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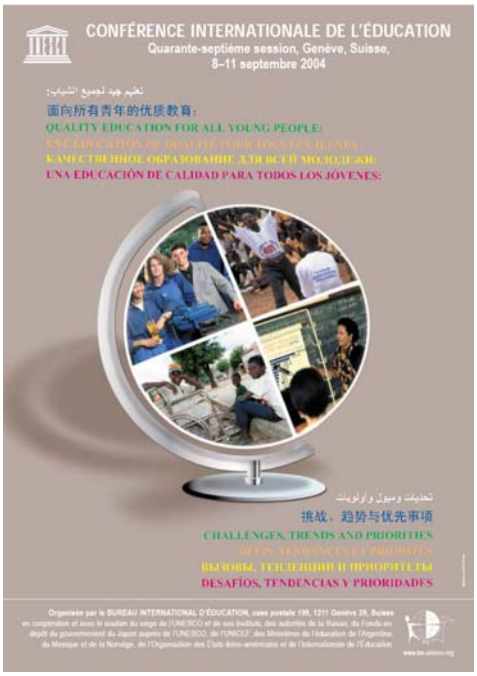
"QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE: CHALLENGES, TRENDS AND PRIORITIES"



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INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The 32nd session of the General Conference of UNESCO, in autumn 2003, gave to the International Bureau of Education the mandate "to organize, from 8 to 11 September 2004, the 47th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) of UNESCO, on the theme of *"Quality education for all young people: Challenges, trends and priorities"*, taking into account the positive experience acquired at the 46th session".

In his letter of invitation, the Director-General of UNESCO stresses the importance of this theme, *"given the major concern, across the world, for the education of young people from 12 to 18/20 years of age"*. This issue has become inseparable from that of Education for All which, in all evidence, *"cannot limit itself to primary education"*. As the Dakar Forum underlined, *"this must be seen as a minimum, not a ceiling. Democratic participation in social and economic development requires larger numbers of citizens with access to quality secondary-level education"*.

The issue of quality education for all young people is directly linked, on the one hand, to goals 3 and 6 of the Dakar Framework for Action and, on the other hand, to those of the Millenium Declaration, defined on 8 September 2000 by the General Assembly of the United Nations and which more specifically concern development and the eradication of poverty, the protection of our shared environment, human rights, democracy and good governance, the protection of vulnerable groups and meeting the special needs of Africa.

This issue has also been on the international agenda for several years. Some examples in this regard are: the meetings of experts organized under the auspices of UNESCO in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in 2000 or in Beijing (China) in 2001, the International Conference on Secondary Education in Muscat (Oman, 2002), the first Conference on Secondary Education in Africa (Kampala, Uganda, 2003) organized by the World Bank and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), or the meeting of the Ministers of Education of countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in March 2004 (Dublin, Ireland). All these meetings focused on secondary education access, equity and quality. The main outcomes of these meetings are presented in document ED/BIE/CONFINTED 47/Inf 1.

The 47th Session of ICE is also being held at a particularly favourable time since, echoing the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), the General Assembly (Resolution 57/254) proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development from 1 January 2005 and designated UNESCO as lead agency in charge of its promotion. This Decade aims to promote education as a building block of a more viable society for humanity and to integrate sustainable development into the education system at all levels. (cf. ED/BIE/CONFINTED 47/Inf 1).

In all contemporary thinking, it seems that the issue of education of young people aged 12 to 18/20 cannot be limited to formal secondary education, in the usual sense of the term. In comparison with other age groups, that of young people raises specific problems, particularly given that the education they acquire will be, for most of them, that of their "entry into life". As the Director-General of UNESCO highlighted at the Oman Conference in 2002, *"it is clear that secondary education not only must be expanded in response to increasing demand but also must be redefined, renewed and improved if it is to fulfil its assigned functions of preparing learners in both formal and non-formal settings for higher education, for the world of work and, perhaps most importantly, for responsible citizenship in a changing world. Priority should be given not only to the renovation of contents, methods and structures in secondary education, but also to the improved training of teachers and school leaders so that they can better perform their roles, including the provision of counselling and guidance to meet adolescents' needs"*.

The main **objectives** of the 47th session of the ICE are: (i) to **discuss in an open manner and in depth** the key issues related to **the quality of education for all young people**; (ii) to identify **consensual or controversial questions** and the **lessons to be learned** as regards educational policies; (iii) to stimulate and strengthen **international dialogue** on educational policies; (iv) to adopt a **Message to the World**, as well as (v) some **Conclusions** and **Proposals for Action** capable of developing capacities, both individual and, above all, collective, at the national and international levels, (vi) to **build** short- and long-term **views** on these questions so as to implement, across the world, **education policies better adapted** both to the individual and collective educational needs of young people and to the socio-economic realities at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

This document is a starting point whose priority aim is to « pioneer » the work of the International Conference on Education. It is therefore in a spirit of an exchange of information, dialogue, debate, and expressions of opinion (even controversial) and enrichment of thinking that the reader is invited to take this reference document.

Additional information (official documents, recommendations resulting from international meetings, etc.) is included in document ED/BIE/CONFINTED 47/Inf 1.

INTRODUCTION

At present, **half the world's population is less than 25 years of age**: the world has the largest generation of young people it has ever known. More than one billion human beings are between 15 and 24 years of age, and the majority of these live in the least developed countries. It is also the first generation of young people to grow up with HIV/AIDS. According to estimates of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in 2020, 87% of young people in the world will live in developing countries. Developed countries, for their part, will be faced with the demographic challenge of an ever-ageing population. What will be the consequences of such phenomena on the education systems of the North and the South? Is it conceivable, wherever one lives on the planet, to be able to face life and the challenges associated with globalization with schooling limited to elementary instruction, in the institutional form of primary education?

The first challenge to guarantee quality education for all young people is, therefore, to assure the right to continue their education beyond the primary level.

"After primary education, what?" This question was at the centre of debates of one of the strategy sessions organized during the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000). Making primary education universal (6 to 12/13 years of age) is only one step to meeting the challenge facing all societies. All the UNESCO Member States are faced with significant problems, in terms of access to and equity in education and in the training of adolescents and young people aged 12 to 18/20 years. However, the issue of the quality of this education is increasingly at the heart of these concerns. Young people, "*want solid education, not merely seats in schools where curriculum and teaching methods are out of date*"[1] and it does seem that existing models of formal secondary education are neither adapted to the reality of the beginning of the twenty-first century nor to the educational needs

[1] World Education Forum, 26-28 April 2000, *Final Report*. Paris, UNESCO, 2000, p. 31.

of the young. Here, the young mostly discover a universe of knowledge fragmented into many subjects (languages, mathematics, history, geography, natural sciences, social sciences, etc.). What do they really learn? And is that useful for entering into active life, the world of work and society?

Some questions on the education of young people are obviously not new and UNESCO, in particular, has been addressing these for several decades. Already in 1972, in its report *Learning to Be*, the International Commission on the Development of Education noted for example in the chapter '*Elements for contemporary strategies'*, that '*The concept of general education must be markedly broadened, so that it definitely includes general socio-economic, technical and practical knowledge*,'[2] or that '*Education should be dispensed and acquired through a multiplicity of means. The important thing is not the path an individual has followed, but what he has learned or acquired.*'[3] Some progress in the above directions has undoubtedly been made in the last thirty years or in the last decade but are not the following points still topical? "*To coin a phrase, 'secondary schools' cut rather a sorry figure in educational thinking. They are the target of considerable criticism and they provoke a considerable amount of frustration.*" [4] And yet, it is between the ages of 12 and 18/20 that the broad lines determining one's outlook on life are drawn, for each of us, for the rest of life.

The International Conference on Education provides an ideal context and opportunity to debate such questions and to look for solutions together. It is a unique forum—as a world conference of Education Ministers—not only for taking stock of concerns and problems but also to discover other promising practices, capable of stimulating the development of better adapted educational policies. In many countries—both in the North and in the South—there are new and innovative paths for reflection and action, as well as prospects of solutions worth sharing, communicating and appraising in terms of their transferability and adaptability to other contexts.

The purpose of this document aims to initiate an intense discussion, with the goal to broaden visions and to help in the conception of educational policies concerning young people that are better adapted to the realities of the beginning of the twenty-first century. It is organized according to the three axes indicated in the subtitle of the 47th session of the Conference: challenges, trends and priorities. It is the outcome of the ten most frequent reflections or questions resulting from the document of the General Presentation of 47th ICE, prepared by the IBE in co-operation with its Council and sent with the invitation letter of the Director-General of UNESCO. The document is, moreover, inseparable from the supporting documents for the debates (ED/BIE/CONFINTED/47 4) proposed for the four workshops, in which certain pedagogical dimensions of educational policies will be more specifically approached: (i) quality education and gender equality; (ii) quality education and social inclusion; (iii) quality education and competencies for life; (iv) quality education and the key role of those who, among the 60 million teachers around the world, work daily with young people.

