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**“QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE:
CHALLENGES, TRENDS AND PRIORITIES”**



DOCUMENT TO ASSIST THE DISCUSSIONS DURING THE FOUR WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOP 1

Quality Education and Gender Equality

Co-organization and financing: UNICEF

Participants in the panel and moderator: list will be distributed during the Conference

Discussion Paper: UNICEF

Additional Paper: UNICEF

This document will soon be available from the ICE site: www.ibe.unesco.org
(Organization/workshops).



WORKSHOP 1

Quality Education and Gender Equality

Introductory videos:

Workshop 1 A : « *FAWE Girls' School Project* » (Rwanda)

Recently inaugurated, the FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists) Girls' School is a unique initiative of FAWE Rwanda. The project aims at fostering girls' education at the secondary level through a holistic approach. Special emphasis is placed on the teaching of science, technology, languages and life-skills. This film introduces Winnie, a student from the Girls' School, who takes the viewer on a tour through the various facets of this project that has already started to make a strong impact on the lives of many girls.

Workshop 1 B: « *GEM: an initiative towards girls' education* » (Uganda)

The Girls Education Movement (GEM) is an African-wide, child-centred project launched by UNICEF in 2001 that aims at empowering girls and ensuring their educational opportunities. This film introduces the FAWE project in Uganda through the story of Edita, a student who was brought back to school thanks to the movement's initiative. Some GEM strategies and actions that have proven thus far to be successful in promoting girls' education are also featured in the video.

Discussion Paper

1. All countries in the world are contending, to different degrees, with problems of gender inequality, and education is often regarded as one of the principal tools for tackling this problem. In most countries, women and girls are disadvantaged, compared to men and boys, as regards access to social goods and services as well as influence and control over decision-making processes and social/political institutions that determine quality of life. This is true within families and households, as well as within the local community and at the national level. As opportunities for female advancement in education increase, countries tend to become more successful in addressing the problem of gender inequality in society. As such, the design and implementation of quality education programmes has implications for progress in the area of gender equity. This workshop will explore some of the links between quality education and gender equity in order to throw light on what needs to be done in terms of policies, strategies and investment choices in education.

(A) Linking Equity to Quality Education and Investment Choices

2. The critical importance of gender equity for development is reflected in the high priority given to it in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Dakar goals set for Education for All (EFA). However gender equity in education is an imperative that goes beyond its importance or usefulness for development. It is essentially a human rights issue and goes to the heart of what quality education should be about. If education is a basic human right then quality education should promote equity and not perpetuate

structural inequalities, forms of discrimination or existing disparities. It is therefore unfortunate that the debate on gender parity and equity in education tends to be focused mainly on access, and that analysis of quality in education often does not include gender parity/equity as one of the main indicators of quality.

Q1. Should gender equity be one of the indicators of quality in education? If so, how can this concept be made an integral part of education assessment and evaluation?

3. While all countries have a problem of gender inequity, the issue is particularly acute in the developing countries because of low levels of female participation in education as well as other deep-rooted forms of gender bias and discrimination in society. As a result, women and girls constitute the great majority of illiterate adults and youths in these developing countries. This is a compounding factor, since research shows consistently that level of education of mothers is a major determinant of schooling for the children. The danger then is that with such a high population of illiterate female adults, children will be less likely to enroll or complete a course of quality basic education with satisfactory performance. It is in this sense that adult basic education and literacy (ABEL) becomes a vital investment (especially for women) if the cycle of illiteracy, ignorance and poverty is to be broken. In terms of education as a human right it can be argued that parents have a duty to ensure that their children can access, attend, and satisfactorily complete a course of quality basic education. However if parents are themselves illiterate then they are not in a position to fulfill their obligations to their children as regards the right to education. There is therefore a strong case for investing in ABEL (for women in particular) in order to redress the imbalance of illiteracy amongst the adult population, as well as to enable them to fulfill their duties to their children in respect of education, and also to fulfill their own basic right to education as individuals in society.

4. Despite a high level of adult illiteracy, the hope for developing countries lies in the fact that their population profile tends to be skewed towards the younger age group. If in spite of adult illiteracy levels the majority of children and young people can be provided with quality basic education, then there is a chance of breaking the cycle of illiteracy, ignorance and the attendant poverty that continues from one generation to the next. This highlights the critical importance of investing in quality basic education for all children in a manner that promotes and sustains gender equity. The investments required to achieve this relate not only to providing facilities, staffing and other resources for schooling, but also to addressing and eliminating the barriers and constraints that prevent some children from accessing, and satisfactorily completing a course of quality basic education.

