FINAL REPORT: EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Building a Sustainable Career Center Model in Tunisia

Contents

I. Executive Summary

Background

Over the course of the last six months, a team composed of six graduate students at Columbia University has worked with Education for Employment Tunisie (EFE) to study the Centres de Carrière et de Certification des Compétences (4Cs) in Tunisia and propose recommendations for improvement of its operational model. After a trip to Tunisia in January, our team developed a first diagnostic framework of the 4C's current operational model, highlighting areas needing improvement or development. Our second deliverable to EFE consisted of a Benchmarking Report of career center best practices from universities across Brazil, Egypt, France, India, Morocco, and the United States. As a result of this research, our team identified a set of best practices implemented all over the world, which may be responses to the challenges highlighted in the previous diagnosis of 4Cs.

Final Report Structure

Columbia's third and final deliverable consists of recommendations drawn from our benchmarking study, adapted to the Tunisian context. By conducting interviews with various Tunisian stakeholders, Columbia's team was able to test international best practices, considering likely feasibility and impact in Tunisia. Therefore, from the broader set of twelve best practices identified in the Benchmarking Report, this Final Report focuses on seven to elaborate the final recommendations to EFE: ***Structuring Staff, Independent Funding, Monitoring & Evaluation, Enhancing Online Platforms, Accredited Work Experience, Multi-Stakeholder Engagement, and Alumni Engagement***.

Aiming to present these final recommendations to EFE efficiently, this report consists of three parts, not including the Executive Summary and Appendix. In section two, we will briefly explain the prioritization process, which narrows down the set of best practices from twelve to seven critical categories. Then, in section three, each one of these seven best practices is presented in detail, examining their specific description, rationale, implementation process, costs, and benefits. Lastly, the report ends with an implementation roadmap for the short, medium, and long term.

II. Selection of Best Practices

1. Explaining Criteria (Impact and Feasibility of Implementation)

Our team gathered a list of best practices for career centers through extensive primary research involving interviews with career center directors from around the world. You can find this comprehensive list of practices in the appendix to this document. Out of these practices, we selected the most critical to the Tunisian context and identified them as recommendations to be prioritized.
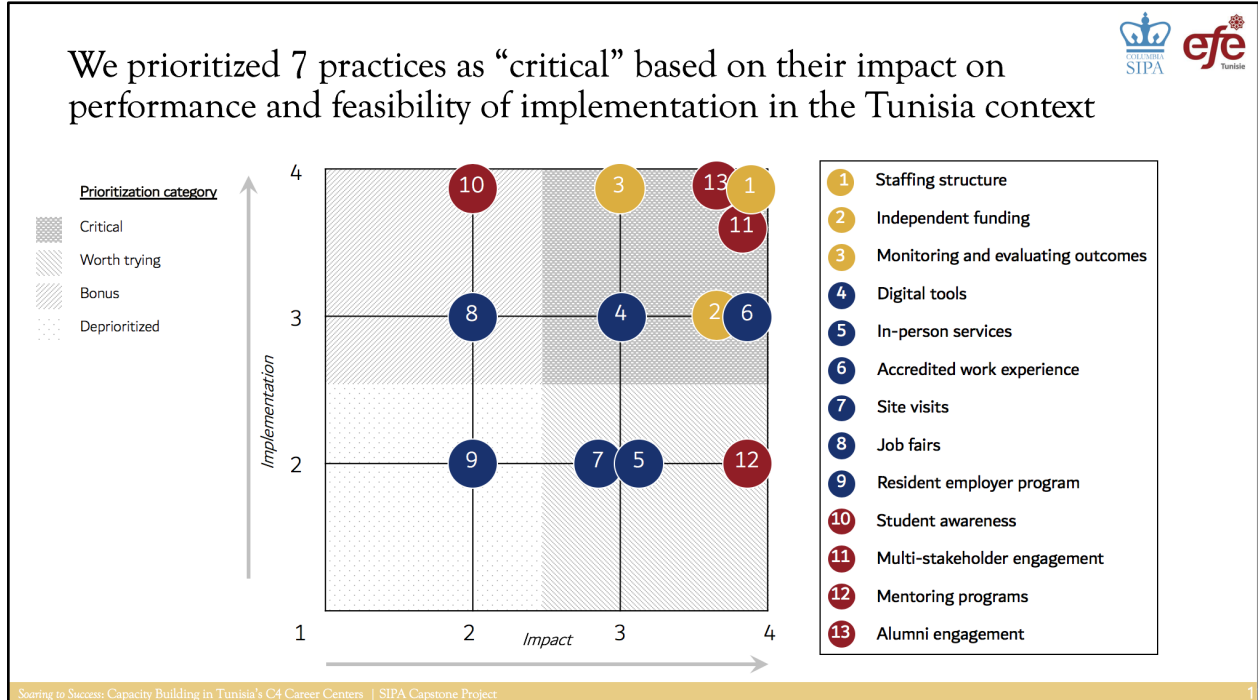
Our prioritization process was quantitative and standardized. We created a framework to rank the practices based on two distinct dimensions: **impact** and **implementation**. Following our

earlier field visit to Tunisia, we had diagnosed the main areas for improvement within the 4C network. We measured the impact of each recommendation by how significantly it would affect the main development areas for the 4Cs. We measured how it would improve the functioning of the 4Cs incrementally. Greater incremental changes were scored higher on the impact scale. The second dimension was implementation. Implementation measured the feasibility of putting the recommendations into practice, specifically in the Tunisian context. This took into account the existing legal, cultural, and public finance structures in Tunisia. Practices that were easier to implement were ranked higher. Each dimension was scored from 1 to 4.

Based on these two dimensions, we created four distinct categories within which we assigned each practice. The categories are as follows:

- ***Critical***: These were practices that ranked high on both impact and implementation. Thus, they would make a significant impact to the 4C network and would also be possible to get underway without much difficulty. These were, essentially, "the low hanging fruit."
- ***Worth Trying***: These were practices that ranked high on impact, but low on implementation. There is added value to these practices, but the costs may be prohibitive. If the right opportunity presents itself, these could be valuable steps to take.
- ***Bonus***: These were practices that ranked low on impact, but high on implementation. Though they carried less significance, they would be quick and painless to get done. These are worth implementing, but should be prioritized lower than the critical ones.
- ***Deprioritized***: These practices were ranked low on both impact and implementation. While there may be a small amount of impact to be gotten here, it would not be worth easy to do so. Thus, these practices are the least important.

