



IBE-UNESCO Preparatory Report for the 48th ICE on

Inclusive Education

Within the Reform Process of 9-Year Basic Education in Africa

**Regional Workshop “What Basic Education for Africa?”
Kigali, Rwanda, 27 September 2007**

Abstract

The International Conference on Education (ICE) is a major international forum for educational policy dialogue among Ministers of Education and other stakeholders (researchers, practitioners, representatives of intergovernmental organizations and NGOs). The ICE is organized by the International Bureau of Education (IBE); the UNESCO institute specialized in assisting Member States in Curriculum Development to achieve quality Education for All. The IBE Council, composed of 28 UNESCO Member States, has proposed in January 2007 that the 48th ICE session, to be held in Geneva in November 2008, should focus on the theme “Inclusive Education: the Way of the Future”. The 48th ICE will focus on broadening the understanding of the theory and practice of inclusive education while discussing how governments can develop and implement policies on inclusive education. The IBE is hosting a series of regional consultative activities dedicated to exploring and advancing the theme of inclusive education in preparation for the ICE 2008. A Working Session on Inclusive Education was carried out within the Regional Workshop on “What Basic Education for Africa” (Kigali, Rwanda, 25-28 September 2007) co-organized by the IBE, the UNESCO Division for the Promotion of Basic Education, BREDA and the Rwandan Ministry of Education of Rwanda.

This report details the discussion that took place at the Working Session and concrete ideas on how to identify common challenges related to the development of inclusive education, principally in terms of visions, strategies and practices for the region; and on how to provide structured technical inputs from a regional perspective to the 48th session of the International Conference of Education (ICE, November 2008, Geneva). The session was split into three groups, concentrating respectively on: (i) Concept, Policy, Legislation and Finance; (ii) Institutions, Curriculum Design and Implementation; and (iii) Training and Incentives for Staff and Teachers, Awareness and Support. With respect to their area of concentration, the groups were asked to analyse the following questions: (i) “What are needs and groups of children to focus on in your country or region?” and (ii) “What are actions to be taken as priorities for approaching inclusive education in your country or region?” The outcomes of these discussions will be examined in this report.

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I. Introduction

The IBE-UNESCO, through the Community of Practice (COP) in Curriculum Development¹, is organizing a series of regional consultative activities on inclusive education (see Activity Calendar in Appendix) with the overall goal of initiating a participatory process to highlight key issues and challenges in inclusive education to be presented at the 48th session of the International Conference of Education (ICE 2008).

The Africa Regional Working Session on Inclusive Education was the fifth one of the above mentioned series of regional consultative activities. The meeting objectives included sharing visions, strategies and practices on inclusive education at the regional and national level; identifying common challenges related to inclusive education; and providing structured technical inputs from a regional perspective for the debates of the 48th ICE. In terms of expected outcomes, participants were expected to: (i) be aware of the scope and modalities of the 48th session of the ICE so as to disseminate this knowledge within their sphere of action; (ii) be open for a constructive sharing of national perspectives on inclusive education within a regional context; (iii) share and discuss the outcomes of the international seminar entitled “Poverty Alleviation, HIV and AIDS Education and Inclusive Education: Priority Issues for Inclusive Quality Education in Eastern and Western Sub-Saharan Africa” (Nairobi, Kenya, 23-27 July 2007), where participants from six African countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda) addressed issues around inclusive education, poverty alleviation and HIV and AIDS education; and (iv) elaborate a regional roadmap on inclusive education that can provide significant inputs for implementing a regional agenda with regard to the theme of the 48th session of the ICE.

Some 120 participants – policy makers, directors of education, curriculum specialists and teachers trainers from 16 countries (Benin, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of

¹ IBE, in conjunction with curriculum specialists from different regions of the world, set up from 2005 onwards, the Community of Practice in Curriculum Development (up to the moment made by 697 members from 85 countries). It is understood as an open and plural worldwide space that contributes to generate collective thinking and action on curriculum issues within the framework of a holistic approach to determining and implementing the Education for All (EFA) goals.

Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda) as well as representatives from UNESCO (IBE, the Division for the Promotion of Basic Education, BREDA, Addis Ababa and Nairobi Offices, UNEVOC), the Association for the Development of Africa (ADEA), the African Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank – attended the Regional Workshop on “What Basic Education for Africa”. Thus the IBE-coordinated Working Session on Inclusive Education could benefit from the inputs provided by this broad attendance.

There are a number of critical dimensions to consider as part of an inclusive education agenda. Each regional consultative activity centers on four sub-themes around which the IBE Council has proposed to articulate the 48th session of the ICE.

- (i) *Inclusive Education: Approaches, Scope and Content* (to broaden the understanding of the theory and the practice of inclusive education);
- (ii) *Inclusive Education: Public Policies* (to demonstrate the role of governments in the development and the implementation of policies on inclusive education);
- (iii) *Inclusive Education: Systems, Links and Transitions* (to create education systems which offer opportunities for life-long learning);
- (iv) *Inclusive Education: Learners and Teachers* (to foster a learning environment where teachers are equipped to meet the learners’ diverse expectations and needs).

The IBE Council visualizes the ICE 2008 as an opportunity for promoting dialogue among Ministers of Education, highlighting some universal and complex issues, and engaging the audience. The Conference should play a pivotal role in orientating and clarifying the debate on inclusive education.

The IBE Council also proposes that the ICE should be based on evidence and involve the Ministers of Education in enriching discussions on evidence-informed policies.

Inclusive education is a concept in a developing process and a challenging issue in Africa. The purpose of this report is to shed light on the concept of inclusive education from the

standpoint of IBE and examine how inclusive educational practices can play out in the region.

The first section of the report provides a background on inclusive education based on the United Nations normative framework. The second section discusses the concept of inclusive education and its evolution. Traditionally, inclusive education has been circumscribed to students with special needs but it has been gradually being recognized and seen as a way of democratizing learning environments and opportunities for all students therefore promoting social justice. The third section details the current status of inclusive education in Africa. This section refers to research materials on inclusive education in participating countries, as well as to presentations and discussions on the topic held during the workshop², and sheds some light on the close link between inclusive education and the 9-year basic education reform in Africa. The fourth section focuses on good practices that various countries within the region are developing with regard to inclusive education, as well as on two examples from other regions of the world: China and Latin America. The fifth section draws results from a regional roadmap that participating countries helped develop at the workshop and various actions workshop attendees felt needed to be taken with respect to inclusive education in the region. Two summaries of relevant discussion papers have also been included, as well as a brief discussion regarding the “Kigali Call for Action” – one of the main outcomes of the Regional Workshop. The final section puts forth a strategic vision for the region by incorporating the four sub-themes the IBE has developed to facilitate discussions about inclusive education at regional workshops in preparation for the 48th ICE.

² Regional Workshop on the topic “What Basic Education for Africa?”; Kigali, Rwanda, 27 September 2007

II. Inclusive Education: the United Nations Normative Framework

Building a truly inclusive society, where all people learn together and participate equally hinges on providing a quality education for all. The United Nations Education for All (EFA) movement is a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, clearly lays down the foundation for the Education for All movement. It states:

Everyone has the right to education and education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom³.

Inclusive education seeks to address the diverse learning needs of all children. This is further supported by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, which states that all children have the right to receive the kind of education that does not discriminate on the basis of disability, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, capabilities, and so on.

The principle of inclusive education was adopted at the 1994 World Conference on “Special Needs Education: Access and Quality” in Salamanca, Spain, and restated at the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal. The idea of inclusion is further supported by the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities proclaiming participation and equality for all.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education call upon member states to guarantee the implementation of inclusive education in order to bring back children who are excluded into the mainstream educational system. According to the Salamanca Statement, inclusive education means that:

Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions. They should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote and nomadic

³ United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (2007). In the *United Nations website*. Retrieved July 2, 2007 from the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights website: <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>.

populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups⁴.

The Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All (2000) further supports previous initiatives by calling upon nations to address the needs of learners who are victims of marginalization. It states:

Education for All (...) must take account of the need of the poor and most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health, those with special learning needs⁵.