5. These barriers and constraints tend to affect girls much more than boys in most countries and they can be found within the education sector as well as outside of education. Girls tend to start school late or not at all because they are more engaged in household chores and income generating activities than boys; or because parents are more concerned for their safety and security away from home; or because households prefer to send boys to school rather than girls, where financial decisions are involved. Girls are also more likely to drop out of school than boys because the physical and psychological conditions as well as the entire school culture/ethos can often be insensitive to the needs that are peculiar to girls and their right to education. It is against this type of background that the case for girls' education is often made. The argument is that efforts to provide quality basic education for all children will not result in gender equity, unless there is a

special focus on the rights and needs of girls as an integral part of such efforts. It is also often argued that by focusing on the rights and needs of girls in education, it is possible to leverage quality education for all boys and girls alike. UNICEF expresses this argument with the catch phrase that:

“Girls’ education is also good for boys, but the reverse is not necessarily true”

On this basis it can be argued that investment in quality education should necessarily also entail investment in girls’ education as a means of ensuring that gender equity, based on a human rights approach to education, is an integral part of quality education. Indeed it has been suggested that without such considerations we run the risk of making broad progress with the MDGs, while inequalities are exacerbated. We need to avoid such a false sense of progress in education by ensuring that equity issues generally are integral to the concept of quality in education.

6. Developing countries have been making good progress with initial enrolment in school over the past decade, but many children and young people have routinely fall between the cracks because they did not start school at the right age and are now too old to enroll in first grade. In addition, for those who succeed in starting school, completion is still the major problem. Large numbers of girls and boys drop out before completing a basic cycle of quality education. In this sense there is also a major gender disparity that results in millions more girls than boys dropping out of school in sub-Saharan Africa for instance. It is estimated that the number of school-aged girls out of school in sub-Saharan Africa increased from 20 million in 1990 to 24 million in 2002. These out-of-school children and youths are at risk of various forms of exploitation like child labour, child trafficking and sexual exploitation, as well as exposure to HIV/AIDS infection. All of this results in a strong case for investing in education of out-of-school adolescents and youths through alternative forms of education such as non-formal education and training.

Q2. In an environment of resource constraints how should countries invest in education to address the following priorities?

(a) Education for all school-aged children to ensure that future problems of illiterate adults and youths do not arise.

(b) Education for Adults to empower parents as a way of ensuring that they can support and facilitate the education of their children

(c) Education for out-of-school adolescents and youths to prevent another generation sliding into illiteracy, ignorance and the attendant poverty.

(B) Defining Quality Education with an eye on Equity

7. There are two main approaches generally used to define quality in education. The first is to use a systems framework and then assess the quality of education in terms of inputs, process and outputs. This is essentially an efficiency model that typically rates the results achieved (usually a measure of learning achievement) against the quantum of investments made in the system and the efficacy of the processes through which the results have been obtained. It is also a normative production model in that it assumes matters of goals and

interests are largely uncontested and the issue of quality is simply about how much inputs it takes and what processes are essential for achieving the desired output. In order to bring equity into this model it will be necessary to adopt a human rights approach to analyzing inputs, processes and outcome.

8. The second approach generally used to define quality involves a sector framework that treats education as one sector that is closely interlinked with other sectors in the society. This approach is concerned with 3 main strands that constitute quality of education, in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. The issue of relevance acknowledges that the goals set and content prescribed for education are contentious and often have to be negotiated. We cannot talk of quality education when the goals and content do not address the needs of the learners or the values and aspirations of the community and the society at large. Effectiveness is about how far the goals and objectives set are being achieved. Here again there is a broader scope of consideration in that a wide range of goals could be set in terms of information, knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and change in behaviour patterns, etc. A quality education must deliver on what it promises, and this is what is being assessed by looking at effectiveness as a measure of quality. Efficiency concerns what it takes to deliver on the promises of quality education. It is about whether increased results could be achieved with the same resources, or whether the current results could be achieved with less resources. In other words efficiency as a measure of quality education relates to the adequacy of resources and the efficacy of methods used. Here again we need to adopt a human rights approach in order to inject equity issues into this model of quality education.

9. Defining quality education in terms of a human rights approach involves systematic review of the factors that facilitate or hinder the rights of various groups, at each stage of analysis in the model used to define quality. This is best done by focusing on the learner as someone with a right to education and reviewing factors relating to access, attendance, attainment (completion) and achievement for different groups of learners.