2. Prioritization Graph

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

Implementation (y-axis), Impact (x-axis)

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

III. *Final Recommendations*

The following section describes each recommendation that was shortlisted using the prioritization process described in Section II. Recommendations that scored high on impact and implementation, becoming critical recommendations have been elaborated on below:

Governance

1. Staffing Structuring

Hire at least one paid full-time manager per 4C; hire a full-time central staff member (Executive Director) to manage the entire 4C network

Description

Full-Time 4C Center Manager: This employee would have a full-time salary and be responsible for the operations and services of the career center. The employee would be responsible for ensuring the 4C culture (or desired culture) and mission is applied to all 4C activities and services. The manager should be knowledgeable about the cultural and economic environment within the region of the career center and its beneficiaries. It is also highly recommended that this staff member be

educated about the employment ecosystem and remain informed about current job market trends in Tunisia. This will be critical if the employee is expected to engage with the private sector and try to increase opportunities between the public/private sector and students.

Full-Time Network Executive Director: In addition to at least one full-time employee per 4C, we recommend hiring a full-time salaried Executive Director to manage the entire 4C network.[1] This Executive Director would oversee and manage operations of the 4Cs, ensuring that 4Cs achieve their organizational and governance objectives. If 4Cs receive centralized funding or have a Central Endowment Fund, as suggested below in the second recommendation, it essential to have at least one full-time employee who oversees the disbursement of these funds to the individual 4C locations. The 4C Executive Director would also be responsible for ensuring that each 4C has equal access to employee training for the 4C directors and resources for the students.

Rationale

This recommendation is based on the need to increase ***capacity and governance***, the importance of which was identified during the January trip and confirmed by the career center benchmarking study and several remote interviews conducted in March. The individual 4Cs are operated/directed by employees who are professors on a volunteer basis, which does not allow for them to invest a full work day or to direct their energy towards the many tasks involved in operating an effective career center. That said, many of these professors are highly experienced and should therefore continue to support their centers after a full-time manager is hired. Additionally, there are three central office employees who are paid by the Ministry and are either teachers, staff or administrators. Directing and managing the 4C network is only one of their tasks. In order to create a more consistent and sustainable administrative model for the 4Cs, we recommend hiring a full-time executive director who is dedicated to managing the 4C network.

Implementation

Full-Time 4C Manager

Manager Contract: Establish a new full-time job opening with a contract outlining the required duties that cover operations and services. The job requirements for staff should be the same across all regions. With this recommendation, it is necessary to secure and allocate funding for the new full-time position and identify funding opportunities for the future.

Hiring Profile: We recommend finding candidates with relevant HR/Administrative experience and establishing appropriate training modules to further educate the employee on how to operate/direct an effective career center. This individual not only has a good base of administrative skills, but is passionate about helping the youth find employment and engaging the local community.

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[1] This recommendation is based on the information the team was given; that there is no longer a 4C Central Director.

Full-Time Executive Director

Employee Contract: Establish a new full-time job opening for a 4C Executive Director. The contract should specify expected responsibilities and commitment period. Much like the employee contract for 4C employees, this will require funding and identifying resources for the future.

Hiring Profile: The new 4C Executive Director will manage all 4C directors, and therefore should not only have a strong administrative background, but also managerial skills. This person must be well-equipped to oversee a vast network of career centers and conduct similar operations across the country.

Implement Standardized Training: It is recommended that the 4C Executive Director oversee the implementation of a *standardized training series* for the full-time 4C managers with continual education throughout the year. Completing this training would be a part of the 4C managers job requirements and the 4C Executive Director would ensure the staff member has access to the training and completes the training. This training program could be modeled after the USAID Moroccan Jobs program training modules included in the SIPA/EFE Benchmarking Report and included in the Appendix of this report. Due to the variance in regions in Tunisia, it is suggested that one of the training modules focuses on education about the students. From several interviews with the International Institute of Debate, we concluded that strategies cannot be the same across all regions because of the diversity among beneficiaries and the business culture. As a result, strategies must be personalized by the 4C and its new full-time manager based on student needs and the job market in the region. Furthermore, universities that tend to emphasize hard skills such as science and mathematics should focus on cultivating soft skills for the job market (e.g. networking, communicating, proper interview etiquette, etc.).

Standardize Implementation of Services: The 4C Executive Director would ensure there is alignment on objectives in terms of operations and services across all 4Cs and this w. However, implementation may vary across the 4Cs due to the differences among the regions. Certain student resources should be standardized across all regions; for instance, having the same access to events (including 4C-related events on cover letters and job search preparedness) and opportunities, and to contact lists so students based in a region with slower economic activity can benefit from networks too.

Costs and Benefits

Costs:
- Full-time employee salary
- Time spent establishing role, relevant tasks
- Training modules and onboarding processes

Benefits:
- Consistent and uninterrupted commitment to 4C's mission and beneficiaries (e.g. students, alumni, employers, etc.)

- Improved organization and productivity
- Higher incentive to improve skills and work hard, which will ultimately improve the centers' performance

Hire a part-time employee to manage alumni affairs and employer relations

Description

If a second position were to be added to the local 4C organizational structure, it is suggested that this position be dedicated to alumni affairs and employer relations. Alumni affairs are integral to increasing the networking opportunities for students, and ultimately increase employment after graduation. Many alumni are eager to reconnect with their universities, and in connecting employed alumni to the school, it brings attention to their employer. This then allows for partnerships to be formed through a direct contact. The alumni affairs manager would work on building an alumni database and create an active network of alumni who can then be invited to attend events organized by the 4C such as panel discussions, job fairs, or workshops. Utilizing alumni in these events would be at no cost to the 4Cs and it would help build the network in order to sustain an efficient career center. In addition to managing alumni affairs, this position would also oversee handling employer relations. Much like alumni affairs, employer relations are integral to a career center's success, especially as it relates to networking and job opportunities for students.