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[2] E. Faure et al. *Learning to Be. The World of Education Today and Tomorrow*. Paris/London, UNESCO/Harrap, 1972, p. 194.
[3] Idem, p. 185.
[4] J. Delors et al. *Education: A Treasure Within, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century.* Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 1996, p. 26.

PART ONE

THE CHALLENGES OF EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BRING ABOUT GLOBALIZATION WITH A HUMAN FACE

The number of adolescents and young people finishing primary schooling is rising rapidly. The number of enrolments at secondary school level in the world has multiplied by more than ten over the last 50 years. Between 1990 and 2000, the gross enrolment rate at the secondary level grew, as a global average, from 56% to 77.5%, an increase of over 38%.[5] This phenomenon has developed concurrently with, on the one hand, major demographic growth in some regions of the world, specifically in poor regions and, on the other hand, with the conviction of millions of people for whom only secondary education can enable them to find work, to ensure a decent wage and to improve living conditions. Statistics have effectively shown a link between the level of educational achievement and that of development. In the 20 countries with "low human development" for which we have data, the average net enrolment rate at the secondary level in 2000-2001 grew by an average of 19% (with variations from 5% to 40%); in the 59 countries with "medium human development", this rate was 55% (with variations from 21% to 88%) whereas, in the 45 countries with "high human development", the average rate was 83% (with variations from 49% to 101%).[6] There are naturally, for a relevant number of population groups, **firm expectations** for every adolescent to continue to receive training in formal education – to develop all their talents, to live better, to rise out of poverty, to enter active life and to take part in development.

However, at the same time, there is growing **unease** in both rich and poor countries, in those structures catering to training the elite as in those for new social classes entering secondary education or even in the case of adolescents and young people who are not integrated into the education system. Loss of confidence goes hand in hand with a generally widespread perception of a drop in learning achievement of the beneficiaries of secondary education, in all the regions of the world. Even if this drop in learning achievement is not as marked as it may seem, and scientific studies are not available or even disputed, it seems that the education of young people, in the various forms of current secondary education, no longer meets sufficiently the needs of individuals and societies in any region of the world. This widespread unease, even if it varies considerably from one region and one group to another appears to be linked to the difficulty of defining and dealing with the highly diverse education needs of adolescents and young people in a world of growing interdependencies and inequalities, that are part of the globalization process.

In order to try to identify the current educational needs of adolescents and young people, the characteristics of this new era that is marked in particular by globalization must first of all be recognized; and equally as well the economic, cultural and political impacts of globalization and, especially, the challenges linked to the building of identities and the reconstruction of institutions.

The inertia of educational models remains very strong. These were constructed on the basis of presuppositions such as the priority of the role of the nation state, its capacity to create a fraternal society made up of people who share common values that have been inculcated or transmitted by literary works, and references to history. Although this model equally intends to prepare students to meet the needs of the labour market, this takes form by more and more unknown and less foreseeable manners. A fundamental issue weaves throughout the theme of the Conference: how to respond to the educational needs of young people at the beginning of the twenty-first century? In the end, who will define these needs and the strategies of response?

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5 *Global Monitoring Report on Education for All*. Paris, UNESCO, 2003, pp. 350-351.

6 From the 2003 *Global Human Development Report*. New York, UNDP, 2003, pp. 270-273.

The first part of this document retakes certain ideas and data related to globalisation, to its constituents and to the challenges of educating those in their adolescence and the early years of youth.

GLOBALIZATION: ITS CHARACTERISTICS, EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Globalization is a complex phenomenon with many facets and implications. The report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization (International Labour Organization, ILO, 2004) describes the main features of recent globalization.

1. Economic challenges and educational challenges

World trade has grown rapidly. Since 1980, the global environment has become far more conducive to the growth of *foreign direct investment* (FDI). The increase in the movement of FDI to developing countries has been rapid but selective: investment remains mostly concentrated in a dozen such countries and territories which all have young populations with high levels of schooling (China, Brazil, Mexico, Hong Kong/SAR of China, Singapore, Argentina, Malaysia, Bermuda, Chile, Thailand, Republic of Korea and Venezuela).

Investment has moreover changed in nature. With the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the fall in transport costs, production processes can easily be distributed across the world as businesses take advantage of differences in costs, factors and the most favourable investment conditions, which include the educational level and profile of the working population.

The rapid integration of *financial markets* in the last twenty years is certainly the most spectacular aspect of globalization. Capital mobility enabling financial transactions the world over 24 hours a day is driving labour flexibility and physical and virtual mobility.

Population movements are intensifying. There are currently at least 175 million “expatriates” in the world, that is, double the number in 1975 (International Organization for Migration, IOM, 2002). A significant proportion of these people are moving without a precise direction: from South to North but also from North to South. Some are what we can describe as genuine immigrants, seeking integration in the country of destination. Many others, however, are “nomad employment seekers” who want to earn a living in different countries too, with new reasons for moving, whilst hoping to maintain close ties with their country of origin where they have left their family, their children, their past and sometimes their future – and they send home one billion US dollars a year (IOM, 2002a).

The *technological revolution,* which has so facilitated globalization, developed in the industrialized countries, but its repercussions are felt throughout the global economy. It has modified international comparative advantages to a certain extent by making **knowledge a very important factor of production**. Activities requiring a high level of knowledge and using the latest technology have grown the most, and if countries wish to succeed in economic development, they must acquire the means to penetrate this sector and compete in it, which means, in particular, that they must increase investment in education, training and the dissemination of knowledge.

As in other fields, there are significant imbalances, particularly between the North and the South, with regard to access to knowledge and technology. Almost all new technologies come out of the North, which is where most research and development activity is concentrated. The same technology behind rapid economic globalization is also in more widespread use by governments, civil society and individuals. The Internet, e-mail, cheap international telephone calls, mobile telephones and electronic conferencing have enabled interconnections worldwide to multiply. An immense and rapidly growing stock of information is now available from anywhere on Earth with an Internet connection. Satellite television and the electronic media are creating a genuine fourth world power. At

the same time, **for the first time in human history, knowledge is changing faster than generations**. However, secondary education continues, as it always has, to teach knowledge as if it were permanent. Furthermore, the development of information technologies that are rapidly spreading a global culture, poses a challenge to the culture of secondary education, which is most often constructed around a body of national contents (literary references, national history and geography, etc.).

All of these changes are *interdependent*: they form a whole and are an increasingly strong influence on world market forces. A far-reaching change is affecting the role of the State and the behaviour of economic agents. The *global production system* is increasingly shaping the structure of commercial exchanges and FDI. The competition in which states are finding themselves, to attract capital, production sites and workplaces to their territory, takes place in new ways due to the existence and rapid development of information and communications technologies.

The advance of *economic doctrines* favouring the market in the last twenty years unquestionably played an essential role in laying the foundations for the emergence of globalization. The collapse of communism in Europe was a turning point. Suddenly, between 1989 and 1990, thirty more countries with some 400 million inhabitants joined the free market economy.

The emergence of global production systems which generate growing flows of FDI has created *new opportunities for growth and industrialization in developing countries*. Some 65,000 multinationals, with approximately 850,000 affiliated businesses, are the key agents of these systems. They coordinate global supply chains connecting businesses in different countries, even including local sub-contractors working outside the official production system and outsourcing work themselves to home workers. The growth of these global production systems has been particularly strong in high-tech industries (electronics, semi-conductors, and so on) and in the case of certain labour-intensive consumer goods (textiles, clothes, shoes). It is also significant in software development, call centres and financial services. Diverse models are possible:

- Parts and components are produced by branches of multinationals in developing countries. Most research and development and other tasks using sophisticated technology stay in the industrialized countries. High-tech industries operate according to this model; they have experienced the fastest growth and now represent the most important individual source of export of products manufactured in developing countries.

- In labour-intensive consumer goods industries, multinationals design the product, specify the quality and outsource production to local businesses in developing countries. Thus they control quality and production deadlines. A “tight flow” production system has been established in this way at the global level.

- In other cases, local production continue to exist, although non-articulated with international networks, but with uncertain prospects to be able to guarantee a better quality of life for the local populations.

The globalization process presents an unavoidable challenge to those who would influence educational processes and who must make crucial decisions concerning the education of young people. The challenge is to create capacities and develop knowledge with a view to enhancing human productivity.

What are the choices to take up this challenge? Do they actually exist or is it necessary to create new approaches? Should we base our idea of what constitutes quality education for young people according to a multi-track global economy?