10. Against this background, and with reference to the background paper, **the workshop might wish to discuss the following statements and assertions** regarding quality education and gender equity:

- (a) A quality education is fully inclusive in that it is accessible to girls and boys on an equitable basis since barriers to provision of opportunities and uptake of such opportunities have been fairly addressed for girls as well as boys.**
- (b) A quality education promotes regular and timely attendance by all girls and boys, because its scheduling and pace have been designed with consideration for other demands on the time and schedule of learners and their families; and also because its culture and ethos are welcoming and gender sensitive.**
- (c) A quality education is one in which the goals set relate to self identity within the local culture and community interests, and self fulfillment in relation to the endless possibilities outside the local culture and reality.**
- (d) A quality education promotes and safeguards the rights of all girls and boys alike, within a learning environment that encourages them to achieve of their best in a journey of self discovery that brings out their full potential.**

- (e) A quality education is one that makes adequate provision of essential resources for learning for all learners and all schools. This includes trained teachers, books, and other pedagogical resources, as well as non-pedagogical essentials like school meals.**

WORKSHOP 2

Quality Education and Social Inclusion

Co-organization and financing: **Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture - OEI**

Participants in the panel, moderator and rapporteur: **list will be distributed during the Conference**

Discussion Paper: IBE, in collaboration with OEI and UNESCO

Additional Paper: OEI

This document will soon be available from the ICE site: www.ibe.unesco.org (Organization/workshops).



WORKSHOP 2

Quality Education and Social Inclusion

Introductory video:

Workshop 2 A and 2 B: *« Youth as constructors of peace towards an inclusive society » (Colombia)*

For more than five decades, Colombians have been living through different levels and modalities of societal conflict and violence, of which youth have been not only affected but also implicated. *« Conflict Resolution for Adolescents » (Jóvenes Constructores y Constructoras de paz)* is a project developed by Foster Parents Plan in partnership with the International Centre of Education and Human Development (CINDE) in Colombia, as an effort to reinforce social inclusion by training and encouraging adolescents to be peace builders. Participation of young people is the core of this initiative. This film points out the main concerns of the youth and also illustrates the guiding principles of the project and how it is being implemented.

Discussion Paper

“Focusing special efforts in the most disadvantaged communities sends the signal that quality education is for all.”¹

1. Social inclusion, exclusion, and education

Current international concern with social inclusion has emerged in response to the challenges posed by persistent and increasing marginalisation, discrimination, and exclusion of vulnerable groups in all societies. Consequently, any discussion of social inclusion cannot be separated from a serious consideration of social exclusion. As inter-related and multidimensional processes, inclusion and exclusion

“describe how people’s opportunities for full and meaningful participation in the main spheres of social life may be differentially facilitated or blocked. These processes, in turn, contribute to unequal prospects that people have to achieve socially and economically valued resources, capacities, and credentials.”²

¹ Final communiqué of the Ministerial Round Table on Quality Education (Paris, 4 October 2003).

² Canadian Council on Social Development

Central to this discussion of the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion, formal education plays a complex and sometimes contradictory role. On one hand, public schooling often serves as an effective vehicle for overcoming marginalisation and enhancing inclusion into citizenship, work and other spheres of social participation. On the other education systems are often seen to contribute to the perpetuation of socio-economic disparities, as well as to forms of discrimination based on such factors as gender, age, health, residence and minority status.

Q1. *How to reinforce the role of education as an effective vehicle for overcoming marginalisation and enhancing inclusion; instead of its impact to the perpetuation of disparities?*

2. Quality education for social inclusion

While the traditional conception of inclusive education aims at the mainstream participation of individual learners with special educational needs, concern with social inclusion focuses on *all* learners. Indeed, many vulnerable groups of children and youth, including girls and young women, those who are working, who are forced to seek refuge or are displaced, orphans, those who belong to linguistic, cultural or religious minorities, and those living in situations of extreme poverty, insecurity and of conflict, and those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, continue to be excluded from quality education. Additionally, little attention has been paid to a new kind of vulnerability, that results from the inability of well-educated people coming from medium or even high-income backgrounds to insert themselves productively and/or socially in the society, generating the so-called *disaffiliation*³.

It is now recognised that the challenge of achieving education for all is not solely one of access and initial enrolment, but also of regular attendance, retention, attainment and achievement. This implies not only that marginalized and vulnerable groups of children and youth actually have equitable access to educational opportunities, but also, that equitable participation in quality education be ensured for all individual learners and groups. Moreover, a social inclusion perspective on quality education is also concerned with the need to ensure that learning opportunities contribute to effective inclusion of individual and groups of youth into the wider socio-economic, civic and cultural fabric of society.

Quality education is therefore an education that is inclusive. It is an education that aims at the full participation by all learners, teaches attitudes and behaviours of tolerance and is therefore a vehicle for the construction of an inclusive and participative economy and society. Concern with educational inclusion cannot be dissociated from the need to ensure relevant quality education as a vehicle for the construction of an inclusive and participative society. Focusing on quality education for enhanced social inclusion implies identifying strategies for overcoming or eliminating the barriers to full participation in quality education for individuals and groups which experience discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion or which are particularly vulnerable.

³ Castel, R. (1991) « De l'indigence à l'exclusion. La désaffiliation » in Donzelot, J (org.) *Face à l'exclusion de modèle français*, Esprit : Paris.