Rationale

The School of Public Affairs at Penn State University had one director who managed all the events, services, and operations of the career center. Despite limited resources, they have recently decided to create a position for an individual who would be solely dedicated to alumni affairs due to the high value and return increasing the alumni network would bring to the students and the career center. It was also confirmed by numerous schools that there were dedicated staff to alumni affairs/employer relations.

Implementation

Employee Contract: Hiring someone full-time to manage alumni affairs and employer relations is a reach for most 4Cs right now. If one of the seven pilot 4Cs could hire full-time in order to assess the benefit of having additional staff members on board, it might serve as proof of concept. More Generally, however, since hiring full-time is an important financial commitment, we recommend starting someone off as part-time. Ideally someone who can commit 10-15 hours a week to managing both alumni affairs and employer relations.

Hiring Profile: We recommend hiring someone with strong communication skills. The person responsible for managing alumni affairs and employer relations will serve as a liaison between various stakeholders. Communication, along with other soft skills, will be key to achieving success in this role.

Costs and Benefits

Costs:
- Employee salary
- Time spent establishing role, relevant tasks
- Training modules & onboarding process

Benefits:
- Consistent and uninterrupted commitment to alumni affairs and employer relations
- Improved organization and productivity; stronger employment numbers
- Good relationship with alumni and employers; strong sense of community that goes beyond the university

2. Independent Funding

Description

The benchmark research has elucidated some strategies that allow career centers to enjoy independent sources of funds, beyond regular revenue streams from universities or the Ministry of Higher Education, which are directly related to their performance. Several careers centers raise funds by specific projects designed in partnership with external stakeholders. For example, while organizing a job fair, companies pay the career center for planning and operating the event, thus generating additional funds which can be applied for programmatic or operational needs. Our recommendation aims to encourage this higher autonomy of fundraising by career centers, which represents greater flexibility on implementing innovative practices as well as greater financial sustainability in face of political changes or scarcity of public revenues. For achieving this goal, we recommend **the development of a Central Endowment Fund for the entire 4C network**. This fund should be designed in partnership with an external financial consulting firm and then be operated by the Executive Director of the 4C network in consultation with local teams, thus serving as a common financial tool across all career centers in the Tunisian network. That means, while fundraising with external partners from the private and third sectors, the career centers can use the fund as the financial instrument to process all transactions. Also, income from investments can be further allocated to improve the delivery of services from career centers, whether in strengthening existing programs or implementing innovative initiatives.

The Fund should be autonomous from the revenue streams of the regular public budgets from universities and the Minister of Higher Education. Besides that, the Fund must have a legal statute predicting investment, withdrawal, and usage policies in which rules of allocation should be defined considering both the amount of participation of fundraising for each career center as well as principles of egalitarian distribution of resources in face of the regional economic inequalities of the Tunisian context.

By implementing a more transparent and egalitarian management of resources based on rules foreseen by the statute approved by in agreement with the local career centers, the establishment of the Central Endowment Fund will result in reputation gains for career centers,

thus becoming a central instrument in promoting a more fruitful relationship with external stakeholders in general. Beyond being used as a tool for specific fundraising from projects as job fairs, the establishment of a well-regarded endowment fund can be a turning point in the relationship between the 4C network and the private sector as it can generate a culture of philanthropy from companies to career centers aiming the development of a better prepared workforce for the country as a whole.

Rationale

The administrative and programmatic efficiency of the career centers is directly associated with the amount of financial resources available, as well as the pace with which these resources are allocated in the initiatives designed by the career center to serve students better. In Tunisia, career centers typically operate with resources either from the Ministry of Higher Education or their respective universities. In many cases, these resources are scarce and associated with various constraints from inefficient bureaucracy and political instability in face of governmental changes. In this sense, the current budgetary structure limits career centers' performance in terms of internal administration and delivery of services.

To promote greater flexibility in planning and implementing new practices, it is necessary to establish greater autonomy in fundraising. In this sense, it is essential to seek new ways of raising funds for stakeholders in addition to universities and the Ministry of Higher Education. By using the Central Endowment Fund as a major financial tool for fundraising across the entire 4C network, local career centers will be able to raise funds from partners in the private sector and civil society.

Implementation

Legal Framework: The first step will be adapting or establishing legal frameworks that enable the development of the Central Endowment Fund. The 4C network will need advocacy support from partners as EFE-Tunisie to push this agenda forward on the Tunisian policy making environment.

Financial Consulting Firm: To develop the Fund's legal and operational structure, we recommend a public-private partnership in which a financial consulting would be hired by the Ministry of Higher Education to accomplish this structuring process. The public-private partnership will last until the execution of this initial stage of designing the operational structure of the Fund, which means that the Fund's subsequent operational management will be a responsibility of the 4C Executive Director. It is worth mentioning that the Fund's development must be designed in agreement with the local career centers to respect their specificities and socioeconomic differences across the various regions of Tunisia.

Legal Status: The Central Endowment Fund must be established as a financial entity completely autonomous from the regular budget streams of the Ministry of Higher Education. It means that its management must be strictly associated with the 4C network, thus guaranteeing an autonomous allocation of resources among career centers across Tunisia.

<u>Internal Statute:</u> It is necessary to establish an internal statute with investment, withdrawal and usage rules thus establishing parameters for resources allocation among the various local careers centers that compose the network. We recommend the adoption of rules that guarantee a balance between the amount that will be allocated in each career center vis-a-vis the portion of contribution to the Fund in terms of local fundraising as well as principles of equal division in view of the economic realities of the various Tunisian regions.

<u>Operational Management:</u> After the complete structuring process and the establishment of the Fund's statute, its daily operational management will be managed by the Executive Director. Besides the operational management, the Executive Director will support the local career centers on how to proceed with transactions and how to fundraise resources with external partners efficiently.

Costs and Benefits

Costs:
- Advocacy support to adapt a legal framework that enables the consolidation of the Central Endowment Fund.
- Hire a financial consulting firm to develop legal and operational structures of the Central Endowment Fund.
- Fees and initial investments needed to consolidate the Fund.

