track graduates placed in jobs
57%	Graduates that are women
3K	Companies that have hired EFE alumni

Tunisia has a level of unemployment, especially among younger people

Unemployment rate by population (%)[1]



How unemployment differs by ....

Age	• Unemployment among young people is persistently high • 85% of unemployed people are < 35y
Gender	• Unemployment is particularly high among educated young women
Education	• Unemployment increases with education level • 40% of the unemployed have university degrees • Three quarters of them are women.

SOURCE: World Bank

EFE is working to reform state careers centers at universities

- MENA region: highest youth unemployment rate globally
- Tunisia Ministry of Higher Education: engaged in reforming its higher education system to increase employability of graduates
- Centres de Carrière et de Certification des Compétences (4Cs): state career centers specifically for students of higher education
- USAID: working with the Tunisian Government on project JOBS, to create sustainable employment opportunities for Tunisians.

As part of JOBS, EFE-Tunisia is working with the Ministry of Higher Education to support the employment reform strategy for the 4Cs

Poster at a C4 in Jendouba University

Our task with EFE was threefold

DIAGNOSE

Key areas for improvement within the 4C network

BENCHMARK

Best practices in career centers around the world

RECOMMEND

Solutions to improve the 4C employment outcomes

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We diagnosed 3 key areas for improvement in the Tunisian 4C network…

Area	Issues	Effect
Governance	• Lack of standardization • Volunteer part-time leadership • Lack of targets and little monitoring	• Certain 4Cs end up less developed and students have no access to trainings and networking
Access to opportunities	• Little appetite for interns • No legal frame for work-study • Few opportunities in interior areas	• Students do not get the needed soft skills from internships or practical experiences
Building the network	• Inconsistent in-person services • Late engagement with students • No alumni connectivity	• Ineffective preparation of students for job searching and corporate culture

An unused 4C at Ecole Polytechnique de Tunisie

… and benchmarked a list of 13 best practices through interviews and desk research

Governance

1. Staffing structure
2. Independent funding
3. Monitoring and evaluating tools

Access to opportunities

4. Enhancing online platforms
5. In-person services
6. Accredited work experience
7. Site visits
8. Job fairs
9. Resident employer program