Is there a basic training common to all the young people in the world, living in diverse economic conditions? Should we train young people for the place where they live and the local pace of development (country, province, town)? Or should we prepare them to be mobile?

Is a vision of education for young people toward world development with integration alternatives and broad cohesion possible? What could be the consequences of the various options?

2. Cultural and social challenges and education of young people

Globalization does not only exist in material and economic form. For a long time, it is the large traits of a culture that is becoming globalized, meaning a particular way of thinking, acting, behaving and organizing the world and what we usually call "modernity". The globalization of markets and technology is in itself a consequence that in turn is speeding up the dissemination of "modernity" and affecting the living conditions of the world's population.

All human societies are subject to change and in any cultural context the traditional is set against the new, the "modern". Nonetheless a particular process has developed since the sixteenth century: the emergence of a form of civilization that is acknowledged to be "modern" and which is characterized by certain features, such as the search for individual autonomy and equality in terms of rights and dignity, the importance of recourse to reason and rationality, the rationalization of human activities, the principle of free inquiry and free debate, modern science, and a focus on the future as opposed to the past, combined with a deep faith that nature can be worked, that individuals can be educated and society shaped.

Modernity is gaining ground, be it through the political, economic and/or military power that it gives to the groups and nations which adopt it, or by virtue of its attractiveness to human societies rooted in other cultures and civilizations and which, representing the overwhelming majority of the world's population, are all having to come to terms with it, particularly under the banner of development. Each society approaches modernity in its own way, with its own heritage, and by taking it on board, transforms it, with cultural and social consequences which may be creative or destructive but which are always very specific.

For its part, globalization adds opportunities to modernization, but also growing inequalities and risks: (i) a new world economic geography is emerging with a dynamic centre in some Asian countries; (ii) the initial advantages of the industrialized countries have been partially counterbalanced by losses for certain categories of workers; (iii) only a small number of developing countries have managed to increase exports and attract FDI; (iv) and the majority of the least developed countries (LDCs), most of them in sub-Saharan Africa, have not yet seen any benefits.

This extremely complex situation has been described recently as "the great disruption". The cultural capitals of various peoples, in the North and the South, are no longer geared to coping with risk, worry and inequality while other cultural capitals, rooted in ancient cultures and looking to the future, are destined to develop.

What are the needs of adolescents and young people today in terms of cultural capital for daily life and for the future? How can they acquire and build up this capital? What is the role of education in this process?

How far apart are the cultural capitals for young people in diverse areas of the world and the cultural capitals that are necessary for the future? Who can and must define the necessary traits of these cultural capitals? How can the world profit from certain cultural capitals from the South that are more promising for the future than often recognized, for example concerning the relationship between human beings and nature?

In the meantime, conflict continues. Between 1990 and 2001, there were 57 armed conflicts in 45 areas of the world. Within societies, violence and the desire to flee are increasing. References to the past of traditional societies and the future of modern societies are being replaced by the monopoly of the "present" as the time frame for human action. Increasingly, one finds groups of young people who do not attach much importance to their lives and their future living alongside groups that seek to take a stand in reducing inequalities and defending and promoting cultural diversity without prior models. Forced by the precarity of their social status or vulnerable because they have no hope, they are ready to become involved in endemic warfare and new forms of globalized terrorism.

Against this backdrop, the world is witnessing more than ever clashes between cultures, attempts to take over and reinterpret modernity, as well as spectacular and violent rejections of it, due to the renunciation, redefinition, redeployment and abandonment it inevitably brings in its wake. Although certain trends towards uniformity may be detected throughout the world, the future seems no less destined to produce a multitude of cultural hybrids and the reconstitution and blending of cultures and civilizations with modernity and among themselves. The process undoubtedly carries great risks with it since, unfortunately, no one can guarantee that globalized modernization or modernized globalization will not bring the world the wars and horror which marked twentieth-century history.

The current great disruption has even managed to call into question the very meaning of formal education for adolescents and young people, its value as a means of acceding to the world of work and contributing to sustainable development, to social cohesion and peace-building. Some researchers are even asking if the financial, organizational and family-related efforts for universal schooling in its current form, particularly beyond the primary level, are worth it. "Learning to want to live together", specifically, remains very difficult. Physical violence within schools is gaining ground, even in the case of young girls and in diverse situations. This could be said, in certain cases, to be a response to an education experienced, firstly, as too distant from the needs of adolescence and youth and which, secondly, is far from guaranteeing employment in the fastest growing sectors of both the global economy and local economies. In the poorest regions, particularly, education often seems far-removed from the possibilities of becoming a pillar of local development and global integration.

In order to alleviate the unequal impact of globalization, old and new skills are needed, as is the sharing of common contents and values such as solidarity, respect for human rights and diversity, and the desire to live together.

How can we move from the rhetorical definition of contents and values to a working definition that can orient policy and educational action, life in educational institutions and adaptation of the curriculum?

3. The challenge of building young people's identity in the context of globalization

The quality of young people's education is dependent on the quality of children's education. The capacity (and the inclination) to learn, self-instruction abilities, the search for and use of information, fully absorbed basic knowledge and attitudes of tolerance and respect for others are some of the goals of children's education in families, schools and communities. Nevertheless, it can also represent a second opportunity, after primary education, to not only learn more, but to learn better, to learn again, or to learn in another way.

Education for young people has several distinctive features. Over and above training for the world of work, social cohesion and peace, the question of identity-building arises at this age in a particularly forceful way and in a new setting.

The 12-18/20 age bracket can be characterized as a rather long transition between childhood – synonymous with dependence – and adulthood, supposed to be the age of independence. Marked by a series of biological and psychological changes, this period is also for adolescents and young people a time of maturing, completing their socialization and affirming their identity and uniqueness. Despite some common features, there is not just *one* category of young people but *several*, separated by differences in living conditions. Common sense tells us that they are different from adults, but young people also differ from each other, depending on the background from which they are endeavouring to break free and the environment which they are preparing to enter.

Human societies and cultures are ever more visible and present for each other, particularly through the media. In a space-time continuum which is simultaneously wider and more compressed, seemingly remote events are propagated with increasing immediacy, affecting at the same time all local contexts, as well as nation-states and regions. The reduction of spatial constraints and a new awareness of the world as a whole are relativizing individual, ethnic, racial and national reference points to a certain extent. Alongside the persistence of a system of national societies is the development of a greater awareness of humanity as a community of membership and of rights, reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and as a community of destiny, something suggested by the ecological metaphor for the planet, "humanity's spaceship". Moreover, the emergence of this awareness draws on and is expressed through the development of a large number of humanitarian non-governmental organizations and movements opposing or proposing alternative forms of globalization. An international civil society is thus taking shape, with intermingling and superposed networks, an objective ally of the system of societies.

In this process, the system for relating the individual with national societies as well as with humanity becomes bigger and more complex. This development leads in turn to a far-reaching "relativization" and a reconstruction of identity references, loyalties and citizenship with which all forms of education and in particular the school system in each country are confronted in a particular way.

> How do young people today construct their identities? What is the role of education in this process? Is the identity of young people linked to future projects that encompass work, family life and political participation? Are global trends apparent? Are similarities and differences linked to educational diversities or to other processes?

Certain sociological studies indicate that young people are increasingly drawn towards a consumer culture and transnational life-styles, which tends to detach them from their traditional heritage and culture. Although this could make them more open to the world, this "estrangement" of

people away from their historical roots could have explosive consequences in many regions of the world. For example, the increasing use of English as a universal language fosters communication worldwide, but could also contribute to the neglect of local languages by young people. Consequently, a major challenge to education for all is the expansion of individual capacities and possibilities of choice. In the case of young people, this expansion is closely linked to the strengthening of each person's identity, of which a major part of the process is constructed outside of educational institutions.

Should this process be respected or should an "educational counter-culture" be constructed, in the light of trends to attach priority to the present and to consumption, which would include ways of acting in the face of uncertainty? What is the impact of the dream images of a "developed world" presented to young people throughout the world?

Are the hypotheses concerning characteristics of youth globally and from each world region confirmed by empirical elements? What do we really know about the aspirations of young people to have an education of quality?

What are the possibilities and also limits of educating young people towards the construction of identities? What contents and values are of use in constructing the identities of young people? What identities?

How can education for a common destiny worldwide be reconciled with different identities? Can education provide a dual focus in the local cultural heritage and the opportunities made possible by globalization?

4. Political modernization: the globalization of the figure of the State as educator

When the United Nations was founded in 1945 it had forty-seven Member States; it now has approximately 200. Most of the recent members are new States resulting from decolonization. The product of European political history and an expression of modernity, the form of the territorial national State is now the major political structuring principle in the world. The State claims numerous monopolies, among which is maintenance of order (police and army), administration of criminal justice and, in most cases, regulation and organization of education for people up to 18/20 years old.