Benefits:
- Greater financial sustainability in face of political changes or budgetary constraints.
- Higher autonomy on local fundraising.
- Reputational gains from the financial structure that enables new and stronger partnerships with companies and civil society organizations.

Access to Opportunities

3. Monitoring and Evaluation Tools

Description

During an earlier phase of the Columbia-EFE project, a key deliverable was to provide an overview of best operational practices from career centers globally. In this process, our team created a Performance Assessment Rubric (PAR) that objectively provided scores to certain domains within these career centers across different countries. The idea behind this was to be able to identify for each best practice domain and provide a numerical score for each practice. The large domains were bucketed into- 'Governance,' 'Access to Opportunities' and 'Building the Network.' Simple questions under these buckets were asked during the data collection phase of the benchmark report, and responses were analyzed to produce 'performance scores' for each category.

While the PAR was developed to assist in identifying which of the countries had strong best practices under a specific category, the use of the PAR extends into being used as a monitoring and evaluation tool. We recommend that the PAR be implemented in operations, so that various implementation aspects of the 4C network functioning can be periodically measured using the PAR.

Rationale

Maintaining and tracking the effectiveness of implementation systems is crucial to understand whether certain operational changes are required to enhance functioning. Using simple tools such as a basic excel sheet that is able to track and compare the progress of implementation processes may be useful in making sure that operations across the 4C network are of equal quality and are being implemented in the same way.

Implementation

The Columbia team put together a simple Excel sheet that provided separate sub-categories under which numerical values can be inputted by consulting a simple rubric, for the effectiveness of implementation. For example, under 'Access to Opportunities' a sample question is 'Do you have an internship program?'. A 4C that has one will be given a higher rating in total as compared with a 4C that does not. In this way, the sheet is a simple and quick diagnostic tool that allows for comparison across the 4Cs. More sophisticated versions of this tool can be developed, with a visual dashboard that allows a user to view the progress of each individual 4C against these parameters in one quick look. The indicators themselves can also be tweaked for use and contextualized to the 4C context as required. The potential for such a tool is high and can be implemented in either its most basic form or into a more sophisticated version as a digital platform.

Costs and Benefits

Costs:
- In order to effectively use this monitoring and evaluation tool, data will need to be collected from the 4Cs periodically, so that the information is updated and ready to be used for quick-decision making. This may be a time-consuming activity.
- In order to ensure that the tool is effective, a common minimum definition of what needs to be monitored across the 4Cs may need to be devised. This common minimum or benchmark will become the reference point to gauge whether a particular 4C is implementing the operational practice correctly.

Benefits:
- In the simplest form, the PAR requires no additional cost in terms of software and can be easily used in a simple Excel sheet.
- Creating the contextualized PAR may not need extensive technical expertise; the Columbia team has already made a version that can be further refined for the 4Cs use. The tool is also self-explanatory to follow and implement.

- The PAR lends itself to taking action if certain implementation processes are not being conducted as they should be. For example, if a 4C scores now on a certain parameter, this will immediately be flagged on the PAR and management can take quick action in that 4C.

4. Enhancing Online Platforms

Description

Having a robust digital tools platform to enhance operations for the organization is important to enhance efficiency. To this end, the 4Cs, in partnership with the Ministry and Chifco— a company in the digital services sector—came together to create a digital platform for the 4Cs. This platform has a front-end that operates to provide information on the various services provided by the 4Cs, while the back-end serves as an internal portal for managers, teachers and students. Students, for example, can post their resumes, access jobs and ask questions regarding recruitment with the use of the back-end portal.

However, for full and successful use of such a digital platform, certain operational measures may need to be taken to ensure that the portal is being used to its full potential. Having people that work on implementing the platform effectively is important and this deserves more attention, perhaps by enhancing staffing from the Ministry. In addition to this, collaborating with firms that are seeking employees to use this platform would be important so that an increased number of jobs are advertised on the platform, to increase platform usage.

Rationale

Based on interviews with Chifco, even with the existence of the online platform, several administrative and other bottlenecks exist that prevent the portal from being implemented to its maximum. Often when the government is working with several private partners, government resources are spread thin and so special attention to detail with respect to implementation of a project can be difficult. Working closely with individuals operating the platform within and outside the Ministry would be important.

In addition to operational aspects, working with other partners that contribute to the platform, such as companies posting jobs would be crucial to ensuring its practical use. As discussed during an interview with Chifco, change management regarding use of technical tools used by employers and job seekers for employment, may be required in Tunisia in general. Therefore, increased dialogue would be important to encourage platform usage by employers.

With the onset of COVID-19, strengthening technological systems will be even more important to ensure continuity of services. With higher unemployment than usual, robust mechanisms such as a strong online platform would help allow students to connect with employers and access jobs remotely. The COVID-19 climate may even serve as a catalyst to build a strong environment for these systems to be implemented quickly.

Implementation

The 4C network can do the following:

Higher Involvement from the Ministry: Advocate if possible, for dedicated person or persons allocated to working maintaining and controlling the online platform. For example, if Chifco is the digital platform partner, perhaps a technical staff member from Chifco can be placed within the Ministry to assist with operating the platform and address troubleshooting. This would prevent the need for hiring additional people to operate the platform.

Offline Interaction with Companies: Have increased interaction with private companies offline, to encourage platform usage. Since half of the usability of the portal relies on external partners, an effort would need to be made to engage with these partners regularly so that they are encouraged to use the portal as much as possible. See the section below, "Building the Network," for ideas on how to accomplish this.

Costs and Benefits

Costs:
- It may be difficult to advocate for change within the government machinery, in terms of enhancing attention to the online portal.
- It may be challenging and resource-intensive to allocate additional manpower specifically for the purpose of maintaining an online database.
- Having employers actively engage with the online portal may be difficult as the current trend in Tunisia may be to engage in alternate means of recruitment. This change management may be difficult to initiate and may not be in the control of the 4C network.

Benefits:
- A successful digital platform would increase efficiency and save time when accessing jobs. A one-stop digital location to find jobs could help students access opportunities faster and may contribute to quicker placements after graduation. Efficient use of online systems could have far-reaching advantages.
- With the use of digital platforms comes the resources to track engagement and usage with the portal.