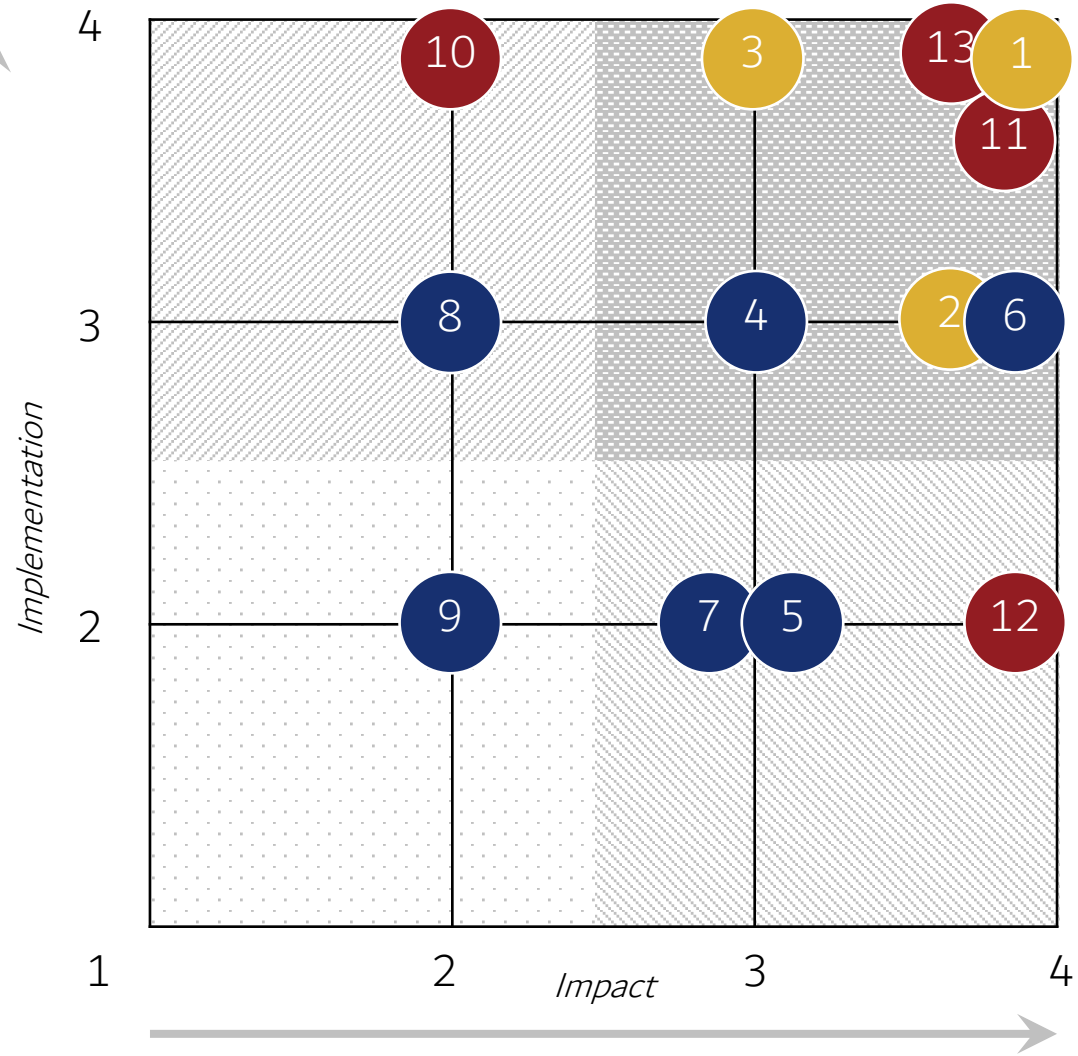
Building the network

10. Student awareness
11. Multi-stakeholder engagement
12. Mentoring programs
13. Alumni engagement

We prioritized 7 practices as "critical" based on their impact on performance and feasibility of implementation in the Tunisia context

Prioritization category

- Critical
- Worth trying
- Bonus
- Deprioritized



1. Staffing structure
2. Independent funding
3. Monitoring and evaluating tools
4. Digital tools
5. In-person services
6. Accredited work experience
7. Site visits
8. Job fairs
9. Resident employer program
10. Student awareness
11. Multi-stakeholder engagement
12. Mentoring programs
13. Alumni engagement

"Critical" recommendations

Governance

1. Staffing structure
2. Independent funding
3. Monitoring and evaluating tools

Access to opportunities

4. Enhancing online platforms
6. Accredited work experience

Building the network

11. Multi-stakeholder engagement
13. Alumni engagement

1 Staffing Structure

DESCRIPTION

- **Hire a full-time 4C manager** for each 4C to
  - Run operations and services of each center
  - Ensure the 4C culture and mission is applied to all activities and services
- **Hire Executive Director** for Central 4C management in the Ministry of Higher Education

RATIONALE for TUNISIA

- Recommendation to increase capacity and governance, as per assessment in January
- All 4C are operated by professors on a volunteer basis and 3 part-time employees paid by the Ministry of Higher Education
- Need for more consistency and for a sustainable operational model

CASE STUDIES

- **Columbia SIPA** and **Penn State** have career service centers with dedicated full time employees and directors.

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"90% of professors here in Tunisia do not have any non-academic professional experience"

- A Tunis 4C coordinator

2 Independent Funding

DESCRIPTION

- **Establish a Central Endowment Fund** for the entire 4C network operated by the Executive Directory
- **Establish a Statute for the fund** with investment, withdrawal and usage rules considering
  - a) fundraising participation of each center,
  - b) egalitarian resources distribution

RATIONALE for TUNISIA

- 4Cs operate with scarce resources from the Ministry of Higher Education
- To promote greater flexibility in planning and implementing new practices, it is necessary to establish greater fundraising autonomy
- With this fund, local 4Cs will be able to fundraise from private sector partners and civil society

CASE STUDIES

- **Polytechnic School at University of São Paulo, Brazil:** Endowment Fund created and managed by the Career Center. Income generated by investments is allocated in programmatic and operational initiatives.

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"Our Endowment Fund was a turning point on the Career Center operations. It guarantees sustainability on revenues at the same time that its transparent management is pivotal to enhance our reputation with the private sector."