- Q2.** *Which are the groups that need to be particularly addressed to achieve quality education for all young people (12-18/20 years old)? Is it enough to address them, or should a policy to promote inclusive education also address adolescents and young people coming from upper-medium and high-income backgrounds? Why and how?*
- Q3.** *Are there general dimensions that have to be addressed to guarantee quality education for all young people (12-18 years old), or should each marginalized and vulnerable group be reached through different strategies?*

3. Framing a social inclusion perspective on quality education

In focusing on the quality of education from a social inclusion perspective, it is important to consider the inputs, processes, and environments that surround and foster, or hamper, learning, in order to ensure that the various components of education are sensitive to social inclusion and to each key group in each context. A number of dimensions of quality may thus be considered both at the level of the learner in her or his learning environment and at the level of the system that creates and supports the learning experience. Learning for social inclusion may thus be approached at the level of (1) the learners and their backgrounds, (2) the learning environment and the schooling process, as well as at the level of (3) the structures and policies of the education system.

3.1. The learners and their backgrounds

Educational opportunities must be available without discrimination. Diverse aspects related to their living conditions and to their culture have to be considered. Young people affected by HIV/AIDS, orphans, isolated populations, internally displaced persons and refugees, young people living in conflict and post-conflict situations, cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities, migrants and the new “job nomads” are usually living under particular conditions. Furthermore, many of the adolescents and young people coming from those groups bring to the educational institutions a diversity of cultures, learning styles, approaches and perspectives that might either enrich learning and add value to inclusion or force them into failure, according to the capability of the education systems, schools and teachers to take advantage of that diversity.

- Q4.** *What does it mean to take the diverse contexts into account by planning and developing educational opportunities for inclusion? How can poor living conditions be compensated through powerful educational environments?*
- Q5.** *How and to what extent do diverse educational institutions for adolescents and young people have to take advantage of the diversity of cultures, learning styles, approaches and perspectives from traditionally marginalized or vulnerable groups of the population?*

3.2. The learning environment and the schooling process

To take the learner's background into account means to address the issues of learning contents, processes and learning environments in a very different way as it was done in the past. In the past it was thought that the learning contents, processes and environments had to be homogeneous and could be defined in an abstract way. In fact, diverse problems arose. In many cases the learning contents were biased. Stereotyping, or mono cultural and monolingual approaches were – and still are – widespread. The concern with the relevance of learning content to changing societal realities and needs was insufficient. Nowadays there are many efforts to promote the integration of rights education, gender equality, HIV/AIDS and preventive education, respect for human dignity and diversity and also concepts and skills linked to the emergent new economy. However, these efforts are still not always reflected in the day-by-day educational practices in schools for adolescents and young people. Perhaps one of the reasons for this imbalance between innovation in the prescribed learning contents and reality might be that processes of education are an often overlooked dimension of quality. How knowledge, skills, competencies, values and attitudes are transmitted and shaped are as important as the content of the officially prescribed curriculum.

Finally, updating educational contents and improving educational processes only will be effective if the learning environment is also improved accordingly to the needs of each context. Both the physical environment of learning (adequate attention paid to the promotion of physical and mental health, safety and security), as well as the psycho-social environment of learning (absence of gender or minority discrimination, bullying, corporal punishment) will enable or hinder learning the needed contents through the adequate processes to form competencies for inclusion thanks to inclusive education.

Q6. Some of the internal barriers to effective access and continuous participation in quality education include inadequate contents, inadequate processes, poor learning environments. How can these three dimensions be improved? What are the lessons learned out of many existing good practices to eradicate violence from schools as a way of promoting inclusion in schools? What are, in a more particular way, the lessons learned from experiences such as peer-education, conflict-resolution projects and opening schools for extra-curricular projects?

Q7. Learning contents, processes and environments can be – at least partially – defined at schools. Is it enough to improve quality education at the level of each educational institution to guarantee inclusive education for inclusion?

3.3. System structures and policies

To promote inclusive education there is probably also a need to improve the social and educational legal framework and to see how to cope with some new trends in the evolution of educational structures and governance.

A sustainable legislative framework that enables the realisation of the right to education for all is needed in all the countries. This may involve forms of compensatory or

affirmative action to ensure equitable educational opportunities for those individuals and groups negatively affected by discrimination. Those affirmative actions should also involve educational processes and not only the provision of the necessary material conditions for schooling, such as adequate spaces, textbooks and other learning materials.

Segregation of educational opportunities is an increasing trend in many countries. The increasing number of private secondary schools being created clearly illustrates this fact. Such institutions are frequently built to attend to the specific demands of parents who want their children to be educated among people coming from the same social level, sharing the same values and cultural backgrounds. Some people have interpreted this phenomenon as an exercise of the right to diversity and the freedom of choice. Nevertheless, one of the points highlighted during the 46th ICE was that diversity alone does not guarantee social cohesion. Indeed, the risk that such a trend contributes more to extend segregation after education, instead of social inclusion, is high. If social inclusion is to be taken into consideration, then a change of attitude would seem to be required, turning from a demand-based approach to a need-based one. Additionally, it is necessary that the most privileged of the society – who are usually also at the top of the decision-making process – be willing to act towards social integration.