5. Accredited Work Experience

Description

A student who participates in a form of formal "work experience" (internship, fellowship, or volunteer opportunity) would earn credit towards their major or program requirements. Earning

credit would be contingent upon meeting necessary requirements in order to earn credit such as hours and relevancy to one's major/program. In some university settings, it may be appropriate to make this work experience mandatory. In various universities in Tunisia, such as the Mediterranean Business School (MSB), internships are required. For example, the pre-engineering program at MSB requires students to complete a four to six-week internship. We recommend expanding programs like these to other programs in different university settings.

Rationale

From both the January field study and March interviews, multiple stakeholders have confirmed that there is a mismatch between education and skills that prepare a student for the job market. In order ***to increase students' access to opportunities*** they need to be in an environment where they learn and apply soft and hard skills to help prepare them for the job market. Therefore, the team advocates that all universities accredit undergraduates formal "work experience," which could be an internship, fellowship, or volunteer position. Providing credit for this "work experience" and placing emphasis on such experience will motivate the student to pursue these opportunities. These accredited "work experiences" could also be required for more undergraduate programs besides schools that focus on business, science, and technology. Accredited work experience would provide students first-hand work experience that will help familiarize them with the job market, build their resume, and obtain a job. Furthermore, this would continue to build the 4C Network and engage the various stakeholders within the private sector and community.

Implementation

Create a Proposal to Universities: The 4C Managers, with the help of EFE, could create a proposal that would be used to negotiate with the applicable university an agreement to accredit work hours towards undergraduates' major that could be called "work experience."

Requirements: The internship could be unpaid, paid, and even a volunteer position if it is related to the major/program and was with a formal organization such as registered non-for-profit, CSO, startup, small business, etc. Accreditation could be subject to the approval of the 4Cs verifying all requirements have been met. One of the requirements can be based on hours completed and then assign the appropriate accreditation. For example, at Columbia University at the School of International and Public Affairs, 120 hours count towards 1.5 credits and 240 hours award 3 credits.

Employer Recruitment Policy: It advisable that the 4Cs create a recruitment and "work experience" policy where the employer would be obligated to follow certain guidelines. This could include, but not limited to the following:
- Hiring organizations possess a tax ID, employer registry, or proof of formal CSO status
- Full disclosure of student's job requirements
- Respect of private information revealed on resumes
- Equal opportunity and non-discrimination clause

Providing the Resources and Additional Tasks: The 4Cs would be responsible for providing the resources for students to find an internship, fellowship, or volunteer position that are in alignment with the student's career trajectory or majors. For example, job listings for accredited work experience could be posted on the 4C portal and include a list of volunteer opportunities with civil society organizations, and internship programs with startups in the region. It is recommended that the 4C director and perhaps a 4C student volunteer make students aware of possible accredited "work experience" by posting them on the 4C website and through distribution emails sent to students by the Director of the 4C.

Suggested Partners: Civil Society Organizations, Non-for-profit, Startups, and other private sector companies.

Many civil society organizations, such as the Young Leaders Entrepreneurs,[2] call for volunteers on a need/project basis for their programs. CSOs are eager to engage with the community, particularly with the youth. Additionally, not-for-profits and CSOs that we spoke with who hired interns reported many those interns being hired as full-time staff. For instance, The Center for Entrepreneurship and Executive Development (CEED) usually has interns who work one to two months, and approximately 50% of their staff has been hired after interning with the organization. Some organizations in Tunisia, such as International Institute of Debate (iiDebate), have formal fellowship programs where the students or recent graduates are mentored and the objective of the fellowship is beneficial for both parties: the individual "gains experience and knowledge in operations while the iiDebate Secretariat will benefit through the presence of an additional professional and his/her capacity and knowledge."[3] It is recommended that 4Cs and universities *advocate* for this type of fellowship program because it is directly addressing the mismatch of skills issue that has been identified among Tunisian graduates.

It is also recommended that partnerships be leveraged with startups that are looking for volunteers or interns to work on meaningful projects. Startups have a high demand for workers who will be required to meet deadlines and provide deliverables, which may prove more fruitful than a public sector job where the intern may be assigned with a small number of tasks that don't enhance the student's skills. Additionally, many of the CSOs and startups interviewed would either like to begin or continue to open their space up for site visits and workshops.

Costs and Benefits

Costs and Risks:
- 4C staff and universities would need to spend more time approving of qualified "work experiences" that meet a set of requirements.

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[2] "Young Leaders Entrepreneurs "Unleash Tunisia" Project Selected for the Intercultural Innovation Award." The U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative. Accessed at: https://mepi.state.gov/unleash-tunisia-venture-bus/.

[3]"IIDebate Fellowship Opportunity for Tunisans Seeking Professional Experience-3 Months." European Endowment Democracy. https://jamaity.org/opportunity/iidebate-fellowship-opportunity-for-tunisians-seeking-professional-experience-3-months/. The roles offered range from graphic designer, reporting and research assistant, graphic designer, project coordination, and administrative and finance.

- 4C staff would need to research and post a diverse set of "work experience" opportunities on the 4C portal to provide the necessary support for this program.

Benefits:
- Students will build soft skills through a "work experience" application process and the actual work experience, will help him/her obtain a full-time job upon graduation.
- Amounting work experience helps build a legitimate CV or resume for future employment.
- Having a formal and accredited "work experience" program will help build the network among universities, students, the 4Cs, and the private and public sector. When students intern, they represent their university, thereby, increasing the connection between the employer and the university. Secondly, the intern, fellow, or volunteer is increasing their network by meeting and working with people in a job.

Building the 4C Network

6. Multi-Stakeholder Engagement

Description

Multi-stakeholder dialogue includes communication through various media such as lectures, site visits, workshops, and panels that will increase the dialogue between organizations (private and public organizations, startups, incubators), professors, academic counselors, alumni, and university clubs. It is recommended that career events are centralized through the individual 4C. Additionally, the 4Cs should be educated on what kind of courses are offered at the university so that they can advise students on certain courses that will enhance their career path. It is recommended that the 4Cs engage with not only professors and academic counselors at universities, but also coordinate career-related activities with university and student clubs and leaders of those clubs.