The Convention on the Right of Persons with disabilities⁶ (2006) specifically addresses the right of all persons with disabilities to education (article 24)⁷. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that (a) persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability ; (b) persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, free and quality primary and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live; (c) reasonable accommodation of the individual's

⁴ The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, Adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality. (1994). In *UNESCO website*. Retrieved July 2, 2007 from UNESCO website: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF.

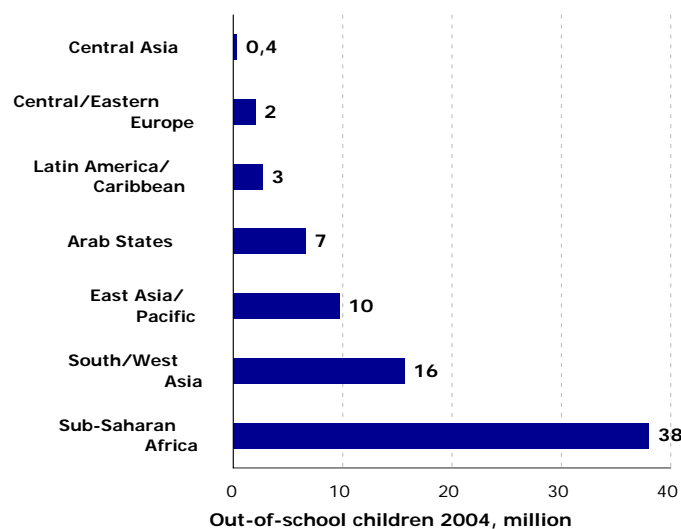
⁵ Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All. (2000). In *UNESCO website*. Retrieved July 2, 2007 from the UNESCO website: http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/framework.shtml.

⁶ Accessible online at: www.un.org/disabilities/convention/.

⁷ According to the UN Press Release of 11 July 2007, the countries that have signed both the Convention and its Optional Protocol are: Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chile, **Republic of the Congo**, Costa Rica, **Côte d'Ivoire**, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, **Ghana**, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, **Liberia**, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Namibia, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, San Marino, **Senegal**, Seychelles, **Sierra Leone**, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, **Uganda** and Yemen. The signatories to only the Convention are: Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Canada, Cape Verde, China, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Dominica, Egypt, **Ethiopia**, France, Gabon, Greece, **Guinea**, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, **Kenya**, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Poland, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Turkey, Uruguay, United Kingdom, **United Republic of Tanzania**, Vanuatu and the European Community. Jamaica also ratified the Convention on 30 March 2007. The Treaty needs 19 additional ratifications to come into force – a figure the United Nations Secretariat of the Convention feels will be reached by the end of the year –.When the Convention opened for signature at the United Nations on 30 March, 81 Member States and the European Community signed the treaty and 44 signed the Optional Protocol. Together, this is a record for the first day of signature for any Convention. The Press Release is accessible online at: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/hr4928.doc.htm>.

requirements is provided; (d) persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education and (e) effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

Quality education for all remains one of the biggest development challenges of our times: in the world, 781 million persons are illiterate and over 77 million children are still not in school (see the following graph): approximately 30-40% of them are children with disabilities and 80% live in developing countries⁸.



In Africa, 4 out of 8/9 students entering primary school fail to complete, and about the same proportion fail to complete secondary education. African countries may not be able to provide sustainable post basic education to more than 15% of its student population over the next 20 years. It is estimated that over 85% former pupils entering the world of work will have only a basic education background. Solutions thus need to be found to ensure that students are kept in schools and to provide them with appropriate teaching techniques, notably curricula adaptation, to meet their contemporary learning needs⁹.

⁸ UNESCO, (2007). *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007. Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education*. Paris: UNESCO.

⁹ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the presentation and discussion performed by Teeluck Bhuanee, Programme Specialist, UNESCO/BREDA (Dakar, Senegal) at the Regional Workshop.

If we are to move by 2015 towards the EFA goals which 164 countries committed to in 2000, we need to focus on the most excluded. Effective legislation and policies will contribute to build a world of inclusion, not only for people with disabilities, but also for all those who are unable to exercise their basic human right to education.

III. Conceptual Dimensions of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is a growing universal concern that informs and challenges the processes of educational reform in both developing and developed regions. Inclusive education is an evolving concept that can be useful to guide strategies of educational change to address the sources and consequences of exclusion within the holistic framework of EFA goals and the understanding of education as a human right.

Special Needs Education

Traditionally and even today in various world regions (for example, in Eastern and South Eastern Europe¹⁰ as well as in the Commonwealth of Independent States¹¹ (CIS) and most parts of Asia¹²) the concept and practices of inclusive education have been mainly circumscribed to students categorized as having special needs, meaning predominantly those with physical and/or mental disabilities, as well as refugees. Under this perspective, the approaches and responses given to students' needs have been remedial and corrective, by setting up and increasing the number of special schools, curricula tracks and special education teachers.

One significant consequence of differentiated curricular and institutional structures for students categorized as having special needs has been their segregation and isolation within the education system. The assumption that there are "special needs children" is questionable as stated by Sue Stubbs¹³: "any child can experience difficulty in learning (..) many disabled children have no problem with learning" and "children with intellectual impairment can often learn very well in certain areas".

¹⁰ OECD. 2006. *Education Policies for Students at Risk and those with Disabilities in South Eastern Europe. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia*. Paris: OECD Publications

¹¹ See International Bureau of Education (IBE) Report on the *Commonwealth of Independent States, Third Workshop on Curriculum Development: "Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future"* Minsk, Belarus, October 29-31, 2007.

¹² See International Bureau of Education Report (IBE) Report on the *East Asia Workshop on Inclusive Education, Hangzhou, China, November 2-5, 2007*.

¹³ Stubbs S. 2002. *Inclusive Education. Where there are few resources*. Oslo: The Atlas Alliance. Pp. 23; 3

Integration

The concept of integration came forward in the 1980s as an alternative to special needs curricula and school models, with the objective of placing students defined as having special needs in mainstream schools. The restructuring and improvement of physical facilities, the increase in numbers of special classrooms and specially trained teachers in the mainstream buildings and the provision of learning materials were, and still are, some of the main components for the application of integration models. Mainly focused on students with mild impairments, integration can risk becoming a rhetorical device rather than a reality in practice; it can become more about a spatial change of school classrooms than a change of curricular content and pedagogy relevant to children's learning needs.

After the 1990s, the scope, objectives, contents and implications of inclusive education in relation to integration were considerably changed. This was principally due to the recognition that integration models solely based on closing special schools and "adding" students to mainstream schools and curricula do not respond to the diversities of learners' expectations and needs. Such an understanding prompts revision of education policies dealing with integration issues by questioning the relevance of curriculum and school models that are the same for all students regardless of their differences. In such models, students must *adapt* to the norms, styles, routines and practices of the education system instead of the education system changing according to the learner. Moreover, dropout rates may increase among students with special needs when integrated into mainstream schools that have not undertaken a comprehensive set of institutional, curricular and pedagogical changes.

Inclusion

Inclusive education can be understood both as a guiding principle and a strategy to attain reasonable levels of school integration for all students. In the context of a broader vision of integration, inclusive education implies the conception and the implementation of a vast repertoire of learning strategies to precisely respond to learners' diversities. In this

sense, education systems have the obligation to respond to the expectations and needs of children and youth considering that the capacity to provide effective learning opportunities based on a rigid scheme of integration (placing “special needs” students in mainstream schools) is very limited. This is what Susan Peters¹⁴ refers to as the placement paradigm; that is, when inclusive education is conceptualized as a place and not as a service delivered within the general education classroom as the continuum.

The debate on inclusive education and integration is not on a dichotomy between integration and inclusion policies and models (as if we could integrate without including, or include without integrating), but rather on identifying to which extent there is a progress in the understanding that each school has the moral responsibility to include everyone. Such an obligation is challenged at the same time when education systems have to effectively address other core universal education problems of non-school attendance, repetition, over-age and dropouts as well as low learning outcomes that undermine the goals and functioning of education worldwide. Empirical evidence indicates that a student who repeats the first school years has a strong probability of dropping out from school¹⁵. Each one and also the combination of the above problems generating exclusion are exacerbated by persistent institutional and pedagogical practices that presuppose that all children have the same learning conditions and capabilities. Moreover, as noted during the 2004 International Conference on Education¹⁶, a child’s exclusion from education represents his/her lack of professional and social competencies needed in order to access essential knowledge and to exert an autonomous and responsible citizenship.