Last, but not least, the marginalized and vulnerable populations are not always consulted or included in the search for good alternatives for ensuring the quality of education for social inclusion. However, it seems that the degree of consultation and stakeholder participation in policy dialogue, formulation and implementation and linkages to other sector policies (health, youth, labour, finance, etc), are both very important to guarantee quality education for all adolescents and young people, particularly for those under conditions of marginalisation and vulnerability.

- Q8. What changes might be needed in the legislation to promote inclusive education?***
- Q9. How can inclusive education be promoted if the education systems are more and more segregated? How can immigrants be educated for inclusion in a high competitive world economy, if they are schooled separately from the local population? How can local wealthy adolescents want and know how to include all, if they are also educated separately from the vulnerable groups of students?***
- Q10. What good strategies are there to promote the active participation of the marginalized and vulnerable groups of adolescents and young people (12-18) and their groups of reference in the process of developing high quality education for them and for all? What are the lessons learned from the many existing good practices?***
- Q11. How do we measure inclusion in education? How can we measure social inclusion as an outcome?***

WORKSHOP 3

Quality Education and Competencies for life

Co-organization and financing: Ministry of Education and Research, Norway

Participants in the panel, moderator and rapporteur: list will be distributed during the Conference

Discussion Paper: IBE, in collaboration with Ministry of Education and Research, Norway and UNESCO Division of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Education.

Background paper: National Institute of Technology (TI), Norway

This document will be available on the ICE website on mid of August:
www.ibe.unesco.org (Organisation/Workshop 3).



WORKSHOP 3

Quality Education and Competencies for life

Introductory video:

Workshop 3 A and 3 B: « *Life skills: a pillar of education?* » (Finland)

Following the OECD Pisa assessment surveys, Finland has become the destination for « educational pilgrims », determined to find out the source of success of its school system. Focusing on the highly developed life-skills component in the Finnish education programme, this film traces the student life in Helsinki and Mäntsälä secondary schools. Furthermore, the video raises the question of whether the Finnish success is really a miracle or simply the outcome of a sound, student-centred instruction.

Discussion Paper

In this world where knowledge and technologies are being renewed at an accelerating pace, and where migration within countries and across countries leads most societies to become increasingly more multicultural, a global consensus regarding the need for secondary education to equip young people with competencies for lifelong learning has developed. The World Forum for Education in Dakar (2000) also addressed this issue through Goal 3: “*Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes*”.

For some years, there has indeed been growing awareness that general secondary education is often too academic and is not preparing young people adequately for the world of work and responsible citizenship (International Expert Meeting on General Secondary Education in the Twenty-First Century, 2001; Oman International Conference on Secondary Education for a better future, 2002). When attending secondary school, young people often still 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?

Since the mid 90’s, case studies in European countries and worldwide, show that progress has been made towards responding better to the education needs of young people. This 47th ICE workshop, not underestimating the complexity of the topic, hopes to examine a few key-issues, providing a forum for discussion and for sharing experiences and good practices, and how these could be transferred elsewhere. In other words, how can education respond better to education needs and existing expectations of adolescents so that they can develop all their talents, live better, rise out of poverty, enter active life and take part in development?

1. Contemporary dilemma: Competencies for life or competencies for work?

Some decades ago, the term '*life skills*' emerged in relation to the need to address in the curriculum and education the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills, that could help learners to cope with risks, decision-making, emergency situations and survival strategies. '*Life skills*' also addressed the need to foster learners' personal development, help them unfold their potential and enjoy an accomplished private and social life. These skills are often referred to as psychosocial skills. More recently, the term '*life skills*' tends to be associated with '*competencies for life*', understood in a broader sense as 'capabilities' (knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, behaviours) to successfully address the challenges of daily life: private, social and professional and to face exceptional situations.

Trying to define, categorize and list relevant competencies or skills offers particular challenges. For the sake of this document and the discussion that will take place during the workshop, we propose to refer to a broad working definition in reference to what is mentioned in the Dakar framework of Action: "*all young people and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be*". This conception encompasses psychosocial as well as vocational skills.

Competencies for life in this sense should provide the tools to transform societies, and help to achieve "*globalization with a human face*". It relates as such to an effective application of all forms of knowledge by individuals functioning independently and in relation to others, in order to help people see themselves as the main actors in building their own future and the future of society.

With this perspective in mind, technical and vocational education is given importance in many countries as a way to prepare the youth for occupational fields. This branch of education, however, is often criticized as not responding sufficiently to the changing labour market's needs; consequently, many parts of the world are undertaking reforms. In order for general education or technical and vocational education to meet the challenge of the globalized economy and the changing requirements of the workplace, one needs to acquire both the functional skills associated with specific occupations and broader generic skills, such as entrepreneurial skills and attitudes, the ability to work in a team and communication skills, which can be transferred from one field to another.