Rationale

Multi-stakeholder dialogue is essential to increasing **information sharing and the network** in order to align students' career objectives, skills, and job opportunities. Increasing dialogue between the 4Cs and universities will ensure that university course curriculum is not only providing academic knowledge, but also the apprehension of skills that are pertinent for the job market. Furthermore, by increasing the dialogue and relationships with the private sector through career-related and networking events, the likelihood for funding the recommended Endowment Fund would increase.

Implementation

Multi-stakeholder dialogue can be enhanced through both formal and informal relationships. These relationships can also help create a foundation for funding requests or the collaboration of the private sector in events such as a job fair.

Initial Meeting- 4C Director and University Key Stakeholder: The 4C Manager should have an initial meeting with academic counselors, deans, and professors to understand each major's/program's course requirements and how this relates to the students' professional career. This dialogue will increase understanding of the extent to which courses are matching job requirements in the job market. This dialogue can also help prepare for conversations regarding accreditation for "work experience," detailed in the aforementioned "work experience" recommendation.

Regular Meetings: Quarterly meetings are recommended among the 4C Manager and the appropriate academic personnel to ensure discussions are continuing and progress is being made regarding any changes or improvements to the academic curriculum and/or 4C services. This would create an amenable environment for conversations such as suggesting bringing in guest speakers to regular accredited courses to enhance job market exposure.

Guest Speakers in the Classroom: It is recommended during dialogue with professors that EFE and the 4Cs advocate for increasing guest speakers in current courses. These guest speakers would be employed in the field related to the course. This would help introduce students to the job market and gain understanding of expectations within their desired field of expertise or give the student more of a clear idea what career they would like to pursue.

Building a Stakeholder List: Create a list of existing partners and potential partners in the region to collaborate with on events such as panel discussions and site visits. These partnerships can be formalized through partnership contracts or informally through career service events. To maximize time and effort, it is recommended that stakeholders with relevance to the student body majors and those who have a large network or networking capacity are prioritized.

Create Partnership Contracts: It is recommended that the 4Cs create a template of a formal partnership contract with organizations created and vetted through the appropriate personnel for approval.

Engage with the Tunisian Diaspora: Engaging with organizations that are composed of the Tunisian diaspora, but who are also engaged with Tunisian communities is recommended. These organizations can share knowledge having lived both in Tunisia and who are now employed abroad. For example, Tunisian American Young Professionals (TAYP) is a network of Tunisian American professionals whose mission is to create a "strong economic, social, and cultural relationship between Tunisia and the United States."[4] Their mission revolves around making new partnerships,

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[4] TAYP Website. https://www.tayp.org/

and they have an expansive network within and outside of Tunisia such as with the Mediterranean School of Business (MSB). As a partner, organizations like TAYP, could connect Tunisian Americans with Tunisians and this could contribute to an enhanced network.

Suggested Stakeholders: It is highly recommended that the 4Cs focus on increasing partnerships with CSOs and startups, particularly those with a mission to increase entrepreneurship and innovation. Many CSOs in Tunisia already have a large network covering a large geographic space; for example, CEED has partners in eleven regions in Tunisia. Startups such as KiHub in Kasserine, focus on social innovation and entrepreneurship and they are eager to collaborate with universities and the 4Cs to help increase employment. Incubators and co-working spaces such as Westerwelle Startup Haus have a large network of startups, which could be a resource for job opportunity listings and the organization could be a potential partner for networking events. Partnerships can be created with the help of university club leaders who are highly motivated to increase the network and knowledge about their specific field. These clubs can be the intermediary between the student body, CSOs, and private sector stakeholders. It is recommended that 4Cs, academic advisers, and university clubs are all involved in activities such as organizing a panel discussion or a site visit.

Marketing: The 4Cs could put more emphasis on marketing career-building service events that engage the private sector. If these events are marketed, this draws attention to the company and incentivizes engagement.

Costs and Benefits

Costs:
- Forming and maintaining engagement with many stakeholders will demand a significant amount of organization skills and time from the 4C Managers.
- Increasing multi-stakeholder dialogue may be easier in some regions than others. For example, Kasserine is small and it is easy to network, yet, they have a weak private sector; these dynamics must be considered. Engagement of the private sector must be pragmatic and strategic to the specific region.

Benefits:
- By increasing relationships and dialogues among the various stakeholders, 4Cs will have more opportunity to collaborate with partners in career-related activities and this will increase the likelihood of private sector funding. Organizations that have participated in cost-free events could be invited to collaborate with job fairs or networking events that typically are produced at a cost.
- Increasing the network can open discussions about knowledge sharing. For example, some of the organizations interviewed have created training models on building soft skills (i.e. public speaking) that have proved to be effective and distributed in a logical sequence.
- Increasing multi-stakeholder dialogue creates the ecosystem for social and organizational change, and problem-solving. For instance, a roundtable of academia and the 4C Managers can be an avenue for addressing the mismatch of skills among university students.

- Increasing private sector engagement, particularly through publicizing the event, can also lead to conversations about increasing the private sector's presence on the 4C portal.

7. Alumni Engagement

Description

Being involved with alumni is an important pillar to strengthen the interaction between students and employers. The alumni's role can be seen in multiple ways, for example as connections to help current students with skill-building. Alternatively, the 4Cs can also be a resource for alumni, therefore incentivizing the use of the career centers. This two-way function for alumni can be beneficial for current and past students.

Rationale

An important part of thinking of career trajectories for students is to be able to track and engage with students that have graduated. Soft advantages such as building reputation and allegiance to the university can serve as a big advantage in building the institution.

Implementation

Simple and inexpensive steps to engage alumni can be conducted:

Alumni Database: Regular surveys and the maintenance of databases can ensure that alumni are tracked. Once alumni contact details are consolidated, communication can be sent out in the form of newsletters, mass emails, and individual emails. Student volunteers can help track down these alumni if dedicated full-time staff cannot be assigned to this task due to capacity limits.

Dedicated Time for Alumni Engagement: Perhaps a day of the week or month dedicated to alumni can be set aside, for alumni to come and speak regarding their current job, how they were placed etc.