While the practical application of the modern State model is ongoing and varies considerably throughout the world, the degree to which school organization has been accomplished is very uneven. But at the same time it is already disputed. All States compete with each other in order to attract to their respective territories employment-generating capital and production sites. States and their institutions allotted to health, security, social services and education are also faced with an erosion of their domestic credibility and exposed to a crisis of confidence in democracy. Thus, everything which affects the State and its institutions also inevitably affects the education of young people.

National societies also vary greatly in terms of wealth and power. What should be noted, however, is that the globalization of the State and educational institutions on the Western model, two of the essential conditions for the recent increase in the globalization of markets, occurred before that increase or at the same time.

If this point is made here, it is because it is relatively easy to transport formal institutions and organizations from one world to another. But their use is invariably modulated by the prism of feelings, beliefs and customs in the hearts and minds of those who are required to live in them or operate them. In view of the incomplete state of this process, the question should now be asked

whether modernization and development policies have taken sufficiently into account this dimension of cultural confrontation and the very unequal distances which can separate different sections of populations from the main features of modernity, the model of the modern State and of educational institutions.

There is a global consensus on the fundamental role of the State in primary education. But must the State equally guarantee compulsory education for young people from 12 to 18/20 years of age? For what purpose? Can weakened and challenged national States at the same time finance educational institutions for all young people?

Over and above these questions, does education for young people today have to be the same everywhere in the world as the form that was invented in the West several centuries ago, e.g. lower and upper secondary schools, high schools, technical and vocational schools? What are the alternatives?

5. Globalization and sustainable development

For most observers, globalization is also embodied in the rapid progression of epidemics and a rather rapid depletion of resources such as fresh water, which was thought to be unlimited, as well as changes in ecological balance. As long ago as 1972, date of the United Nations Conference on the Environment, scientists have warned the international community of the fragility of our environment and the exhaustion of the world's natural resources. Since then, the international community has been seeking a difficult balance between preservation of the environment and economic development. Today, there are few aspects of the natural environment surrounding us that have not been affected by human activities. The external risks caused by nature (traditional risks) have been replaced by human-induced risks. We now fear nature less than what we have done to it. In the areas of natural resources (water, air, earth), climate change, and health (HIV/AIDS), we are forced to tackle the risks which are part of our daily lives. These human-induced risks are creating new responsibilities for individuals and governments (which must discover new forms of collaboration since they will not find solution to most of the problems within their frontiers) and require more active and relevant links with science and technology.

The environmental factors are exacerbated by a marked increase in the inequalities between countries and within each country. The average income of the twenty richest countries is now 37 times greater than that of the twenty poorest countries. This ratio has doubled over the last forty years, mainly because of the lack of adequate growth in the poorest countries. Poverty in a large part of the world contributes to environmental degradation. Between 1990 and 1999, the number of people living on just one dollar a day fell slightly in some regions of the world and rose in others. It is highly likely that, on a world scale, the "one-fifth" society will persist, dominated by the privileged fifth of the population who currently consume 80% of the resources.

Sustainable development and peace-building are the two major challenges affecting the welfare of persons and peoples now and in the future. In order to achieve these goals in a globalized world, fostering social cohesion and reducing inequalities within each country and between countries and regions of the world are vital strategic objectives. Education alone cannot address these problems, regardless of the financial, social, scientific and educational investment made by each country. But dovetailed and consistent public policies will only succeed in correcting the major imbalances in each society and each region if priority is given to education in a determined and continuous way. Education shapes people and communities. Education is the human and social driving force that can

change, in a lasting way, the face of each country and the face of the world. The countries that have known exceptional and "exemplary" development processes seem to have all wagered on education.

Sustainable development cannot be reduced to its economic and political dimensions: it is essential to take the cultural, social, ecological, humane and spiritual aspects into account, which makes the role of education all the more crucial (Human Development Report 2003, UNDP). To alleviate poverty and eliminate hunger, achieve education for all, increase the educational levels of young people and promote gender equality constitute some of the objectives that, according to UNDP, will enable progress to be made towards forms of sustainable development. For its part, the Report of the UNESCO General Conference Youth Forum (2003) places education for sustainable development, and also HIV/AIDS, at the forefront of the major challenges that concern young people worldwide and which require their direct participation.

Given the social changes worldwide and the new challenges of the "risk society", is not secondary education specifically challenged as regards its contributions to training for action (and no longer only as regards knowledge, diplomas and other more formal aspects)? In order to cope with the challenges, in view of their extent, their complexity, their vital character for the future of the world and their effects on everyday life, is not the first priority the construction of competencies for action and for substantial "civic" responsibility? What competencies? With what relations to increasingly transitory knowledge? And with which knowledge?

PART TWO

TRENDS IN EDUCATION AND THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A number of relatively strong trends may be identified with respect to the education of youth, their educational needs and their development. Other trends are linked to more widespread models of education for young people, in particular secondary education, technical and vocational training, as well as non-formal education.

1. The preoccupation with quality

The first trend is linked to the growing importance of issues related to the quality of education for all young people. It is not enough to guarantee access to formal educational opportunities for all young people. Certain provocative visions even cast doubt that the expansion of formal education is an adequate measure to guarantee quality education for all young people, if the educational options that are offered today to adolescents and young people from 12 to 18/20 years old are not changed resolutely in character.

The concept of quality is inherently multidimensional. It is partly linked to results and partly to objectives and components that intervene to reach these results. The forty-seventh session of the ICE has chosen to put in evidence two results, one objective, and certain components that influence the construction of quality education for all young people. The four ICE workshops centre around these issues, which are set out in the document drawn up to assist the discussions in the workshops (ED/BIE/CONFINTED/47/4).

Workshop 1 takes on the question of quality education for adolescents and young people, which should be evaluated in terms of its ability to guarantee gender equality, most particularly to allow

young girls to benefit from a secondary education. In many contexts, young girls marry very early and thus feel forced to abandon their education. In other educational contexts, stereotypes continue to be maintained. A good secondary education that is adapted to the needs of young people and of society contributes to the strengthening of a positive self-image, to social integration and to beneficial effects on the social, cultural and economic development of a country.

Quality should also be evaluated taking into account the ability to combat exclusion and promote **social cohesion** based on solid ethics and respect for others. Social exclusion is a growing phenomenon worldwide, which increasingly is affecting adolescents and young people, either directly or through a process of "shattered expectations". Millions of adolescents and young people feel excluded, even if they have been studying for a long time. Their reactions are diverse: violence, absenteeism, rejection of the adult world, drugs, suicide, xenophobia or fundamentalism. The subject of the second workshop will be the challenge of promoting social inclusion, indirectly through professional training, through the building of a shared imaginary construct, acknowledging diversity and social participation, and in relation with the structural and pedagogical factors in the education of young people.

The third workshop is devoted to the building of **competencies for life**. In a world where knowledge and technologies are being renewed at a growing speed and where the needs of young people should be the foundation of their education, there is a certain consensus in the existence of a very concrete challenge: to define the competencies that are necessary throughout life and to build these through education. These are not only competencies for daily life, at the local level and for a given time, but competencies for all of life, which will allow young people to integrate into the communities where they are living or other places or countries. However, without appropriate and up-to-date contents, or without a change in curriculum and other teaching materials, structures, institutional environments or in the mentality and capacities of actors to concretise a new vision for the education of young people, these competencies cannot be built.

Finally, there are new and sometimes contradictory tendencies in national and international debates that are reinstating the need and the **role of teachers**. On one side, some slightly iconoclastic views suggest that with good basic training or elementary instruction, and with the introduction of new technologies, the role of teachers could become less important. Others consider equally that teachers are massively conservative so are more brakes rather than motors towards quality education for all young people. On the other side, societies as a whole are putting more and more demands on teachers. Although they were often trained from the beginning to transmit knowledge, teachers are now expected to find solutions to other problems: fight against poverty, educate towards citizenship, prevent violence, promote social integration, train in the use of new technologies, and so on. Some interesting questions that will discussed in workshop 4 are: the "new professional teacher" and its evolution, recruitment, initial and in-service training, and the role of governments and professional associations.

However, there are other intrinsic and external dimensions in educational processes that influence the quality of education for young people, such as: the value accorded to education inside the community and political life of diverse contexts, the traditions of each culture, cooperation with families and the media, the existence of opportunities for social mobility and to improve the quality of life connected to education, the motivation of young people, the existence of peace or conflicts, economic growth or crisis. In certain cases the educational sector can guarantee certain conditions that favour quality education for all young people. In others, education alone is impotent and needs to be built on a framework with established minimum conditions.