Therefore, approximately in the last fifteen years, the concept of inclusive education has evolved towards the idea that all children and young people, despite different cultural,

¹⁴ Peters S. World Bank. 2004. *Inclusive Education: an EFA strategy for all children*. Washington: World Bank.

¹⁵ See UNESCO, 1998. *Wasted Opportunities: when schools fail; repetition and drop-out in primary schools, Education For All, Status and Trends*, Paris, EFA Forum Secretariat. UNESCO, 1996. *La Repetición Escolar en la Enseñanza Primaria Una Perspectiva Global*. Ginebra, Oficina Internacional de Educación; UNESCO, 1984. *The drop-out problem in primary education: some case studies*. Bangkok, Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific.

¹⁶ UNESCO. 2004. *International Conference of Education. 47th meeting. Workshops 2A y 2B Quality education and social inclusion*. Geneva: IBE/UNESCO. Annex XVI, pp. 8–14.

social and learning backgrounds, should all have equivalent learning opportunities in all kinds of schools. The focus is on generating inclusive settings, which implies: (i) respecting, understanding and taking care of cultural, social and individual diversity (education systems, schools and teachers' response to the expectations and needs of students); (ii) providing an equal access to quality education; (iii) having close coordination with other social policies. This should involve the expectations and demands of stakeholders and social actors.

A broad conception of inclusive education also addresses the learning needs of students with disabilities, learning difficulties and disadvantages, as conceptualized by OECD¹⁷. Although there are different categories to consider, the nature of the concept of inclusive education is non-categorical, and aimed at providing effective learning opportunities to every child, in particular tailored learning contexts.

Precisely UNESCO¹⁸ defines inclusion “as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children”. Furthermore, as stated by Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow¹⁹ in their proposal of an index for inclusion, “inclusion is about making schools supportive and stimulating places for staff as well as students (...) It is about building communities which encourage and celebrate their achievements”.

Indeed, the design and the development of policies on inclusive education should not be understood as the sum of initiatives and efforts towards specific groups (an endless although possibly incomplete list). Quite to the contrary, the focus is not on which

¹⁷ OECD. 2006. *Education Policies for Students at Risk and those with Disabilities in South Eastern Europe. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia*. Paris: OECD Publications

¹⁸ UNESCO. 2005. *Guidelines for inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All*. Paris: UNESCO.

¹⁹ Booth T. and M. Ainscow. 2002. *Index for inclusion, developing learning and participation in schools*. CSIE: Bristol, p. 4.

categories to include but on the provision of friendly learning environments and diverse learning opportunities for all. According to Rona Tutt²⁰, the main challenge is to provide inclusive settings in all schools through the provision of a diverse continuum of services that are part of a school network in articulation with other social policies.

Thus, the challenge of an inclusive education implies the articulation of a coherent and articulated set of policies aiming for (i) a pertinent and relevant curriculum with a vision that facilitates dialogue among different levels of the educational system; (ii) a vast repertoire of diverse and complementary pedagogical strategies (formal and non-formal schooling) that can respond to the specificities of each student by personalizing the educational provision; (iii) available physical facilities and equipment aligned with the designed curriculum and its implementation; (iv) strong teacher support in the classroom, seeing him/her as a co-developer of the curriculum and (v) engaging in dialogue with families and communities in order to understand their expectations and needs as well as to promote their active participation in the schools.

An inclusive educational strategy implies the careful and detailed consideration of the specificity and uniqueness of each child and adolescent so as to provide them with effective educational opportunities throughout their lives. In these terms, inclusive education is about the ways and the modalities under which teachers and students interact and generate mutual empathy and nearness; how they understand and respect their diversities and jointly create suitable and attainable conditions for achieving relevant and pertinent learning opportunities for all.

Cognitive education plays a key role in achieving an inclusive education as it tends to make children aware of their own cognitive functions, which can help them to understand and learn better. It is an effective way for educators to address the needs of diverse populations by better understanding how students learn, think, and reflect, critically and

²⁰ Tutt, R. 2007. *Every Child Included*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing / The Association for all School Leaders (NAHT).

creatively, and how to use this understanding in the co-construction of a meaningful curriculum and of associated activities.

As a contribution to the discussion of pedagogical approaches of inclusive education, David Skidmore²¹ draws attention to the difference between a pedagogy of deviance and one of inclusion by noting the following five aspects:

- a) student's learning – while the deviance discourse establishes a hierarchy of cognitive skills to measure the abilities of each student, the inclusion discourse highlights the open learning potential of each student that can be progressively discovered and stimulated;
- b) explanation of school failure – while the deviance discourse points out that the main learning difficulties are related to the deficiencies of the students' capacities, the inclusion discourse argues that the main difficulty lies instead on the insufficient responses generated by the curriculum;
- c) school response – while the deviance discourse states that the support of the learning process should be focused on the students' deficiencies, the inclusion discourse emphasizes the need of reforming the curriculum and of implementing a crosscutting pedagogy in the school;
- d) theory of teachers' expertise – while the deviance discourse emphasizes the importance of specialized discipline knowledge as key to teachers' expertise, the inclusion discourse highlights the active participation of the students in the learning process; and
- e) curriculum model – while the deviance discourse argues that an alternative curriculum should be designed for those students categorized as low achievers, the inclusion discourse emphasizes the need of a common curriculum for all students.

In overall terms, inclusive education implies four key elements:

- a. it is essentially a process of looking for the most appropriate ways of responding to diversity as well as of trying to learn how to learn from differences;
- b. it is linked to the motivation and development, through multiple strategies, of students' creativity and capacity to address and resolve problems;

²¹ Skidmore. D. 2004. Inclusion, the dynamic of school development. London: Open University Press. Pp. 112-127

- c. it comprises the right of the child to attend school, express his/her opinion, have quality learning experiences and attain valuable learning outcomes; and
- d. it implies the moral responsibility of prioritizing those students who are at risk of being marginalized and excluded from the school, and of obtaining low learning outcomes.

Inclusive Education and Social Inequalities/ Social Inclusion

The urgent need to advance in the democratization of opportunities for all children accessing and profiting from a high-quality equitable education can be based on the conception of inclusion as a central strategy to foster educational and social change. Inclusion from an educational perspective can help address the traditional and structural problems of poverty; the challenges of modernization and social and cultural integration; and the growing diversity of national societies. Social inclusion and inclusive education are mutually implicated in a feedback relationship. Inclusive education opens the way to increasingly addressing forms and contents of exclusion. For example, inclusive education can aim to address the social gaps in access to ICT; the marginalization of disaffected young people (those who do not study, do not work and do not look for work); the lack of educational opportunities and low learning outcomes among migrant populations; the cultural homogeneity of educational proposals that do not know, understand and value multiculturalism; and the stigmatization of cultural and social diversity as an obstacle to integration.

Therefore, inclusive education can be considered as a pathway to attain social inclusion. From a societal perspective, inclusive education is clearly and substantially linked to the discussion around the type of society to be attained; the kind of well-being desired for all citizens; and the quality of democracy and social participation we wish to pursue. On a long-term basis, basic education in relation to social inclusion implies an understanding of the former as key to citizenship and as an essential component of social policy.

Along those lines, the relationship between social inclusion and education highlights central issues of inclusive education related to (i) the struggles against poverty, marginality, cultural and social segregation, exclusion and HIV-AIDS, (ii) the consideration of cultural diversity and multiculturalism as both a right and a learning context within an universal framework of shared universal values, and (iii) the protection of the rights of aboriginal, migrant, displaced populations and populations in a minority.