Alumni as Mentors: Based on the example of the career center in the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil, a special program for alumni can be implemented that encourages alumni to become mentors. This is in turn also useful for the alumni as they can hone their skills such as managing teams, leadership etc. that could be useful in their own careers.

Extending Services to Alumni: For alumni to be invested in the process of supporting current students, a program or initiative that engages alumni and provides services to them to support their careers can be developed. For example, continuing career counseling, job advertising are simple steps that can be taken to engage alumni.

Alumni as a Resource: The alumni can be a potential source of funding for the career centers. They can be asked to contribute annually to the functioning of the career centers, enabling them to have their independent funding.

Costs and Benefits:

Costs:
- Supporting activities that involve providing career counseling etc. for alumni may require special expertise and manpower that may be difficult to commit to with limited resources.
- To escape the cycle of poor job placement, the alumni that would be responsible for guiding current students would need to be of a certain proficiency level so that they are able to accurately guide students. In the beginning, this may be difficult to do as significant time may need to be spent to identify the kind of alumni that need to be engaged with. Therefore, it may initially be a cost to the 4C to have a small group that may not be as effective to begin with, and therefore yield less than desired results.

Benefits:
- With a large alumni network across 4C universities, having alumni as mentors or part of the services provided by 4Cs can increase the students reached significantly.
- Having alumni engage with students also provides an example for the services that the university provides to students in terms of career support even after they graduate.

IV. Conclusion

We have provided a roadmap below to serve as a guide regarding the timeline for these recommendations.

Roadmap to success (1/2)

Legend: Governance | Opportunities | Engagement | Enablers

Recommendation	Short term	Medium term	Long term
1 Staffing structure	Securing funding	Hire staff for 7 pilots	Hire staff for all 4Cs
2 Independent funding	Establish a legal framework for an endowment fund Engage a committee to design the fund's operational structure	Design operational structure and the statute rules	Begin fundraising, disbursing resources
3 M&E outcomes	Expand M&E to outputs and outcomes	Create monitoring structures at the regional level	
4 Digital tools	Develop digital platform	Roll out platform	Expand platform with new services
6 Accredited work experience	Create a proposal to universities in order to accredit "work experience"	Create Employer Recruitment Policy	List "work experience" opps. on the portal

Roadmap to success (2/2)

Legend: Governance | Opportunities | Engagement | Enablers

Recommendation	Short term	Medium term	Long term
11 Multi-stakeholder engagement	Meet to align on type of stakeholders Create list of stakeholders to engage with in career service activities	Create Formal Partnership Contracts with various organizations.	
13 Alumni engagement	Create simple alumni database to track alumni	Set up and allocate time slots for alumni-students interaction	Implement mentorship programs
PAR tool	Use simple Excel-based PAR tool created by Columbia	Contextualize the PAR for 4C network use on a digital platform	Allocate resources to work on the PAR
Enhancing online platforms	Actively update online platform and encourage for use with students	Encourage private orgs to use online platforms for recruitment	Place technical experts in the Ministry

To conclude, this report draws from extensive research vis-à-vis best career center practices and interviews with various Tunisian stakeholders in order to recommend strategies for improvement among the vast network of career centers in Tunisia. In order to address issues such as organizational structure and governance model, our team suggests implementing the following seven recommendations: ***Structuring Staff, Independent Funding, Monitoring & Evaluation, Enhancing Online Platforms, Accredited Work Experience, Multi-Stakeholder Engagement, and Alumni Engagement***. In addition to these seven recommendations, we recommend being vigilant and responsive to the ever-changing nature of the job market. Flexibility is key to succeeding in the current job market and should therefore be encouraged as much as possible among career centers and students. Career centers, specifically paid full-time employees, must study the job market(s) and project their findings to students through career services.

V. Appendix

Example of Training Modules for 4C Full-Time Employee Staff:

In the USAID Morocco Career Centers project, all staff receive comprehensive training on the following topics:

Initial Start-Up Training:

Module 1:   Introduction to the Career Center
Module 2:   Gaining Familiarity with Management Tools
Module 3:   Mastering IT tools
Module 4:   Basics of Communication
Module 5:   Communication Techniques
Module 6:   Mobilizing and Attracting Youth to the Career Center
Module 7:   The Youth Ambassadors Program
Module 8:   Preparing for the Career Center Launch
Module 9:   Understanding the Employment Ecosystem
Module 10:   Delivering Key Career Center Services
Module 11:   Managing a Career Center

Continuous Professional Development Training:
Module 1:   Assessment and Feedback One Month After Career Center Opening
Module 2:   Review of Theories and Pedagogies in Career Counseling
Module 3:   Review of Management and Communication Tools
Module 4:   Introduction to Private Sector Engagement (Part 1)
Module 5:   Preparation Of the Bi-Annual Review of Career Center Activities
Module 6:   Management of Internships and Job Officers

List of Interviews:

1. Thinkit (startup): Mhamed Bougsea, January 9 2020
2. Africinvest (Private sector): Khaled Ben Jilani, January 10 2020
3. Senda Gamra - HR Director: Orange, January 10 2020
4. Ministry of Higher Education: Amira Guermazi, January 13 2020
5. Majdi Hassen (CSO): IACE Director, January 13 2020
6. Ferihane Boussofara, 4C Coordinator: FSEGT (School of Economics Mgmt Tunis), January 14
7. Houda Ghozzi : Mediterranean School of Business, January 15 2020
8. Karim Zaghdane: Giz, January 15 2020
9. Farès Mabrouk (CSO) Yunus Social Business, January 16 2020
10. RBK (NGO): Tarek Chehidi, January, 16 2020
11. Ali Mnif (CSO): Silatech, January 16 2020
12. Driss Sayah: Advisor to the Minister of Education, January 15 2020
13. Abbey Walsh - Program Officer at Education For Employment Global (EFE-
14. Global) Washington, District Of Columbia