How can we take into account the complexity of the quest for quality education for all adolescents and young people, and at the time set priorities for action? What are the most powerful levers? How can these be articulated?

2. Acknowledgement of educational needs as a motivation for change

The "reversal of perspectives", one of the main messages of the Jomtien Conference held in 1990 to promote a conception of basic education founded on educational needs rather than merely on supply, or even on demand, is another strong trend in the development of efforts towards an education for all young people worldwide.

In fact, during the last decades of the twentieth century, educational reforms were essentially centred on secondary education or vocational training. These educational modalities remain very important and deserve due attention. However, the offer-centred vision was not sufficient to find solutions where secondary education is universalised, or to propose alternatives where a growing number of young people are nearing the end of their elementary instruction or six-year primary education programmes.

The most frequent reforms, coming from offer-centred approaches, have consisted especially of extending compulsory schooling, or changing structures (number of years of study per level, selection and organization of courses, exam systems and study disciplines, coordination with businesses, and the degree of centralization or decentralization in decision making). These reforms do not seem to have succeeded in, among other things, giving back to adolescents and young people a sense to education or finding paths to solve the problems of selecting and organizing educational experiences. Furthermore, they have not realized an absolute consensual change in the role and profile of teachers for this age bracket; nor have they succeeded in coordinating educational experiences in a different way with communities and the world.

Moreover, certain reforms have been put in place at the demand of groups, economic or social, or of individuals possessing stronger voices. In an approach where the education of adolescents and young people is directed by voiced demands, the groups with weaker capacities to make demands are always at risk of being marginalized.

A synopsis of educational needs in the globalization age, coming from various reflections and diverse research, highlights four major groups: (i) guaranteeing the rudiments of education as a human right (reading, writing, arithmetic and possession of the necessary life skills); (ii) possessing the skills and knowledge for human productivity; (iii) developing individual capacities to allow for the expansion of choices; and (iv) building the capacity to strengthen human society through citizenship, justice, equity, peace and human values.

How can such diverse needs be faced? How can opportunities for quality education for all young people be offered to those who still have not yet benefited from fulfilment of their human right to a basic education? How can secondary education and vocational training be transformed so that the acquisition of the necessary abilities and knowledge for productivity, the expansion of choices and the strengthening of human society through citizenship, justice, equity, peace and human values are guaranteed?

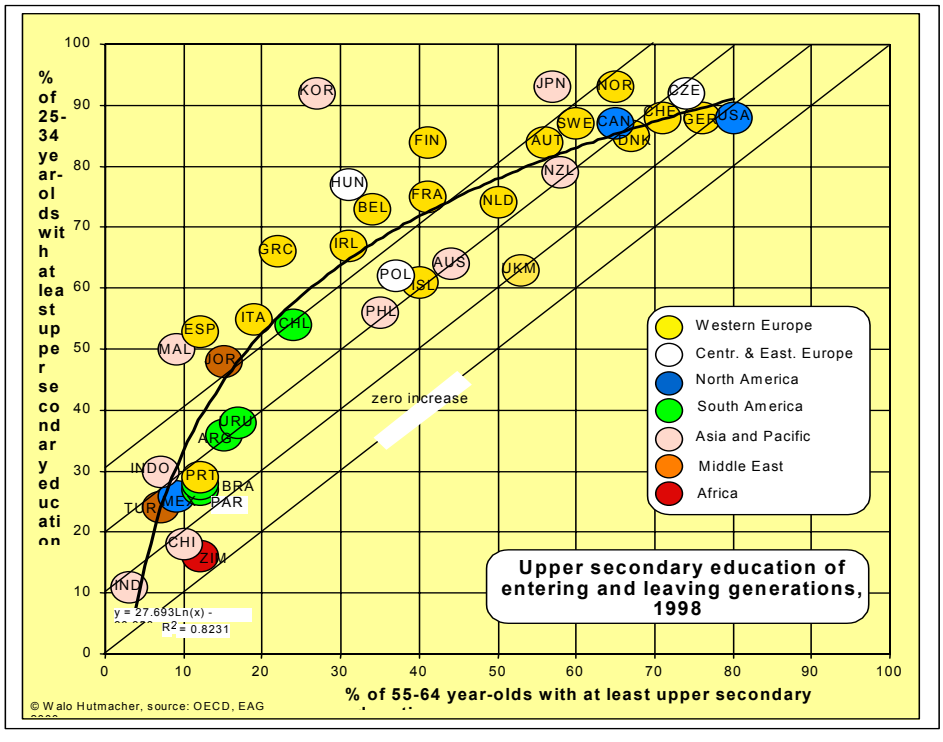
In general, some features of a recent study carried out by the IBE on the basis of national reports submitted by Member States at the last session of the ICE show that in the definition of general objectives in education, there is a high level of consensus on the concepts of "personal and emotional development", "equality", "national identity", "citizenship", "employability" and "democracy". In comparison with the 1980s, more and more importance tends to be given in the definition of national policies to objectives related to: (i) the recognition of education as a human right; (ii) the enhancement of individual skills and the expansion of choices; and (iii) the strengthening of human society.

Furthermore, another recent study, also based on documents submitted to the ICE at its 46th session, seems to indicate that globalization is seldom mentioned as one of the main reasons for curricular reform; the main reasons generally given are of a pedagogical nature.

> Without a profound understanding of globalization, its impacts and its short and long-term effects in each particular context, is it possible to attain quality education for all young people?

3. Raising the level of educational attainment and competitiveness

Despite the "pessimistic realism" that is essential when examining the situation of education in the world, studies show that the level of educational attainment is generally following an upward trend when the level attained by today's generation is compared with that of the previous generation. The chart below illustrates the overall configuration of competition in education. It shows some forty countries around the world and plots the role of the youngest (vertical axis) and the oldest (horizontal axis) active generations who have reached the level of upper secondary general or vocational education.[7]



7 These are countries that have participated in the World Education Indicators (WEI) project conducted jointly by the OECD and the World Bank, for which sufficiently reliable and comparable data are available on educational attainment, by age group, of the resident population (OECD, 2000).

These two generations broadly reflect the educational conditions prevailing in the various countries concerned during two periods thirty years apart. Most members of the younger generation are therefore the offspring of those belonging to the older generation. The latter were born between 1934 and 1943 and, in accordance with Western standards, reached the age to enter upper secondary education between 1949 and 1958, just after the Second World War. The younger generation was born between 1964 and 1973 and reached the age to begin post-compulsory secondary education between 1979 and 1988.

These data show that: (i) the number of years of schooling is rising everywhere; (ii) there is probably a general development trend in which the intergenerational increase is rather rapid initially, subsequently slowing and finally stagnating at around 90%; (iii) there are enormous differences between countries. Only rich countries clear the 60% threshold and therefore have an enormous advantage in competing on the international capital and labour markets, especially as the trend extends to tertiary education: the larger the number of young people completing secondary education, the larger the number who then go on to higher education.

The trend line, as adjusted, also points to the future. In the globalized world, the chances of a country retaining and attracting investments that increase the number of work places depend *inter alia* on the level of educational attainment of its workforce. Countries all over the world are consequently competing with each other on this variable, and they know it. The economy is not the only reason for raising the level of educational attainment, but all countries tend to do so, as just indicated, and in the very next generation the situation may be very different.

Will the extraordinary efforts made to date to provide formal secondary education (general or vocational) suffice in the future to ensure quality and enable new countries to join resolutely in a development track?

Under these conditions, will more years of schooling make a strong difference? But, if we accept that it is quality that will make the difference, do we have to improve educational quality for better competitiveness only?

4. Assessing learning achievement and international comparison

The concern of education officials to have at their disposal reliable assessments of pupils' achievement constitutes yet another strong trend at the national level and within the international community.

Unfortunately, no internationally comparable data are available to ascertain whether young people at school have learnt what they should learn, both to realize the right to education and to develop personally, participate in global productivity, and contribute to sustainable development and to living together in the world.

Partial indicators can nevertheless be found, which permit a number of observations to be made for particular countries or regions such as all the OECD countries, Latin America and some African countries.

The first finding is that, even in the industrialized OECD countries or in Latin America, young people in general, technical and vocational secondary education do not learn enough of what they are supposed to learn in terms of necessary skills for the twenty-first century. The well-known PISA study, carried out first in the OECD countries and then extended to a number of UNESCO's Member

States in various regions of the world, reveals major learning gaps among 15 year-olds in reading, mathematics and science, even in highly developed countries that invest a great deal in education. This type of study therefore contributes, on the one hand, to better knowledge of educational results but, on the other hand, it sometimes heightens the unease about education mentioned in the first part of this document.