In the context of an ongoing discussion, the following points seem to be critical in understanding and advancing on the conception and practice of inclusive education:

- a. Identifying the significance and priority given to inclusive education, in governmental and state policies. Inclusive education, as a key social policy, is a powerful instrument to mitigate the negative effects of social inequalities and cultural disintegration as well as residential segregation. Inclusive education is useful to address the changing cultural, ethnic, migrant and social composition of schools, a major challenge to the development of efficacious and efficient government social policies.
- b. Fostering high quality equitable learning opportunities for all by considering the articulation, diversification and flexibility between the different ladders and pathways of the education system, its structures and contents, within a global and unified vision of basic and youth education.
- c. Developing a tailored approach towards providing a real opportunity of educational success to each child by focusing on the learning needs of both potential and current students (those who have never attended school, those who are currently attending and those who dropped out), taking into account their cultural, social and cognitive diversities as well as their ethnic origin, philosophical and religious beliefs and migrant status. Diversity in learning contexts should be considered as a challenge and an asset to education and not as an obstacle.
- d. Guiding, articulating and undertaking efforts and initiatives aimed at generating suitable conditions for achieving useful and relevant learning by conceiving the school as the main force of educational change, and also as an integrated institutional and pedagogical unit within a solid educational policy and shared curriculum framework, from early childhood to youth education.
- e. Renovating and recreating teachers' professional role taking into account their ethical, societal mission and responsibility. Teacher training should strengthen the ways in which teachers understand, approach and respond to students' differences; teaching styles should be revised and adjusted in

order to be aligned with cultural and social contexts that are increasingly complex and uncertain; teachers should be considered as co-designers and co-developers of inclusive education policies at the school and classroom levels, and not as mere implementers of curriculum change.

In overall terms, the transformation of education into inclusive education²² implies collective thinking and action on the concept of social justice and social inclusion; on the beliefs around the learning potentials of each student; on the conceptual frameworks that sustain good practices of teaching and learning; and on endorsing a comprehensive political and technical vision of curriculum encompassing processes and outcomes.

²² British Educational Research Journal. 2005. *Thematic Review. Inclusive education: discourse and action*. Vol. 31, No. 2, April 2005, pp. 269–275.

IV. Regional and Country Situations/Challenges/Lessons Learnt²³

In Africa, where poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, rural isolation and conflict are commonplace, the need for education systems that are inclusive, i.e. that cater for all learners, is particularly acute. However, providing such systems poses formidable challenges in a region where education in general suffers from insufficient and inadequate human, financial and material resources. The needs of children with disabilities and children marginalized for other reasons are often not recognized in policies and therefore not included in National Plans for Education.

Inclusive education is an issue that cuts across all areas of education – early childhood, primary, special needs, vocational and adult education, teacher training and curriculum development. It also takes into account special needs related to culture and social development. It cannot be seen as a specific issue, but must be regarded as an approach to the development of the entire school system.

With the purpose of discussing the strategies aimed at taking up education challenges in Africa, the Conference of the Ministers of Education of African Member States (MINEDAF VIII) was held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, on December 2nd to 6th 2002, based on the following theme “From commitment to action to achieve education for all by 2015”. The Conference adopted the Dar-es-Salaam Statement of Commitment “The Education to build the new Africa”²⁴. Its goals are, among others, to eliminate illiteracy, ignorance and non-enrolment in school, which affects 41 million children, particularly those with disabilities. Attendees agreed that the strategies must include the following cross-cutting dimensions: (i) education of girls, women and disabled children; (ii) teaching of science and technology; (iii) impact of HIV/AIDS on education; (iv) use of African languages; (v) use of ICTs and broadcast technologies for education; (vi) psycho-

²³ The information in this section is mainly adapted from presentations and discussion performed at the Regional Workshop on “What Basic Education for Africa” (Kigali, Rwanda, 25-28 September 2007).

²⁴ For more information, please visit: http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11639&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

social support and welfare; (vii) environmental education; and (viii) education for human values, including peace and tolerance.

MINEDAF Conferences are attended not only by Education Ministers of African Member States, but also by representatives of United Nations Agencies, the OAU, and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Government and Non-Governmental Organisations. Their main purpose is to set up a network of Ministers, which plays a significant role in the development of education on the African continent. Drawing from the issues mentioned above, it is clear that each country in this region faces numerous challenges towards designing and implementing more inclusive educational practices.

Due to lacks in information provided by several countries, the following analysis does not include all countries represented at the working session.

A. Rwanda²⁵

The Education Sector in Rwanda has many policy objectives which notably include: (i) ensuring that education is available and accessible to all Rwandese people; (ii) improving the quality and relevance of education; (iii) promoting an integral and comprehensive education orientated towards the respect of human rights and adapted to the present situation of the country; (iv) sensitising children to the importance of environment, hygiene and health and protection against HIV/AIDS; (v) improving the capacity for planning, management and administration of education; (vi) promoting the teaching of science and technology with a special focus on ICT; and (vii) promoting research as a mobilising factor for national development and harmonise the research agenda.

²⁵ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the presentation and discussion performed by Yisa Claver, Director of Planning, Policy and Capacity Building, Ministry of Education, Rwanda and from the 2004 Rwandan Report to the 47th ICE.

Its general strategy is a sector-wide approach (SWAP), decentralisation of management and governance and the promotion of a strong political will. Education is considered a central element in Rwanda's development. Indeed, attainment of Rwanda's policy objectives would represent a big step towards achieving Millennium Development goals, Education for All goals, the Rwanda Vision 2000, the Rwandan Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy and National unity and reconciliation.

The Rwandan educational system is committed to achieving 9-year basic education. It indeed realises that Human resources are a key to economic growth and poverty reduction in Rwanda and that quality and relevant basic education is the foundation of human resources and citizenship in Rwanda. Children and youth aged 18 and below represent over 50% of Rwanda's population and will play a key role in Rwanda's future. Several issues have been distinguished: (i) school enrolment levels in Rwanda are high at primary level but below Sub-Saharan average at secondary level; (ii) there has been an access shock – enrolment has grown faster than inputs of teachers, classrooms and learning materials; (iii) there are low completion rates at primary level (58% in 2006), and problems of drop out (14.6% in 2005) and repetition (15.8% in 2005); and (iv) girls' enrolment in primary education is now higher than that of boys, but examination performance is poor. Rwanda's Education Sector promotes a sector wide approach to the implementation of 9-year basic education. This approach comprises extensive consultations and dialogue, Joint Education Sector Support JESS, sector budget support, cluster meetings and capacity building and joint reviews of the education sector. Targets are to: (i) decrease drop out rate from 14% to 5% by 2010 and 2% by 2015; (ii) decrease the repetition rate from 19% to 8% by 2010 and 3% by 2015; (iii) reduce pupil-teacher ratio at primary school from 67 to 45 in 2015, (iv) attain a pupil-textbook ratio of 1:1 in core subjects by 2008; (v) reach a transition rate from primary level to lower secondary level of 75% by 2015; and (vi) accomplish a gross enrolment rate at secondary from 16% to 43% by 2015.

Regarding inclusive education, after the Rwandan genocide and war, there was a big increase in the number of people requiring special frameworks (orphans of the genocide,

war and HIV/AIDS, physically and mentally handicapped children, street children etc.). Principal strategies and actions envisaged in the framework of the Strategic Plan of the Education Sector for 2003-2008 are: (i) elaborate a sub-sectoral policy of special education to ensure handicapped children the same access to education, equal opportunities and right to employment after their studies; (ii) integrate a regular education system, when possible, for handicapped youth; (iii) develop scholar and extra-scholar programmes for handicapped students; (iv) integrate such programmes into normal schools in order to provide schools with educational and pedagogical materials required and to provide future teachers with basic notions of special education as well as with methods of identification of children who need special frames; (v) put in place a legislation which renders education for handicapped students compulsory; (vi) train teachers and supervisory staff; (vi) build new, well equipped welcome centres and equip the existent ones with appropriate materials; and (vii) create assistance funds for vulnerable children and reinforce existing funds such as FARG.

*B. Senegal*²⁶

The Senegalese government has affirmed that it will take all measures useful to make equal opportunities and equity a reality in the educational system, notably concerning education of girls, handicapped children and children from poor or vulnerable groups. In this framework, the government envisages to improve girls' access to schools and encourage continuation and success of their education; to promote a special inclusive education of quality throughout the country and to develop positive discrimination in terms of educational offer and distribution of resources to the advantage of children from poor and/or vulnerable families. The State will give support, in the form of financial help or grants, to students coming from such families, to girls and to handicapped students.

²⁶ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the Senegalese 2004 national report to the 47th ICE.

In 1991, the Senegalese government voted for the orientation law 91-22 of February 6th, stipulating that special education is an integral part in the educational system and stating its intention to give handicapped children access to ordinary schools.