However, development of competencies for life should definitely not be limited to preparation for an occupational world but should also enhance the capability of young people to cope with the various risks (e.g. HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, violence), challenges and tensions they face in their societies and in their daily lives. Key questions to be addressed include:

- Q1. What could be the goals of competencies-based education? For education systems? For learners? For society?***
- Q2. Is it possible, or desirable, to define a set of generic competencies that is common for young people all over the world? Who should decide what constitutes key competencies? And what is the role of education in defining needs in terms of competencies and strategies to respond to those needs?***

- Q3.** *To what extent should formal education prepare young people for work and provide them with skills and competencies to cover their own needs for survival and for income-generating activities? To what extent should it respond to the labour market's expectations? Wouldn't this be to the detriment of other learning experiences that the world of work cannot provide?*

2. Expanding role of education

A competencies for life approach implies a paradigm shift regarding the idea of education since to some extent it is due to the changing role of the family and communities, who were previously the providers of these competencies and values. Schools, when providing such competencies, were doing so mostly in the hidden part of the curriculum. The following questions may be asked regarding this new role of schools:

- Q4.** *Will schools alone be able to achieve the goals of competencies-based education?*
- Q5.** *How can synergies and partnerships be created between formal education and other community resources?*
- Q6.** *The teaching of these competencies has implications for other sectors. How can these sectors best be involved e.g. health, legal, social, police?*

3. Delivery of competencies for life and life skills education

Transferring competencies from curriculum objectives to educational practice presents a serious challenge. An operational definition is needed that may drive political action and have an impact on life in schools as well. Pedagogic considerations must be taken into account. The pedagogy required for internalisation of new values and behaviours is time-consuming, since students need to practise their new skills in order to acquire them and to role-play, and have opportunities for classroom discussion and personal and collective reflection to identify with their new values.

Competencies-based curriculum objectives are not compatible with learning by rote. They thus imply totally renewed teaching approaches and have implications for teacher training. Competencies-based education requires highly skilled teachers and adequate preparation of educators, pre and in-service, as is the case in any education reform. Since all teachers cannot be transformed overnight, there is a strong suggestion that selected teachers should be trained first to introduce competencies for life and life skills education into schools, especially where there are crises such as HIV/AIDS or the need for reconciliation after conflict.

Competencies have to be relevant to students' future life, and also to their present daily life. In general, some features of a very recent study carried out by the IBE on the basis of national reports submitted by Member States at the last session of the International Conference on Education, 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”.

The delivery of competencies for life will have implications for the curriculum and teaching methods. What are these implications?

- Q7. Could more be accomplished if the contents of secondary education had a stronger emphasis on competencies for life and life skills education?***
- Q8. What would be the most practicable methods of effectively introducing competencies into the curriculum? How can secondary education ensure the imparting of competencies in a holistic and balanced manner? (psychosocial skills and vocational skills?)***
- Q9. How can these competencies be provided throughout life in a rapidly changing society?***
- Q10. What are the implications for teacher training in general? And for teachers with special responsibilities in this psychosocial and life skills area? How can it be ensured that the necessary reforms are undertaken to guarantee successful teaching of these competencies?***

4. Competencies for life and the school environment

In addition to qualified and inter-disciplinary skilled teachers, other mentors from the society will also be needed. Not only traditional materials, but also hands-on methods or experience-based learning approaches will be necessary. Moreover, a competencies-based approach does not merely amount to a set of fragmentary and separated elements. As a consequence, participatory process of external world in schools and in non-formal education, will be needed in order to combine every aspect of knowledge and experience encompassed by a competencies-based approach.

Clearly any move to emphasise competencies for life needs to be developed in consultation with all stakeholders. This will include employers and representatives of the various groups in society. In many sectors of modern and developing economies, the competencies of communication, cooperation, conflict resolution, citizenship and so on are seen in general as helping achieve greater productivity.

The process of curriculum renewal to use a competencies-based approach, or the decision to strengthen the competencies element in an existing curriculum, will require major efforts not only on the part of education managers and teachers, but also from students and parents who will also need to readjust their expectations and will have to adapt to a new approach. The following questions may be asked:

- Q11. Would this effort be worthwhile in terms of benefits to society as well as to individual students? And will it be attractive to potential employers and unions, or is it possible that employers might in some circumstances prefer less skilled workers (to pay them lower wages, for instance)?***

Q12. Is there a risk that education that focuses on psychosocial and vocational skills could be seen as having lower status than academic subjects? Could it be seen as remedial or “second-rate” education, compared to more academic subjects?