The second finding is that, even if general, technical or vocational secondary education is essential for social inclusion, such training does not offset differences between families or, in many cases, linguistic and cultural disadvantages linked to immigration. The results of the international PISA study, national research works, entrance exams in many universities worldwide, the TIMMS study or others, show that adolescents from poorer families and the sons and daughters of immigrants have more difficulties in completing their studies and in performing well in the educational tracks that offer the best chances for social inclusion.

Nevertheless, some recent studies have also helped to show that, in some cases, when there is political will to promote change, secondary education appears to contribute to change when it is linked to society-wide demands. For example, studies on civic knowledge show that young people enrolled in secondary education in Central and Eastern European transition countries often have a better knowledge of the values and rules of democracy than young people enrolled in secondary education in some Western European countries. Other studies also show that if the objective is to change people's living conditions, great progress can be achieved. For example, the enrolment of girls in secondary education not only gives them access to knowledge but also often enables them to change their behaviour and protect themselves better, for example from HIV/AIDS or to avoid an early marriage or pregnancy. The benefits are thus felt much more widely in society and not just by the girls themselves.

New assessment studies on the learning achievement of adolescents and young people (in particular those aged 15 or 16 years) aim to measure acquired skills rather than only on accumulated information. They are applied in different contexts, but evaluate outcomes that ought to be similar. They have not yet been applied in the poorest countries of the world. Should the same studies be considered to find out more about the quality of what schooled young people learn? Should they perhaps also be applied to out-of-school youth? How can a better understanding be gained of the real level of young people's educational attainment in relation to the challenges of brining about globalization with a human face?

5. Reconsideration of financial investments in education

The question of educational costs is at the centre of often passionate and sometimes contradictory debates in all countries. For certain ones, education is (too) expensive. On the contrary, for others it is the best long-term investment a society can have. Even if it is not possible to establish an undisputable cause-effect relationship between the quantity of investment in and quality of education—given that certain States have reached better performances than others with less cost—quality education comes with a cost worldwide. This is illustrated in the document ED/BIE/CONFINTED/47/Inf 1, which includes references to the work that was carried out in the framework of the PISA survey (i.e. further results from PISA 2000) that was published by OECD and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

What can be observed in most countries is the trend towards the reconsideration of education investments, which is multiform. For example, there might be a quantitative decrease in education

investments overall, as a result of a deliberate political choice or fiscal pressure. It might also take the form of a reconsideration of the distribution of investments in the various sectors of the system.

The chart below shows trends in public education expenditure as a percentage of GDP in the various regions of the world from the 1990s[8].

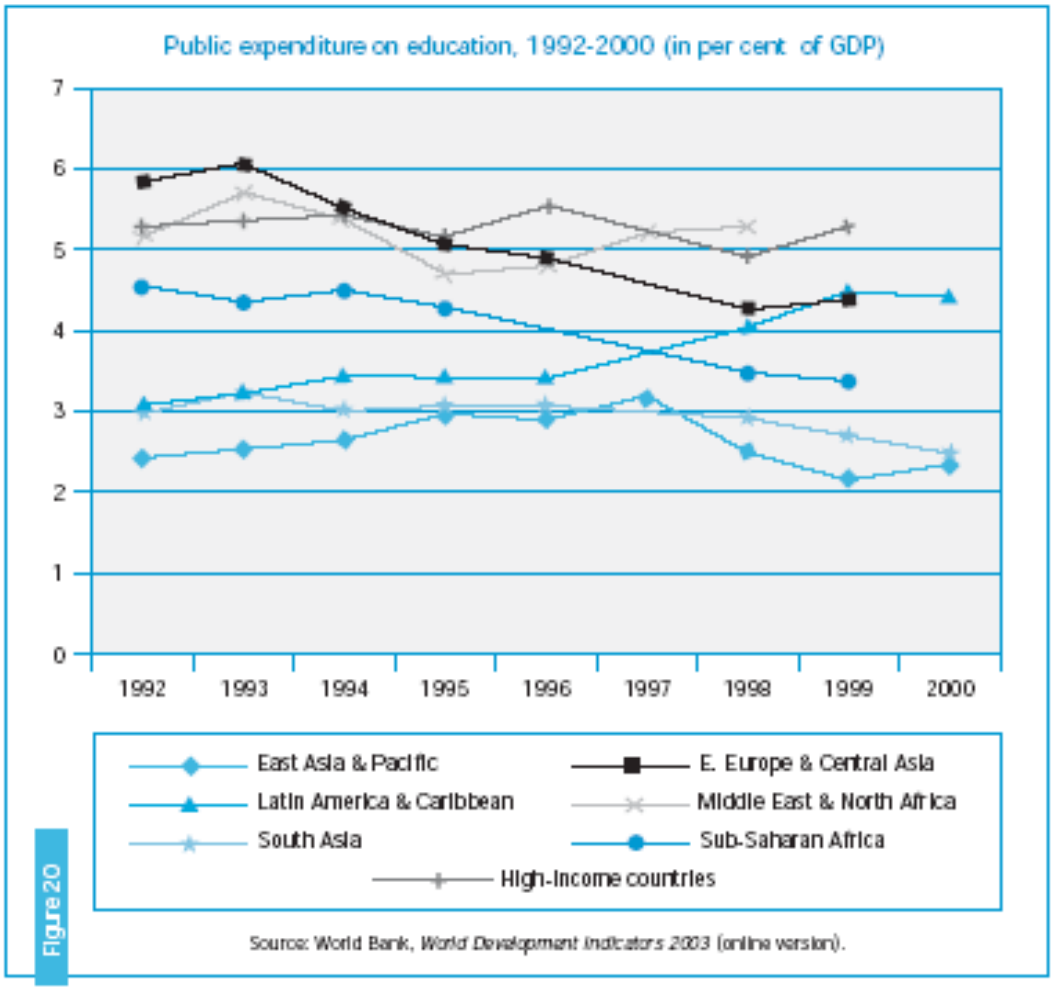


Figure 20

Apart from major interregional disparities (there is a threefold percentage difference), there has been near-general stagnation or even regression in several regions since the end of the decade.

How is the near-general stagnation of expenditure on education to be interpreted? In a global context where the demand for education for all seems to be interpreted as a demand for primary education for children, what are the consequences on the education of young people? Is it an educational policy choice dictated by the attainment of an adequate level of access to education with which countries might be satisfied? If so, how will it be possible to improve quality, which, as one knows, has a price?

Another hypothesis might be proposed. Countries and their governments face two constraints because of international competition. To attract capital and jobs, they must both reduce the tax burden

[8] This table is an extract from: "A JUST GLOBALIZATION – Creating opportunities for all". Final report of the Global Commission instituted by the International Labour Bureau (ILO). Geneva, ILO, 2004.

on businesses and wealth and raise the level of educational attainment of the new generations. This twin constraint explains at least part of the recent trend in educational policy debates. Education and training still seem to be given a high level of priority in policy. But the exacerbation of fiscal competition, together with the doctrine of reducing the role of the State, in turn reduces the State's capacity for action. In many cases, that has led to cuts in vital public expenditure in education, research and development, as well as health, social security, agricultural extension services and poverty reduction.

How can this dilemma between reducing fiscal expenses and improving quality, life-long education for all, be resolved? Are there national solutions or is it time to step into a more internationally dynamic phase regarding the objectives and strategies of education for all? Will education for all be reached country by country? Or only through an international strategy? Would such a strategy be possible and desirable? Or might it produce an unacceptable cultural impoverishment?

6. From national sovereignty to new international systems of governance?

Economic globalization has in fact shattered one of the foundations of the regulatory structure of twentieth century societies, the approximate superimposition of the sphere of the market economy on the sphere of democracy and politics. That superimposition enabled political processes to regulate to a certain extent the consequences of capitalism so as to promote equal conditions and social cohesion in nation-state contexts, including the expansion and definition of the quality of education, in general and that of youth in particular.

Economic forces now come into play worldwide, while politics, in particular democracy, remains confined primarily within national borders. Nevertheless, in the field of educational policy, international movements are increasingly deliberate and more consistent.

On the one hand, a world system has developed, embodied by the United Nations in particular and reflected in a large number of programmes, specialized agencies and bodies such as ILO, WHO, UNESCO, the World Bank, etc. This system for negotiation, consultation and competitive cooperation among nations obviously reflects the great inequalities of power in the world. It nonetheless also holds out hope for a great deal, and for a form of world government capable of regulating the at times excessively harmful consequences of the free-market economy to ensure equitable development of all countries and social cohesion worldwide.

There are pressures that prompt national governments and public powers to remain active in regulating the education of adolescents and young people, that is, in the defining of standards and monitoring. Rarely is the role of governments in defining the goals and objectives of quality education for all young people questioned. However, latent debates continue and there are differences of opinion on the way in which governments should define the goals and objectives of this education.