This was followed by “notes of services” of the National Ministry of Education²⁷ for priority welcome of children with handicaps and of girls in primary education. Thereafter, this position was confirmed by a sectorial policy letter. During the inter-ministerial reunion held in 2001, the Senegalese Prime Minister reiterated the objectives of the government and pronounced himself in favour of the participation of the estimated 800’000 handicapped persons (1988) in the Senegalese society.

In the framework of the “National Policy for Social Action²⁸”, the national policy of undertaking and promotion of handicapped persons was legislated. It notably comprises the “Plan for Education and Training²⁹”, which encourages the system to integrate vulnerable categories, notably disinherited children, handicapped children and children unable to adapt socially, and to promote diligent actions towards them.

Nowadays there exists a real engagement in favour of inclusive education at the classroom level. These developments are in accord with the “Ten-year Programme for Education and Training³⁰” which includes a sub-component on special and inclusive education.

The undertaking of handicapped students necessitates important transformations in social and educational infrastructures as well as in pedagogical strategies, and thus important financial means that will be difficult to find in spite of generous declarations from technical and financial partners.

²⁷ Ministère de l’Education Nationale

²⁸ « Politique Nationale d’Action Sociale »

²⁹ « Plan d’Education et de Formation »

³⁰ « Programme Décennal de l’Education et de la Formation (PDEF) »

*C. Republic of The Gambia*³¹

The Gambian Department of State for Education stands out as a vibrant arm of government that has undergone unprecedented developments from 1994 to date. Indeed, the Government, under President Yahya Jammeh, embarked on a massive capital investment program to provide at least nine years of uninterrupted basic education to all children. This marked the beginning of an unparalleled expansion of the school system, resulting in not only a major increase in the number of schools, but also the transformation of the entire education system.

Within the framework of government's development of educational infrastructure, 2000 classrooms have been constructed from 1994 to 2007.

The number of senior secondary schools has increased by 49 in 2005, so that about 60% of primary school pupils now transit to senior secondary schools as opposed to only 20% in 1993. The number of basic schools has also increased, from 250 in 1993 to 340 in 2007. There are now 81 upper basic schools, instead of 22 previously. And the introduction of basic cycle schools in 2000 has resulted in the establishment of 43 such schools.

In its quest for Universal Primary Education (UPE), the Gambian government also collaborates closely with international partners and stakeholders to reduce the educational cost burden on parents. Conventional wisdom in The Gambia, even after the coming of the Second Republic, was that the country could not afford to set up its own university. The myth was broken when the government decided to found the University of The Gambia. Ten years later, the University has graduated 312 students in diverse fields of specialization, thus contributing to the much needed trained resource base.

³¹ The information in this section is taken from: *Education in the Gambia - the Sky is the Limit*. In *Banjul AU Summit Magazine*. (2007). Article available at: http://www.ungei.org/news/gambia_908.html.

*D. Sierra Leone*³²

Peace was declared in Sierra Leone in January 2002 after a devastating civil war that lasted for over a decade. During the war hundreds of schools were severely damaged or destroyed and thousands of teachers and children were killed, maimed or displaced. Since the war rapid progress has been made in the education sector in terms of government commitment and increased access to primary education.

The major challenges that the country currently faces all have a strong impact on the education sector: (i) the need for continued healing and rehabilitation as the nation recovers from the effects of war; (ii) the need to prevent the occurrence of further conflict by fostering a conducive environment which prizes the values of peace, democracy, equality and tolerance; (iii) the need to produce qualified and relevant workforce to spearhead the development of the country; and (iv) the need to cater for a steadily increasing population as peace flourishes and the economy grows.

The major strategies which address the above challenges and form the backbone of the education sector plan are as follows: (i) building up infrastructure and an adequate qualified teaching force to cope with the present and future requirements for Universal Primary Education (UPE); (ii) reviewing the curriculum and making it more relevant to the needs of individuals, communities and the nation as a whole; (iii) developing a policy to address, amongst other things, the gender issues which negatively impact on the education sector such as gender inequality and gender based violence; (iv) directly tackling the problem of out-of-school children with targeted responses which break down the barriers preventing children from going to school and thereby reach those disadvantaged children who have special needs, come from underserved rural areas or live in extreme poverty; (v) supporting post-primary education as a linchpin for the education sector and society as a whole, since post-primary education produces skilled personnel and technicians such as administrators, qualified teachers and female role

³² The information in this section is taken from the document: Sierra Leonean Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. (2007). *Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan, A Roadmap to a Better Future 2007-2015*. Available at: http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Sierra%20Leone/Sierra_Leone_ESP.pdf.

models who are essential for the healthy development of the nation; (vi) making increased provisions for literacy and skills training, including the establishment of a book policy; (vii) increasing the capacity of education actors at all levels – national, district and school – and promoting the decentralization process; (viii) improving data collection and analysis for monitoring, planning and accountability purposes through the recently established Education Management Information System; and (ix) improving on quality, mobilizing and making effective use of resources, including the promotion of public-private partnerships and cost recovery, at the tertiary level.

In order to achieve UPE by 2015 the government intends expanding facilities to cater not only for the out-of-school children being attracted into school but also for anticipated changes in enrolment due to an increasingly positive attitude towards schooling. As the government intends achieving UPE of quality it will upgrade existing facilities, provide textbooks and teaching/learning materials and increase the number of teachers.

Ongoing consultations will continue with stakeholders during Education Sector Plan (ESP) implementation in order to ensure that strides are being made in the direction that would make possible the achievement of targets set and allow the achievement of those goals and aspirations of the government necessary for the development of the country and the advancement and well-being of individuals. Partnerships will be developed with the private sector as necessary to allow achievement of the goals for education.

During ESP implementation much attention will be given to capacity building. In order to ensure achievement of UPE, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) will take all actions to get the many children still not going to school in spite of the government's policy of free primary education to do so.

The ESP prioritizes both institutional and individual capacity building since the capacity needs of the education sector are great at each and every level. Without adequate capacity, the various stakeholders cannot provide an education system of good quality and inputs will be ineffective.

In its pursuit of achieving equity in educational opportunities and outcomes, the MEST has notably elaborated plans to create a department whose mandate will be to promote inclusive education, as well as a curriculum reform which promotes inclusive education. Expansion and upgrading of the education sector will require additional funding and more effective use of resources, given the enormous challenges which the nation faces. The government will increase the overall envelope for education through further donor support and through its own funds as the economy improves year by year. MEST will align allocations of public spending to the various sub-sectors according to the stated policies and priorities as indicated in the ESP. The government will also seek alternative ways of financing education such as by promoting private schools and universities and by engaging in cost recovery at the tertiary level.

*E. Ethiopia*³³

The present government of Ethiopia has placed great importance on education and recognized it as an essential component for society's development needs. Based on its 1994 education policy, which emphasises building capacities which allow citizens to actively participate in the country's development, upholding principles of democracy and responsibility, the country has been through two education sector development programmes between 1997 and 2005. Both were aimed at ensuring better quality of education and expanding access especially for children from rural areas and girls. Ethiopia has set the year 2015 as a goal for achieving good quality primary education. The country has also made EFA a major component of its second development programme and has addressed goals and strategies set in the Dakar Framework for Action.

Coverage of primary education as measured by enrolment in grades 1-8 expanded at an annual rate of growth of 11.3% during the years 1998/99- and 2002/03. Improvements were achieved with greater movement towards equity. Indeed, gender and rural/urban disparities were reduced.

³³ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the Ethiopian 2004 national report to the 47th ICE.

Primary level (1-8) curriculum has been assessed by external evaluators to keep its standard. Accordingly, the syllabi for primary grades (1-8) and first cycle secondary grades (7-10) has been revised and endorsed by the respective subject teachers and curriculum experts. The syllabus revision was enriched by incorporating contents that reflect the new government's strategies on rural development, values and ideals that help ethically good citizens and HIV/AIDS conscious individuals.

The country's new education and training policy gives special attention to technical and vocational educational training (TVET) by providing broad and multi level foundations. TVET is presently divided into training for agriculture, health and teacher training. Serious attention is given to industrial, commercial and skill training as well as training manpower for the development programme the country needs.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is being introduced in the education system to strengthen the expansion of quality education. In a globalised world, Information Communication Technology is vital.