Q13. Could these programmes on the contrary be seen as luxuries in some countries, particularly the poorest, even though students in these countries are particularly at risk of HIV/AIDS, or hard hit by poverty

5. Assessment of learning outcomes

Experience shows that if competencies for life are not assessed, they will not be taught properly. Competencies-based education is also criticised as it may reduce accountability of schools regarding learning outcomes, as assessment is often not (yet) being implemented or required.

New evaluation studies on adolescents and young people (in particular up to age of 15 or 16) aim to measure acquired skills and competencies rather than knowledge amassed. Scales to assess competencies are being developed. 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. Key questions to be addressed include:

Q14. What are the best ways of assessing these competencies? How can existing systems to assess competencies for life be improved and transferred to other education systems?

Q15. Should they perhaps also be applied to out-of-school youth?

Q16. How can a better understanding be gained of the real level of young people’s educational attainment in relation to the challenges of globalization and other contemporary social, economic and cultural developments?

WORKSHOP 4

Quality Education and the Key Role of Teachers

Co-organization and co-financing: Education International (EI)

Participants in the panel, moderator and rapporteur: list will be distributed during the Conference

Discussion Paper: IBE, in collaboration with EI and UNESCO

Background paper: Education International (EI)

This document is currently available from the ICE site: www.ibe.unesco.org
(Organization/workshops).



WORKSHOP 4

Quality Education and the Key Role of Teachers

Introductory videos:

Workshop 4 A - « Teacher training: a building block for education reform» (Jordan)

In Jordan, the education system is in the midst of a reform that aims to prepare students to enter the knowledge economy as « technologically literate learners ». The training of teachers in the use of information technologies has been a priority within the reform. In this video a teacher who has been attending IT courses at a learning resource center shares some of his views on how this training and the constructivist philosophies of the reform have impacted his teaching. Also highlighted in the film is the Queen Rania IT Center in Amman, the largest center for teacher training and the technological heart of the reform.

Workshop 4 B: « Future teachers learning to live together » (Sri Lanka)

At the height of civil tensions within the country, GTZ Basic Education Sector Programme (BESP) organized a literary competition on peace for student-teachers throughout Sri Lanka. This was followed by the project « Peace Link » which has the goal of fostering peace in education through coordinating exchanges between future teachers at training colleges from the North, South and East. This video gives insight into the lives of two teachers, one a Sinhala native speaker from the South and the other a Tamil native speaker from the North, who met through this programme. The two speak about how this initiative affected their lives, teaching, and concept of learning to live together in peace.

Discussion Paper

Inside the daily reality of classrooms and educational establishments, the promotion of quality education for all young people sharply brings to light problems concerning the role of the teacher and other education providers: their recruitment, the adequacy of their profile and function, their training, and their social recognition and status. It is evident that a sufficient number of competent teachers is required in order to improve the quality of educational processes. The Ministers of Education, when they met together at UNESCO for its 32nd General Conference, also reaffirmed this: “*We find indispensable the role of teachers as purveyors of knowledge and values and as community leaders responsible for the future of our young. We should do everything in our power to support them and to learn from them.*” (Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Round Table Meeting, 4 October 2003 – www.unesco.org)

A multitude of questions can be asked concerning the role of teachers. This 47th ICE workshop hopes to examine a few of these more specifically, providing a forum for discussing problems and especially for sharing experiences and practices that are often both innovative and promising.

1. Teaching: a demanding and constantly evolving profession

The image of the teacher as a specialist in a specific subject who stands alone in front of the class is still a reality today in many contexts, particularly at the secondary level. However, this perception of the role of teachers no longer matches the demands of teaching and the expectations that are made with regard to the education of young people. Even if the teaching profession has preserved an element of permanency, regardless of time period or education level, many elements have changed and are continually changing: knowledge and ways to access it, the influence of the media and of ICT's, societal demands, the social environment, the students themselves, etc. The teacher is moving away from being a "transmitter of knowledge" and led more and more towards becoming a "mediator in the construction of knowledge", a facilitator and, even at times, a social worker. He or she must also foster the development of social skills and create a learning environment that will encourage young people to learn to live together and to become responsible citizens. Faced with expanding access to secondary education, the growing heterogeneity of students, the redefinition of objectives, learning content, working methods and evaluation, the rising autonomy of educational institutions, the increasing participation of young people in decision making at the school level, and so on, there are some who do not hesitate to speak about a "new teaching profession", which has become much more demanding and complex. Therefore, the background paper for this workshop which was prepared by Education International (EI) cites "ten new competences for teaching", identified by Perrenoud⁴: 1) organising student learning opportunities; 2) managing student learning progression; 3) dealing with student heterogeneity; 4) developing student commitment to working and learning; 5) working in teams; 6) participating in school curriculum and organisation development; 7) promoting parent and community commitment to school; 8) using new technologies in their daily practice; 9) tackling professional duties and ethical dilemmas; and 10) managing their own professional development. This list is quite impressive and one could ask whether an individual alone, regardless of personal qualities and training, could reasonably be expected to take on such a complex role.