Should we continue to do this on an individual basis, as in the period of nation-states with "firm" frontiers or should we consider doing this in a more cooperative manner?

Is it possible to define desired global "standards" of knowledge or skills? On the other hand, is it politically and socially acceptable, in order to achieve globalization with a human face, to contemplate defining skills for different groups or categories of countries (developed/developing, rich/poor, etc.)?

Can knowledge acquired be assessed in terms of a concept and universal values that characterize the quality of education for all adolescents and young people? Is this desirable? Faced with the planet-wide challenges of poverty, environmental damage, social cohesion or peace-building, is it reasonable to think that any country can go it alone?

More generally, is it necessary and desirable to envisage international mechanisms for educational governance?

How are these questions specified in the case of pre-vocational or vocational training in a multi-track world, with increasing populations who are in movement, either searching for work or responding to a demand for workers from abroad?

PART THREE

SIX PROPOSED PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The third goal of the Framework for Action adopted at Dakar is to ensure "*that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes*".[98] What are the priority strategies that can help to guarantee quality education for all young people from 12 to 18/20 years of age?

The forty-seventh session of the ICE should provide an opportunity to discuss some of the priority strategies that should be implemented to promote quality education for all young people at the national level and at the regional or international level. This last section of the document proposes some priority lines for action that are likely to help to reach this goal.

1. Promoting the consideration of the fundamental educational needs of young people in light of the challenges of bringing about globalisation with a human face

Education for all young people is not an objective but a personal development strategy for each individual, as well as a human, social and economic development strategy in the short and long-term, sustainable and on a worldwide scale. Without relevant education for all young people, the efforts made towards education for all children would risk being cancelled out or less fruitful. Education of young people links children's education with scientific, technological and economic development, and the governing of each country and of the world.

Adolescents between ages 12 to 18/20 hold ambitions for personal development as well as social insertion, and live with the anguishing possibility of not realizing them. They wish to advance in the process of building their identity as independent and integrated persons, as workers and citizens with full rights, and as pillars of their families. Too many adolescents seem to reject certain values and knowledge of adult society and its institutions. They could even have valid reasons for this. On their side, adults seem not to know young people well enough to recognize the links between the needs of youth with the social challenges and the knowledge and know-how that are available in adult society.

General secondary education establishments sometimes have trouble in attracting young peoples' attention to certain fields of human activity that are important to the future of the planet, such

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9 World Education Forum, Final Report. Paris, UNESCO, 2000.

as life and earth sciences, physics or other subjects which contribute to rigorous intellectual training, abstract thinking and solving new problems. Occasionally they refuse to refer to the past and to history or to be open to the world. This situation poses serious risks to the social fabric.

The question of whether an education that aims only towards the acquisition of reading, writing, arithmetic and life skills can be considered as quality education for all young people, is the topic of numerous debates. In industrialized countries of the world that participate in a knowledge-based economy, there is a growing tendency to define the education of young people above all as one that is centred on developing abstraction capacities and other methods of thinking and working (learning to learn). However, quality education also has other more qualitative and global components. Such a conception is not incompatible with an education that is oriented towards basic skills (reading, writing, arithmetic and life skills). Actually they are complementary. Further, quality education is integrative as it satisfies the learning needs of the student. It values the diverse experiences brought by adolescents. Its content is re-examined in light of world changes and uses current events to create links between subject disciplines (chemistry, physics, geography, etc.). Its teachers are trained and capable in using student-centred methods. The physical and intellectual environment should assure security for the learners; concerning this matter, it is particularly important to take into account questions regarding violence in schools and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Moreover, quality education assumes efficient systems of administration and management, implementation of good policies, an appropriate legislative framework and sufficient resources.

Nevertheless, it does not yet seem clear enough how the vision of quality education for all young people can be expanded and concretized without falling back into formal models that were created for past and outdated times. This underlines the importance of the debates of the forty-seventh ICE. But these debates must be based on a solid conception of the needs of adolescents and young people. It seems important therefore to draw upon research that can shed better light on the educational needs of all young people, in all countries of the world, to bring about globalisation with a human face and sustainable development.

2. Rethinking the management of change

Training institutions for adolescents and young people are being redefined all over the world. Still, even if there is no doubt about the need for changing educational contents, teaching methods, school life and the profile of trainers, it would prove to be difficult to define the path for these changes if there is not at the same time a process of re-inventing models of education for young people and adolescents. The countries of the North and the South address the future of schools in radically different terms owing to unequal resources and also for cultural reasons. Western countries are grappling with the legacy of their own history during which the various structural and cultural components of modernity that provide the framework for the school education model developed concurrently.

In building their education systems, other countries have started by merely “copying and pasting” Western models. Apart from the often-prohibitive costs, however, they had to contend very soon with the cultural and structural differences between their societies and Western models of both State and school. Lacking alternatives, several countries faced with a growing number of young people completing primary education (five or six years) are investing more in increasing the number of lower and upper secondary schools and community colleges. Now that “traditional and technical” secondary education is being called into question in several developed countries, such schools are being established or increased in number in the countries of the South. Even though “good policies” and “good practices” are being implemented everywhere to some degree, they are not well known and

there has not been adequate reflection on their value in contexts other than those in which they were devised.

Developed countries today are faced with the end of the industrial model and are moving towards a post-industrial society, also known as a "knowledge society". A new standard based on an economics concept of quality has emerged there recently, transforming education policy from traditional management by inputs to management that is geared more to outputs and economic, social and, incidentally, cultural outcomes.

The status of the education of adolescents and young people is in certain cases changing from that of a public good to a private good, as schools are perceived more as providing an educational service from which individuals benefit before the community. The role of public authorities then is called into question. Should the State continue to be both a regulator and provider of educational services? In any event, the traditional management of educational opportunities for young people is being called into question, even more strongly than the schooling of children, as are the objectives, rules of the educational game, curricula and their constant transformation.

Countries that are on the road to development, but also developed countries face the issue of change management too. For all countries, change management will entail *inter alia* a strong information, discussion and debate campaign and, consequently, an in-depth review of educational authorities' traditional communication strategies and methods. International platforms such as UNESCO, other international organizations and regional organizations such as OEI (Organización de los Estados Iberamericanos) or SACMEQ (Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality) have a strategic role to play in this regard.

3. Innovating in the framework of existing educational models

Education systems are complex realities subject to all kinds of pressure and to internal and external resistance. Their development or transformation is therefore often slow and difficult and it would be illusory to imagine their radical transformation in the very short term. Taking a realistic view, all countries will undoubtedly have to continue to manage existing systems and to improve them gradually. As lasting solutions are not likely in the short term, a central question concerns the crucial role that educational innovations should play in bringing about permanent change.

Reflections, guidelines and action plans abound in this field. Their main points, formulated at recent international meetings that have been held in particular under UNESCO's auspices, can be found in document ED/IBE/CONFINTED/47 Inf.1. Most of those guidelines are still fully valid, and it is extremely difficult to propose a synthesis. It is also very difficult to offer differentiated proposals for each type of educational opportunity throughout the world. Still, and with the unique purpose to facilitate dialogue during the Conference, certain challenges can be identified with nuances for each type of opportunity. These mainly concern: education for the excluded, the last years of compulsory schooling, general secondary education, and vocational training.

In the case of adolescents and young people who have been excluded from possibilities of elementary instruction, their reintegration into the education system should guarantee that: (i) educational opportunities are appropriate to their age; (ii) teaching and learning methods take their life experience into account; (iii) contents are relevant to their future, but also to their daily life; (iv) school life takes into consideration possibilities and limits due to family obligations, work, and civil participation; (v) teachers have training adapted to the needs of these groups; and (vi) much importance is devoted to academic and vocational guidance.

In the case of Years Seven to Nine in the schooling process, which are often the last years of compulsory schooling, it seems most important to guarantee that: (i) the basic competencies are strengthened; (ii) teaching and learning methods continue to be active; (iii) contents are at the same time representative of the knowledge and know-how deemed important by the State, and the needs and interests of adolescents and young people; (iv) school life fosters self-esteem as a prerequisite for knowing others and "living together in peace"; and (v) teachers become active partners in learning, which is holistic, active, and linked to community life as well as the world.

In the case of Years Ten to Twelve or Thirteen in the schooling process, which usually comprises upper secondary education, it seems of highest priority to guarantee that: (i) the strengthening of basic competencies are continued and are not suffocated by the accumulation and memorization of fragmented bits of information; (iii) learning experiences include increasingly intensive project work that relate to the needs of the community and also of the young person; (iii) contents are up-to-date and linked to their history and practical application; (iv) young people participate more and more in decision-making on school life; and (v) teachers are capable of motivating young people to want to learn and to undertake disciplinary knowledge (languages, mathematics, sciences, etc.) but even beyond, and with an interdisciplinary perspective.