New teacher training colleges are being implemented and already existing ones are being upgraded. In order to improve the quality of education, emphasis is given to improve not only the academic qualifications, but also the methodological approaches and ethical values of the teaching staff.

*F. Kenya*³⁴

Kenya's commitment to achieving Education for All goals entails reaching out to disadvantaged and vulnerable children including girls, orphans, school dropouts, children with special needs, child workers, children from nomadic/pastoralist families, street children, refugees, specially challenged and displaced children.

³⁴ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the Kenyan 2004 national report to the 47th ICE.

The population of people with disabilities in Kenya is estimated at 10 percent of the total population. Enrolment in special education is low given that out of a total population of 750,000 children with disabilities who are in age to go to school only an estimated 90,000 have been properly assessed in relation to their particular learning needs. Only 14,614 are enrolled in educational programs for children with disabilities; while an equivalent number are integrated in regular schools. This implies that over 90 percent of handicapped children are either at home or in regular schools with little or no specialized assistance. At the tertiary level, the enrolment level for disabled youth is low. There is need to enhance mobilization and awareness programs to eradicate taboos and beliefs associated with disabilities, develop and implement a flexible curriculum that is child-centred and make special education an all-inclusive education of children with disabilities into regular schools.

Providing education for the hard to reach groups who are vulnerable, disadvantaged or in difficult circumstances is another challenge that affects equity. Some of these groups include: orphans, working children, street children, girls, specially challenged children, etc.

*G. Uganda*³⁵

Before Universal Primary Education goals were introduced in Uganda in 1996, the few existent schools for children with disabilities were not sufficient to meet the needs of these children. Therefore, most children with disabilities were kept out of school. Today, the situation has changed. Special needs schools benefit from UPE funds. Even more significantly, children with disabilities are being integrated into normal schools through an “inclusion” sector policy. The introduction of UPE and the current broadening of the concept of special needs in education have led to a much higher number of learners with special educational needs receiving education within the mainstream sector. In post

³⁵ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the Ugandan 2004 national report to the 47th ICE and the document: Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports, Uganda National Institute of Special Education. (2001). *Including the Excluded: Meeting Diversity in Education. Example from Uganda*. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001226/122613eo.pdf>.

primary schools there is a steady but slower increase in enrolment and quality of instruction for students with special needs. However, under the macro policy on social integration and on human rights, children with disabilities are encouraged to access education and special measures are in place to address their learning needs. A Department of Special Needs Education and Careers Guidance has been established within the Ministry of Education and Sports to develop and implement policy and to provide an operational framework for special needs education, careers guidance and counselling.

There is the need to provide education for disadvantaged communities including children affected by conflict. This category is more difficult to reach. In most cases the education system has to follow them and adapt to their conditions by providing education facilities wherever they have settled.

The Ugandan government is striving to handle exclusion from educational services through several policies: (i) providing free education for the poor; (ii) sensitization of local communities; (iii) free secondary education for children in conflict; (iv) providing alternative basic education for working children; (v) initiating income generating activities; (vi) more flexible educational programs; (vii) strengthening science and technology and provision of vocational education as qualification framework programs; and (viii) resource allocation to social facilities and amenities.

*H. Malawi*³⁶

The Malawian government's policy on education for people with special needs emphasizes their integration as much as possible into normal schools. In secondary schools and universities, the Malawian Council for the Handicapped provides more assistance to students on the basis of merit and need.

³⁶ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the paper *What Basic Education for Africa? Malawi Presentation* compiled by Rodrick Nthengwe, Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Malawi and the Malawian 2004 national report to the 47th ICE.

While integration has worked for deaf and blind students, there is need for special facilities and programs for persons with other disabilities. At the moment, there are four residential special schools for the deaf/hearing impaired and two for the blind/visually impaired at primary school level. These residential schools accommodate learners with severe impairments who are separated from learners without visual and or hearing impairments. Specialist teachers teach these learners. On the other hand, learners with mild impairments are integrated in resource centres attached to regular schools where a specialist teacher is deployed to the school to support the children with special needs and also the regular teachers. The rest of the learners with impairments, who cannot be accommodated in either residential special schools or resource centres, attend other regular schools. Itinerant teachers who operate in several schools in a catchment area assist these learners. This Itinerant Programme is operational in 24 out of 33 education districts.

At the secondary school level there are eight secondary schools where deaf learners are integrated, nine secondary schools for the blind and only two where learners with physical disabilities are integrated. At college level there are students with all types of impairments at Montfort TTC, Domasi College of Education and Chancellor College (University of Malawi).

However, what has been highlighted reflects only on learners with learning difficulties, hearing impairments and visual impairments. Within the concept of inclusive education, the government has broadened its focus by bringing on board other learners with special needs like orphans, street children, refugees, children in conflict with the law and other. Nevertheless, interventions in this regard are minimal. The Malawian government is planning to introduce a component of special needs education in each of the six regular teacher training colleges so that all the teachers, upon graduation, have skills on how to handle children with special needs.

*I. Ghana*³⁷

The Ghana Education Service recognizes the Rights of the Child as enshrined in its 1992 Constitution. In this regard, every effort is being made to address issues of gender inequality in all aspects of education.

Historically, the school curriculum has been skewed towards the empowerment of boys to the detriment of girls. Consequently, the Curriculum Research and Development Division of the Ghana Education Service have undertaken a number of strategies to raise the level of awareness of both teachers and pupils on the rights of the child and to avoid situations which could evolve into gender discrimination.

The Special Education Division of Ghana Education Service (GES) is mandated to carry out policies that will ensure the social inclusion and quality education for students with special needs.

Educational programs are available for deaf, blind and mentally-handicapped students in both segregated and interpreted settings from basic to tertiary level. Physically-disabled students are educated in the mainstream schools and not in special schools.

According UN estimations, disabled people represent between 10 – 12% of any country's population. Ghana, with a population of around twenty million, therefore probably has 2 to 2.4 million disabled people. The 2000 census calculated that the total school age population (from pre-school to senior secondary school) in Ghana is 6.7 million; therefore the number of disabled people in this age group is estimated between 679,000 and 804,000.

With a population of between 670,000 – 804,000 school age children with disabilities, when one considers that 4,109 children are enrolled in both segregated/integrated schools,

³⁷ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the Ghanaian 2004 national report to the 47th ICE.

it is indicated that only 0.6% of the population of children with disabilities receive any form of education.

Moving towards inclusion is the main policy of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MOEYS), as outlined in the Education Strategic Plan 2003-2015. In collaboration with the British Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), the Ghana Education Service (GES) has developed a project for moving towards a more inclusive system that will address both the special learning needs of pupils in the regular schools and also implement the MOEYS/GES policy of inclusive education.

After basic education, blind students are integrated into selected second cycle institutions and Teacher Training Colleges. This facility is also available for deaf students. However not much has been achieved in the area of curriculum adaptation to address the diverse learning needs of children with special needs in the regular classroom.

J. Common Challenges for the Region

Countries in this region have made significant progress in terms of EFA goals and implementation of nine-year basic education.

In terms of integration and inclusive education, many policies or policy objectives are being elaborated, leading to equal opportunities for all pupils and a generally more adapted education. There is still no unified concept or general implementation of inclusive education in the region, nonetheless there is increasing engagement towards this type of education and also a common tendency to broaden the scope of targeted groups beyond disabled children.

Challenges remain in regard to design and implementation of inclusive educational practices addressing the diverse needs of all learners, including those whose factor of

exclusion is not a disability, but rather an economic, social, cultural, gender, etc., type of factor.

For most African countries the major challenge still remains to assure education for all. Education for All equally cares about inclusion of all children into the formal education system, but obstacles can be mainly linked to development levels: poverty, rural areas, the gender gap, etc. being quoted the most often. Thus, the need for broadening the concept and scope of inclusive education is very much linked to the current processes of educational change. These processes mainly imply the strengthening and the revision of basic education by improving the transition between primary and secondary education, the development of competency-based approaches in curriculum and also improvement in the provision of learning resources (e.g. textbooks).