15. Grant Littke - Pennsylvania State University School of International Affair
16. Career Center Director Meg Heenehan - Director of the Office of Career Services at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University
17. Miriam Keep at FHI360
18. Nabil Jadiri - Project Manager at the USAID Morocco Career Center program at EFE
19. Sarah Little - Program Director at EFE Global (EFE-Global) Washington, District Of Columbia
20. Cyriel Pelletier - International Career Center and Employers Relations Manager, Sciences Po Paris
21. Vyas Sreenivas- Former Placement Committee Member, Institute of Rural Management Anand, India
22. Beralda Lima - Coordinator of the Career Development Center at Getulio Vargas Foundation of Rio de Janeiro, February 12, 2020
23. Tiago Ziruolo - Director of the Career Center of the University of São Paulo & Polytechnic School, February 20, 2020
24. International Institute of Debate (NGO): Elyes Guermazi, March 2020
25. International Institute of Debate (NGO): Iyed Hamadi, April 1 2020
26. Young Leaders Entrepreneurs (CSO): Ahlem Nasraoui, March 20, 2020
27. Westerwelle Startup (Startup): Nidhal Mahdi, March 30, 2020
28. KiHub (Incubator/Small Business): Wali Abaidi, March 30, 2020
29. CEED (NGO): Wafa Makhlouf, April 2, 2020
30. TAMSS (NGO): Mohamed Ben Yedder – Entrepreneurship Programs Director at TAMSS, March 30, 2020.
31. TAYP (Non-Profit Organization): Anis Mnif and Mahmoud Mamlouk, April 2, 2020
32. African Development Bank (Private Sector): Amineta Beye, March 24, 2020
33. Chifco (Private Sector): Amine Chouaieb, April 13, 2020
34. 4C at University of Jendouba (Public School): Hanen Rebhi, January 16 and April 15, 2020
35. 4C at University of Sfax (Public School): Mohamed Belhaj, April 16, 2020
36. Ecole Polytechnique de Tunisie (Private School): Marjène Rabah Gana, January 16 and April 16, 2020
37. Education for Employment Tunisie (Non-Profit Organization): Mohamed Hichem Dakhli, January 10 and April 24, 2020

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Summary of tabs

SurveyInput	Table to enter in information for each school surveyed. Some are continuous (e.g.: enter number of students), some are categorical (e.g.: enter 1 if center has an online platform)
Calc1	Calculates the median for each of the continuous variables
Calc2	Scales all the continuous scores onto a categorical scale Calculates the score for each category Weighs it by category
WeightsOutput	Reports total weighted scores by category Option to adjust weights

Instructions

1. First add a column for a new school to the right of the last one in the *SurveyInput* tab
2. Fill in the rows with answers for the new school you have added. Make sure to read the input instructions for each question Some questions require direct number responses, other reguire choosing a category
3. Add a column to the right of the last one on *Calc2* and copy the formula from the cells in the last column
4. Adjust the weights (if needed) on the *WeightsOutput* tab

Section	Sub-section	ID#	Question	Calculations	Scoring	Total possible
1. Governance	1.1 Organization structure and capacity	1.1a	How many students per professional staff? (ratio)	Ask and report: how many students do you have, how many employees?	Report number of students	3
		1.1b	Do you have specific employees dedicated to career advising?		2 = yes, alloted specifically for this 1 = yes, but they're doing other things too 0 = no	2
		1.1c	Do you have specific employees dedicated to managing relations with employers?		2 = yes, alloted specifically for this 1 = yes, but they're doing other things too 0 = no	2
		1.1d	Do any of your non-admin employees have previous experience in human resources or career centers prior to working for your career center?		1 = yes 0 = no	1
		1.1e	Do you provide trainings to your non-admin employees?		1 = yes 0 = no	1
	1.2 Alignment with policy objectives	1.2a	Do you have a mission statement?		1 = yes, 0 = no	1
	1.3 Performance Measurement: How well does the center monitor its service and performance?	1.3a	Is there a system for tracking employment among recent graduates?		1 = yes, 0 = no	2
		1.3b	Do you have a specific software for measuring employment outcomes?		1 = yes, 0 = no	1
		1.3c	Do you have a system for measuring student feedback?		1 = yes, 0 = no	1
	1.4 Flexibility of fundraising	1.4a	Do you have independence in increasing your budget allocations?		1 = yes, 0 = no	

2. Access to opportunities	2.1. Breadth of Impact: How many students would get their opportunities (internship, job, or interview) from the centers?	2.1a	Is there an internship program?		2 = mandatory 1 = voluntary basis 0 = no		2
		2.1b	How long, on average, does it take a student after graduation to obtain full-time employment?		3 = less than 6 months 2 = 6 months to a year 1 = 1-2 year 0 = more than 2 years		3
	2.2 Services	2.2a	Do you offer individual career advising sessions?		1 = yes, 0 = no		1
		2.2b	Do you offer individual resume reviews?		1 = yes, 0 = no		1
		2.2c	Does your affiliated university or your career center offer courses that address soft skills?		1 = yes, 0 = no		1
		2.2d	Do you have an online platform where these services mentioned above can be accessed?		1 = yes, 0 = no		1
	2.3 Networking: How well does the career services provide networking environments to students (Job Fair, Alumni Happy Hour…)?	2.3a	How many career panels do you hold per year?		Report actual number		3
		2.3b	How many site visits/information sessions do you hold per year?		Report actual number		3
		2.3c	How many job fairs do you hold per year?		Report actual number		3
		2.3b	How many student/alumni networking events do you hold per year?		Report actual number		3
		2.3c	How many civil society organizations are you in partnership with?		Report actual number		3

3.	**3.1 Students Participation**: Amount and quality level of student engagement	3.1a	Do you have a way to track how many students are		1 if yes, 0 if no		4
		3.1b	If yes, what percentage?		4 = 75-100% 3 = 50-75% 2 = 25-50% 1 = 0-25% 0 = not tracked		4
		3.1b	Does your center have a way for students to apply for employment through the career center (e.g. SIPALink)?		2 = yes, digitally, 1 = yes, manually 0 = no		2
	3.2 Alumni Participation: Amount and quality level of alumni engagement	3.2a	Are your alumni allowed to use your services after graduation?		1 = yes, 0 = no		1
		3.2b	Do you have a student/alumni mentorship program?		2 = yes, formally 1 = Yes, not formally		1
		3.2c	Do you have a way to track how many alumni are		1 = yes, 0 = no		1