In the case of vocational training, a whole spectrum of priorities could be mentioned, among which are: (i) to guarantee a basic training that is sufficiently broad, and to avoid specialization too early on; (ii) to guarantee a practical training that provides continuity between developing fundamental skills and becoming open to conceptualisation and innovation; (iii) to link specific skills to contents; (iv) to provide opportunities for "learning to do", and also learning to start up projects; and (v) to facilitate contact with trainers who have significant professional experience.

4. Building a new long-term vision

Families, communities and public authorities continue to make substantial efforts to maintain the schooling process for increasingly longer periods, that is, beyond primary school. The question that arises is whether this schooling should take place in the types of institutions invented and "systematized" in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, based on even older models, such as the Greek model and the Medieval faculty of arts.

Education systems as we know them today were established and developed in an environment characterized by seemingly stable national economies and States, a still large rural population and relatively limited and homogenous demands for democratization. Current requirements are both more global and diverse, and family and communication and information structures are completely different.

The question of whether this type of functioning is viable in the long run may rightly be asked. The analysis in this document of the state of developments in the world and of the role of education systems in meeting the educational needs of young people to enable them to take part in life, participate in sustainable development and build a more human world, suggests that it is not. Many observers consider that a "new paradigm" is needed for education in the world since it would appear that, continuing along current lines, the problem really lies in the solution. Continuing to do "more of the same", even though there might be improvements, might be self-defeating. The results of recent research could no doubt make an interesting contribution to the construction of a long-term vision, for

[9] World Education Forum. *Final Report*. Paris, UNESCO, 2000.

example, one that identified a certain number of scenarios for the future. The work of the OECD/Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), namely, is a stimulating initiative.

Following its work at a forum organized during its fiftieth session in January 2003, the Council of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO singled out some elements of a desirable educational scenario on a global scale. This scenario takes globalisation into account but associates the utopia of a knowledge society and of a network society. It also has free circulation of cultural and educational goods and services. In such a scenario, it is not enough to change each learning establishment. Each has to be linked to other establishments, to surrounding institutions and to systems of governance.

In diverse prospective exercises carried out at the ministerial level with representatives from African and Asian countries, the emphasis was placed on the need for all educational institutions, such as those intended for adolescents and young people, to coordinate with the communities. This is inarguably a necessary, though not sufficient, condition to improve the quality of education offered by a given institution. As a unit, an educational institution is too small and sometimes too fragile to anticipate making all the necessary changes with regards to knowledge, production, and social, familial and personal life. Diverse types of establishments, which coordinate between themselves, are well informed and led with consideration of empirical knowledge and clear analysis, and that participate in exchanges will always be stronger than isolated units.

5. Integrating education policies for young people into an intersectoral, partnership policy

It is estimated that the long term economic impact of one additional year of education in the most developed countries of the world can rise up to 6% of the total production. Furthermore, this impact is not automatic or guaranteed.

At the occasion of the forty-sixth ICE, it was remarked that throughout the twentieth century, more than 180 million people died as victims of crimes that were committed by people who had spent a large part of their lives in education systems in poor or rich countries.

Education cannot, on its own, ensure economic development, cohesion of the social fabric and the construction of peace, whatever the financial, social, scientific and educational investment of each country. In certain cases, it can even contribute to the emergence of conflict, for example in totalitarian regimes and in the case of terrorist movements. The economic and social benefits of education depend above all on the quality of education that is offered. Such quality, though, depends on the existence of coordinated and well-grounded public policies that will only effectively resolve the major imbalances in each society and region if **priority** is given deliberately and continuously to **education, and equally for adolescents and young people**. Education must be the business of all, and of the entire government in particular, and it seems that only a comprehensive inter-ministerial policy can be effective.

In many countries, genuine political dialogue has been established in which partnerships are both the outcome of and the lever for dialogue. In addition to the usual social partners, this increasingly involves **the whole of civil society**, which also plays a decisive role in the formation of social, human and ecological capital. The development of civil society is reflected in the growing number and diversity of associations and non-governmental organizations, the strengthening of their

role in the cultural life of societies, and in the new relations between the cultural, economic and political spheres.

Other partnerships are growing in importance in the education of young people. The media, for instance, are playing a greater role not only as a means of communication but as agents in education systems. The media, in particular television, take up much space and time in young people's lives and play a decisive role in their socialization. The producers of teaching materials, educational programmes and content on the Internet, families and students themselves should be considered fully-fledged partners.

Given the importance ascribed in secondary education to integration into the professional world, businesses and the economic world in general should also become one of the most important partners. The same should hold for the entire non-formal and informal education sector.

The questions raised today no longer really concern recognition as such of all these partners or of their legitimacy, but rather recognition of their productive and creative linkages in a system of good governance. How can conditions and methodologies for dialogue and action be created in order to form a virtuous circle among all those involved in educating teenagers and young people? How can these partnerships be implemented and managed on a day-to-day basis?

There are no easy answers or models that are ready-to-use (or to export). It is not enough, however, to "believe" in partnerships, issue announcements on them or assert their importance. Their success depends on a number of necessary conditions, such as: proximity of the educational community and the partners' relevance and legitimacy; mutual trust and effective practice of democracy; reciprocal political will of all partners; clear definition of the roles of all those involved; structures for dialogue, concerted action and management, "interfaces"; time needed for concerted action; effective information and public relations policies.

Some strategic tools may also assist in this endeavour. Charters, covenants and cooperation agreements are, for example, tools that make it possible to adopt long- and medium-term strategies, as the target social and educational transformations are not compatible with the duration of political terms of office (and discontinuity is often dictated by political considerations). The Declaration and the Millenium Goals adopted by the United Nations, and the educational charters and strategic plans drawn up by some countries are examples of strategic tools for ambitious partnerships. They do not always give rise to unanimity or broad consensus, but they do act as clear and shared agreements and commitments accepted by all partners.

6. Strengthening the mobilization of the international community

International partnerships, together with those of the various national actors, are indispensable for securing quality education for all young people. When it adopted the Dakar Framework for Action, the international community affirmed that *"no countries seriously committed to Education for All will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by lack of resources"*.[10] However, funding for quality education for all young people is still under-resourced. Despite the recent announcement of an increase in international aid provided by the industrialized countries, the effort is still insufficient to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Current levels of aid will have to be practically doubled if the Goals are to be attained. Most bilateral donors have set themselves the goal of contributing 0.7% of their gross domestic product to development aid. Most of them, however, with the notable exception of the Nordic countries, have not managed to do so. Between 1990 and 1997,

[10] World Education Forum. *Final Report*. Paris, UNESCO, 2000.

aid for education from bilateral sources actually fell (from US$3.64 billion to US$3.55 billion in current terms). Furthermore, available resources are allocated as a priority to primary education or non-formal education. Some countries often continue to invest, proportionally, considerably more in higher education than in secondary education, which as a result still seems to be the "poor relative" in education systems, in addition to preschool and adult education.

It may also be considered that the mobilization of the international community should not be confined to funding education for young people. It should in particular play a role in advocating, driving, supporting, encouraging and monitoring education policies.

It is up to beneficiary countries to design and manage their strategies to attain educational goals. Aid should be results-based and defined on the basis of expertise in national proposals, follow-up action and careful evaluation and verification of educational programmes. Donors should also improve the coordination of the support provided for national education policies. In many countries, foreign aid is needed most in order to strengthen policies and institutions, in other words, to reforming governance. Building up capacities to "reflect on and organize education" should be a priority for development aid, but should not, however, account for the lion's share of allocated funding.

The traditional method of sending foreign experts to train nationals of beneficiary countries may curtail opportunities to strengthen local expertise. Likewise, sending people from the South to train for a diploma abroad may quite simply increase the brain drain. It would seem that aid for the education sector may be more effective if it enables beneficiary countries to manage their own education systems and does not tie them to the geopolitical interests of funding bodies. Development aid to the education sector today should aim to develop human resources so that the improvement of education conditions will be sustainable.

Thus, at the global level, more solid partnerships are needed to lessen inequalities in the world; the effectiveness of international cooperation is being questioned today, as stressed in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report 2003. It remains to find out what mechanisms may yet be promoted, developed or invented to ensure effective international cooperation in the education sector.

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This forty-seventh session of the International Conference on Education could be a new step towards strengthened, deepened and renewed dialogue on all these questions, which are crucial to the future of the planet. In fact, while prime responsibility lies with each individual State, there is also international responsibility for improving the quality of education for young people all over the world.