The main challenges the African region faces appear to be related to: (i) positioning a broadened concept of inclusive education, an inclusive curriculum and a renovated school model as the critical dimensions to expand and democratize basic education in Africa; (ii) development of a holistic, integrated and inclusive competency-based curriculum framework relevant to the needs of children and youth in Africa for the minimum 9-year basic education; and (iii) raising awareness and convincing stakeholders that quality education cannot be achieved if teachers lack motivation. Participants strongly called upon governments and communities to create incentives regenerating teachers' social status. As in the other regions, advocacy campaigns about inclusive education were considered to be needed in order to sensitize all stakeholders, including policy makers, educators, communities and families.

Curriculum development and change represent an important challenge for most African countries³⁸. Indeed curricula throughout the region are often overloaded and unbalanced, too academic, exceedingly focused on the objective of progression and do not address issues of skill development, preparation for life, for the world of work and for sustainable

³⁸ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the presentation and discussion performed by Teeluck Bhuwanee, Programme Specialist, UNESCO/BREDA (Dakar, Senegal) at the Regional Workshop.

development. Setting curricula right is a challenging task for which many aspects must be taken into consideration, such as: (i) identifying the profile of school leavers at national levels; (ii) identifying expected learning outcomes; (iii) finding alternative methods of assessment to be explored; (iv) gathering information on the labour market and other socio-economic requirements in order to meet learners' needs and aspirations (e.g. work changes, employment, health, HIV/AIDS); (v) balancing local elements (e.g. African culture and history, economy, gender issues), with global considerations (globalisation, world trade, cultural differences etc.); (vi) maximising education in Science and Math, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), and HIV/AIDS; (vii) finding ways of moving to competency-based approaches, problem-solving, interdisciplinary learning etc.; and (viii) identifying best practices that can be recommended to teachers.

The region is faced by another contemporary challenge: the financial burden entailed by educational reforms³⁹. In 1990, less than half the children in Africa achieved primary education, today it is more than two third of the children. Some countries have almost attained UPE goals, others are still far from it. Fifteen countries have or will reach it by 2015; a dozen others will not make this objective but will see a considerable increase in primary education achievement. Thirty countries had an access rate to secondary education lower than 60% in the year 2000. Since then, about 20 countries have achieved a global acceleration in these access rates. Due to these important developments, pupil-teacher ratios have increased and remain the highest in the world. Also, the quality of teaching bodies has deteriorated in many countries, because of preponderance of unqualified or insufficiently qualified teachers. In light of these observations, the push to achieve 9-year basic education, albeit having many positive aspects, represents an important financial challenge for African countries if they wish to have relatively small classes and qualified teachers. Indeed, this extension/expansion of education must not be done to the detriment of proper educational environments and conditions. The financial burden which needs to be borne in most countries outweighs heavily what is sustainable through public financing. Solutions are in the hands of policy-makers, but they require a

³⁹ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the presentation and discussion performed by Borel Foko, Educational Policies Analyst, Pole Dakar, UNESCO/BREDA (Dakar, Senegal) at the Regional Workshop.

comprehensive sectorial approach. There are indeed possibilities to mobilise more resources, notably through better opportunities of economic growth (there are hypotheses of a 4-6% growth rate in the next decade) and attraction of national and international financing. Also, costs of first and secondary education can be reduced through alternative organisational means and provisions of educational services. Obviously, there is no unique model and all countries face different situations. A realist agenda requires prioritising and, in many countries, confirmation and consolidation of UPE goals will remain centre-stage.

Common barriers of exclusion include, among others: lack of resources and data, lack of trained teachers and staff, lack of clear educational/curricular guidelines addressing diversity, insufficient family involvement, gender inequalities, financial burdens of educational reforms, geographical remoteness (difficult to reach areas), regional disparities, on-going or post-conflict regions, etc.

V. Good Practices

A. Good Practices in the Region⁴⁰

A.1. Abolishment of school fees (Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone, the Gambia and Tanzania)

In *Kenya*, introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE), which abolished all levies charged at public primary schools created learning opportunities for many poor children who could not access education in the past due to user charges. This strategy alone led to a 22% increment in enrolment in public primary schools in one year and brought on board children who in the past would not have had the opportunity to access education. Moreover, bursaries are allocated for secondary and higher education targeting students from poor backgrounds, as well as talented ones. This aims at improving access and retention of the vulnerable groups.

In *Malawi*, in order to encourage parents to send their children with special needs to school, certain provisions exist for remission of fees depending on the needs of the family.

In *Sierra Leone*, the government's decision to offer free primary education and free West African Examinations Council (WAEC) examinations led to primary school enrolment increasing from 659,503 to 1,280,853 between the years 2001/02 and 2004/05.

In *The Gambia*, tuition is free for all pupils from grade 1 to 6. Scholarships and sponsorship schemes, particularly for girls, have been expanded significantly. For instance, the President Jammeh Foundation, the Girls Education Scholarship Scheme and the Angels Trust Fund aim to make education free for all girls in the country from basic education level to senior secondary school level.

⁴⁰ The information in this section is mainly adapted from UNESCO, (2007). *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007. Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education*. Paris: UNESCO and the 2004 country reports to the 47th ICE.

The *United Republic of Tanzania* abolished school fees in 2001, resulting in a large increase in enrolment but also in a very rapid forcing up of public spending in order to offset the lost fee revenue. Public spending on education grew from 2.1% of GDP in 2000 to 4.3% in 2004. Tanzanian spending on education as a percentage of GDP and of overall public spending as well as the removal of school fees show the increasing level of priority given to education.

A.2. Well-targeted and well-managed incentives to increase access for the marginalized (Ghana, Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia)

In order to reduce the cost of education on parents and in response to the 1992 constitutional provision for free and compulsory education, the Ministry of Education and Sports in *Ghana* introduced, in 2004, a pilot capitation grants programme to forty selected deprived districts. The capitation grant was provided to schools to abolish all school levies such as charges for school-based extracurricular activities. This programme was judged to be successful and extended to all 138 districts in the country. By 2005, enrolments in basic education increased from 3.7 million to 4.3 million, an increase of about 16% (Ghana Educational Services, 2005). Moreover, a programme was launched in September 1998 with the main aim of improving the quality life of the Karaimojong (a semi-nomadic people who live in north-eastern Uganda) children and their community notably through providing access to formal primary school education and supporting primary schools concerned.

In *Kenya*, in order to address the issue of hard to reach students, the government has put up boarding primary schools in the arid and semiarid areas and provided school feeding programs in ASAL areas, urban slums and pockets of poverty. For children and youth who cannot fit in the regular or non formal schools, the informal sector popularly known as the “*Jua Kali*” provides skills training for those not admitted to technical training institutes. The “*Jua Kali*” sector is flexible and equips the youth with hands-on skills as they learn under tutelage.

The *Ugandan* government, working with NGOs, has provided temporary learning centres for displaced school children in areas of insurgency in north and east Uganda in order to provide education for children in disadvantaged communities, including those affected by conflict.

In the same vein, the government of *Ethiopia* is seeking to meet the needs of children and young people in post-conflict situations. Its Healing Classrooms Initiative in northern Ethiopia provides support for the psychosocial and educational needs of children in refugee camps. Moreover, the problem of out-of-school children, especially those in pastoralist and semi-agriculturist regions is being minimized through an alternative mode of education delivery which is suited to the regions' socio-economic and cultural realities. This programme helps not only the reduction of disparities among the regions but also the realization of Ethiopia's commitment of universalizing primary education by 2015.

A.3. Policies encouraging gender equality and access to education for girls (Ghana and the Gambia)

In *Ghana*, gender equity is addressed through several curriculum development programs. First of all, syllabus development and review and textbook development and review serve the purpose of gender equity. Throughout the syllabuses of all subjects at basic and senior secondary schools levels content and teaching-learning activities have been carefully formulated so that they do not introduce any gender biases into the classroom. This is meant to ensure that the expected learning outcomes - knowledge, skills, behaviour, attitudes etc. - accrue to every learner irrespective of gender. All specific objectives, for example, begin with: "The *pupil* will be able to". In a number of teaching-learning activities, "his/her" are used together to ensure that teachers involve both sexes in every classroom activity. Regarding content, gender-oriented messages and language such as 'chairman,' 'mankind' etc. which could introduce some gender biases have been replaced with gender-neutral language such as 'humankind', 'chairperson' etc. Furthermore, issues on 'Rights of the Child' have been introduced into the environmental and social studies syllabuses to make all school-age children aware of their rights and the need to respect

gender equality. To implement gender friendly curriculum, teachers who are key implementers of the curriculum have become sensitized through a number of in-service training sessions. Most classroom teachers have now been made aware that they need to be critical about classroom organization, selection of instructional materials, delivery of teaching-learning activities as well as seating patterns in the classroom in order to promote gender equity in schools. Monitoring has been strengthened to enforce this sensitization.