Q1. What constants (or elements of permanency) have been preserved in the role of the teacher at the beginning of the twenty-first century?

Q2. What specific problems are posed for teachers regarding the education and training of young people from 12 to 18/20 years of age?

Q3. What new skills are thus demanded of teachers to improve the quality of this education?

⁴ Perrenoud, Ph. (1999) Dix nouvelles compétences pour enseigner. Invitation au voyage, Paris, ESF

2. Recruiting quality teachers

An education system that aims to offer a quality education for all young people should be able to count on teachers who are well trained and adequately paid. Further, they should be capable of independently following the evolving processes and structure of knowledge, and have the necessary competencies to take into account the growing interdependencies at both the global and local levels that impact on schools. Many countries are suffering from a serious shortage of teachers, or at least of teachers who are qualified in particular subject areas. There are numerous obstacles that frequently challenge the presence of well-trained, competent teachers in classrooms, for example, low wages, precarious social status, heavy workload, large class sizes, limited prospects for professional advancement, etc. Many systems are bearing witness to an aging secondary teaching staff, which further accentuates the cultural distance between students and those who are responsible for their education; female representation is often very unequal as well. Moreover, the attractiveness of the teaching profession to competent young people is lessening in favour of higher revenue professional opportunities. All over the world, too many young people are leaving the formal education system having lost the motivation to learn, and consequently, the desire to teach. In certain countries, teachers are leaving their profession early on, in favour of more advantageous working conditions and career prospects. In other countries, as a response to the shortage, there is a call even for teachers who have not had adequate training (volunteers, “*vacataires*”, junior teachers, etc.).

Q4. What measures could be taken to attract the best candidates, including young people and women in particular, to the teaching profession?

Q5. What will convince good teachers to stay in the profession?

Q6. What do we know about the influence of recruitment policies on the actual quality of education for young people? Do these policies have medium/long term perspectives or should they be simply considered as emergency measures?

3. Pre-service and in-service teacher training

At all levels, teaching is increasingly being considered as a real profession and not simply as a talent. This recognition thus necessitates a sound professional training and the acquisition of skills well beyond those related to subject knowledge. The criteria for initial training, recruitment, integration and in-service training concern all teachers, but particularly those in the post-primary level. Some subjects that teachers were initially trained in are disappearing. Consequently, teachers need to be redeployed to accommodate the changing roles and functions within the teaching system. New learning areas are also emerging. Health promotion, HIV/AIDS prevention, sex education, and life skills training, which in the past rarely or never appeared in schools, now imply different approaches to teaching and learning based on strong human relations and interpersonal skills. Within this perspective, the recourse to new technologies is not an adequate response. In general, the demands of the “new teaching profession” require the acquisition of skills that are much larger in scope than those

necessary to simply transmit knowledge. Some trends that can be observed at the level of pre-service training include, on the one hand, longer duration of training, and on the other, a qualitative improvement towards: “professionalisation”, a better balance between theory and practice, broadening pedagogical and didactic skills, creating links to research, utilizing new technologies, etc. However, it seems that there still is not enough place given to, inter alia, self-evaluation (“the reflective practitioner”), interpersonal and communication skills, interdisciplinary approaches, dialogue, teamwork, and “collective professionalism”. Some people have even gone as far as proposing that it would be better to invest less in initial teacher training and to place more emphasis on ongoing professional development. Certain recent studies indicate that teachers tend to reproduce the pedagogical styles that they experienced as students rather than the ones they acquired during their teacher training.

- Q7. What types of policies for pre-service and in-service teacher training would allow countries, particularly those in the South, to respond to the combined challenge of expanded access and quality improvement of education and training of young people?***
- Q8. Are there any successful or promising policies in the world today that articulate well the pre-service and in-service training of teachers?***
- Q9. What role can school administrators play in the improvement of teacher training?***
- Q10. How can the training of trainers be improved, particularly that of university instructors, who are usually the ones responsible for the training of teachers?***

4. Ensuring support for teachers

One might expect that teachers themselves are committed to improving the quality of education, have a professional ethic, and feel responsible for their own continual professional development both as a right and a duty. However, often there is a disparity – and sometimes a complete division – between the expectations of the school public (and parents or society) and the way in which teachers believe that they should practise their profession. At times isolated, overworked, living in precarious conditions and facing difficult classes, teachers also need a decent status, support and recognition of their irreplaceable role; they need this from public officials, parents, students, and society as a whole. They also need to create a community amongst themselves and to be able to count on the support of effective and responsible professional associations.

- Q11. Among the many possible action plans that could be envisaged, what are the most effective levers that the government and public officials could lean on to provide teachers with the support they need?***
- Q12. What could and should professional associations bring to this field***