- Tiago Zuriolo, University of São Paulo

3 Monitoring and evaluating tools

DESCRIPTION

- **Use simple M&E tools** to track progress of 4Cs
  - Eg: Performance Assessment Rubric developed by the Workshop team
- **Institute performance monitoring** at the regional level to encourage a culture of transparency among the various 4Cs

RATIONALE for TUNISIA

- 4Cs currently only track inputs, e.g: number of students attending an event
- Tracking metrics are only available at the Ministry of Higher Education level

CASE STUDIES

- **Columbia SIPA:** use of a software to track services utilization rates

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"We track only input statistics at the Ministry, at the moment. It has been hard to get information on employment outcomes"

– 4C Director

4 Enhancing online platforms

DESCRIPTION

- **Collaborate with firms** seeking employees to increase the number of jobs advertised on the platform
- **Increase offline interactions** with companies to encourage platform usage
- **Advocate for technical advisor** to be placed within the Ministry from private technical partners

RATIONALE for TUNISIA

- Administrative bottlenecks prevent the platform to be fully efficient
- Tunisia does not have a culture of using online platforms for recruitment- change management is required

CASE STUDIES

- **Columbia SIPA:** SIPAlink software used to post recruitment opportunities, job fairs, etc.

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"The current usage of online platforms for recruiting are not that prominent in Tunisia- they are currently more offline. Change management to encourage job posting and seeking to be made online is required"

- Amine Chouaieb, Chifco

6 Accredited work experience

DESCRIPTION

- **Establish an academic credit system** for students who participate in a form of formal "work experience" (internship, fellowship or volunteer opportunity)
- In some settings, make this **work experience mandatory**

RATIONALE for TUNISIA

- Critical need to increase students' access to work opportunities and place emphasis on work experience
- This would continue building the 4C network and engage the various stakeholders within the private sector and community
- Leverage the opportunities provided by the civil society sector to increase students' work experience

CASE STUDIES

- **International Institute of Debate's (iiDebate):** formal fellowship programs
- **Mediterranean School of Business:** pre-engineering 4-8 week required internship.
- A number of organizations that were interviewed said half of their full-time staff used to be interns

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"Once graduated, students don't know how to create a network and apply their academic knowledge. On the other hand, companies don't have solid internship program or they are not structured in a way to hire interns"

– Iyed Hamadi, iiDebate

11 Multi-stakeholder engagement

DESCRIPTION

- **Establish a dialogue** through various communication media (site visits, lectures, panels)
- **Create formal partnerships** with private and public sector organizations, professors, academic counsellors, alumni and university clubs

RATIONALE for TUNISIA

- Essential practice to increase information sharing
- Ensuring that university curriculum includes apprehension of skills pertinent for the job market
- Can help increase funding opportunities for the recommended endowment fund

CASE STUDIES

- **Columbia SIPA:** NYC Career Panels, WA DC Conference
- **Getulio Vargas Foundation (Brazil) Career Center** engages with all university departments in order to design an annual calendar
- **The Center for Entrepreneurship and Executive Development (CEED)**

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"It is all about partnership."
– Wafa Makhlouf, CEED

13 Alumni engagement

DESCRIPTION

- **Establish an alumni database**
- **Establish dedicated time slots** for student interaction with alumni
- **Work with alumni as volunteer mentors** and use alumni as a resource
- **Extend career services** to all alumni

RATIONALE for TUNISIA

- Space to enhance students' career trajectories by tracking alumni and providing opportunities for students to connect with alumni.
- Soft advantages such as built reputation and allegiance to the university can serve as a big advantage in building the institution as a whole

CASE STUDIES

- **University of Sao Paulo in Brazil:** special program for alumni that trains them in topics such as leadership and knowledge transfer to act as mentors to currently enrolled students.

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"Alumni must be seen both as users and service providers for careers centers."

- Tiago Ziruolo, University of São Paulo

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Roadmap to success (1/2)

Governance | Opportunities | Network

Recommendation	Short term	Medium term	Long term
1 Staffing structure	Secure funding	Hire staff for 7 pilots	Hire staff for all 4Cs
2 Independent funding	Establish legal framework for fund Hire consultants to design structure	Design operational structure and rules	Begin fundraising, disbursing resources
3 M&E tools	Use simple Excel-based PAR tool	Contextualize the PAR for 4C network	Allocate resources to work on the PAR
4 Enhancing online platforms	Update online platform and encourage for use	Encourage private orgs to use online platforms for recruitment	Place technical experts in the Ministry

Roadmap to success (2/2)

Governance | Opportunities | Network

Recommendation	Short term	Medium term	Long term
6 Accredited work experience	Propose universities accredit "work experience"	Create Employer Recruitment Policy	List "work experience" opportunities on the portal
11 Multi-stakeholder engagement	Meet to align on type of stakeholders List of stakeholders to engage with	Create formal partnership contracts	Aim to secure private sector funding
13 Alumni engagement	Create simple alumni database	Set up alumni-students interaction	Implement mentorship programs

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Questions?

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