In *The Gambia*, the Scholarship Trust Fund for Girls is designed to increase girls' access to, retention in and performance during upper basic and secondary education. In low-income regions, the fund awards full scholarships for tuition, books and examination fees to one-third of the girls in schools with low enrolment levels. In less deprived regions, 10% of the girls who excel in science, technology and mathematics receive full scholarships. In 2004, more than 13,800 lower-secondary girls and more than 2,600 upper-secondary girls received scholarships. As a result of the programme, girls' enrolment in three regions rose from 32% in 1999 to 65% in 2004/05 at lower-secondary level and from 11% to 24% at upper-secondary level.

A.4. Ensure sufficient, efficient and sustainable resource allocation to education of all children (Kenya and Benin)

The share of government expenditure devoted to education is one indicator of the importance of education in relation to other national priorities. This share ranges from 10% to more than 40% in the vast majority of the countries with data available for 2004. Education accounts for one-quarter or more of the government budget in *Kenya*, and increases of 30% or more were registered in *Benin* for example.

A.5. Making non-formal education institutions quality institutions (Kenya, Malawi and Uganda)

The government of *Kenya*, in partnership with education providers such as the community and the civil society, is supporting non-formal education institutions to make them quality institutions. The schools mainly admit school dropouts, displaced and street children. These children find it difficult to fit in the formal system due to its rigidity, in addition to the opportunity cost of being in school as the majority head households or support themselves.

In *Malawi*, programmes are being put into place by the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports to impart knowledge to out-of-school youth in areas such as sexual and reproductive health, livelihood skills, and environmental issues.

Uganda has a three-year programme of Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas, offering non-formal basic education to urban out-of-school children and adolescents aged 9 to 18. It is module-based and contains adapted versions of the main subjects taught in primary schools, as well as pre-vocational training.

A.6. Incentives for teachers and teacher training (Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia)

A strategy to increase the supply of teachers is to reduce the length of time spent on pre-service training. The shortening of the teacher training cycle is a growing trend, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa where countries following this path include *Ghana*, *Guinea*, *Malawi*, *Mozambique*, *Uganda* and the *United Republic of Tanzania*.

In *Guinea*, for example, a primary teacher education programme initiated in 1998 shortened the cycle of initial training from three to two years and resulted in an increased numbers of new teachers – 1,522 per year compared with 200 before the reform. The teachers trained in the new programme are as effective as those who graduated from the

previous one. Also, the programme is considered cost-effective because of a higher ratio of student teachers to teacher trainers⁴¹.

The *Kenyan* government has included a 20% rural hardship allowance for teachers working in rural areas as an incentive for teaching in these areas where work conditions are often very unattractive.

In *Ethiopia*, several programmes have been put into place such as the “Teacher Education System Overhaul” under which new curriculum material has been developed to emphasize active learning by means of modular approach; and a programme of continuous professional development where teachers update their knowledge with new outlooks, approaches and policy direction.

B. Common Elements of Good Practices

Each country in the region could advance on broadening the concept of inclusive education, committing to an official policy and looking to successful initiatives on an inter-regional basis in order to articulate and implement inclusive educational policy. Abolishment of school fees, increased access for the marginalized and incentives for teachers and teacher training are some of the actions that countries have been able to implement, thereby making progress in the realm of inclusive education. In summary, the key elements of good practices incorporate ideas of awareness, flexibility and diversity both in terms of the offer and demand of education and a coherent transition between the different levels of the educational system. They also seek to bolster adapted teacher training, cross-sectoral cooperation (political, social, and economic) and involvement of students, parents and the community at the international, national and local levels.

⁴¹ Dembélé. (2004). *Competent Teachers for African Classrooms: Looking Ahead*. In *IIEP Newsletter*, Paris. Vol. XXII, No. 1. pp. 5-6.

Experts from China and Latin America were invited to the Regional Workshop in order to inspire African counterparts with international experiences in comparable reform processes.

*C. China*⁴²

China has been through a comprehensive ten-year educational development process towards expanding compulsory education. Within this development, two goals have been upheld: popularising compulsory education and ensuring education quality. Three stages have been recognised as guiding the way to compulsory education: (i) forming policy and legal foundations; (ii) providing necessary funds and (iii) implementation of a new curriculum and teaching philosophy.

The country went through significant progress between 1995 and 2005 such as an increase in 58.8% of the population covered by the “Two Basics⁴³” programme, an increase of 7.6 % in primary graduation rate, an increase of 16.6% in secondary gross enrolment rate and a decrease of 1.4% in secondary drop-out rate.

The Chinese government has made significant investments in educational projects since 1995, both at central and local level. For example, total governmental inputs have been of about 20 billion RMB for implementing compulsory education in poor regions and of about 28 billion RMB for the renovation of school buildings.

The “Two-Exempted and One-Subsidized” policy, in place since 2005, has put in place several initiatives to encourage education of children from rural or poor urban origin. It consists in exempting tuition and miscellaneous fees, subsidising living expenses for

⁴²The information in this section is mainly adapted from the presentation and discussion performed by Prof. Jinghuan Shi, Institute of Education, Tsinghua University, People’s Republic of China.

⁴³ This involves basically universalizing 9-Year Compulsory Education and basically eradicating illiteracy among young and middle-aged groups.

boarding school children and offering free textbooks. The government spending so far has been important: 3.04 billion RMB for freeing textbooks and tuition, 3.06 billion RMB for freeing miscellaneous fees and 1.1 billion RMB for subsidizing boarding students' costs.

The successful popularization of compulsory education in China can be summarized through the following points: (i) a favourable legal and political environment (Compulsory Educational Law of 1986, comprehensive assessment system set up to evaluate progress in 1994, etc.); (ii) guaranteed financial support with the government as the major contributor but also shared responsibilities between central and local government levels, as well as community and society input; and (iii) improvement of hardware equipments and software conditions (teacher quality and salary).

Since 1999, the country has been through a curriculum reform with the goal of ensuring education quality. In China, the content of the curriculum and of textbooks used to be centralised and unified at State level. Since the reform, local authorities and schools have the freedom to choose specific teaching materials themselves in order to meet the curriculum standard. Courses are standardized at three levels: central-state, local-state and schools. This system strives to integrate “real-life” experiences. For example, an urban middle school is using the topic of “old batteries” as a study case. Students are asked to form a team and to work on the question of the detrimental effects of old batteries on the environment. In this ambition, they are asked to interview experts and to design questionnaires and experiments. They must then analyse the data they have gathered, organise group discussions and share their findings with the rest of the students. This type of exercise allows students to learn to gain information by researching, to acquire a scientific way of thinking and to cultivate civil awareness and responsibility.

7,000,000 primary and secondary teachers participated in training under the New Curriculum Reform between 1999 and 2005. These trainings represented a new approach integrating holistic training, professional development as well as capacity building, and

were realized by universities, specialised teacher training schools, the National Education Bureau and other social organisations.

Several conclusions and recommendations can be drawn from the Chinese experience: (i) the government should be efficient in setting up targets, mobilizing social forces, and implementing universal education through the management system; (ii) financial responsibility to support educational development should be clearly shared, whereby the central government must take a major portion, while society as a whole should contribute; (iii) through decentralization, more social participation can be mobilized to bring about educational changes; (iv) external frameworks should be constructed to support a lifelong education (education quality evaluation system, teacher's professional development programme etc.); and (v) within the context of universal education and lifelong learning, informal education should be moved into focus in order to construct a new relationship between school and community and to allow schools to play the role of regional learning and cultural centres.

*D. Latin America*⁴⁴

Several goals can be identified in the region: compulsory extension of basic education to nine or ten years, democratisation of education, quality and equity of education opportunities, and the provision of education as a right. One important challenge to uphold these goals is the substitution of the traditional secondary education paradigm for a new paradigm that would notably allow the following:

- a. Secondary education for all versus elitism
- b. Flexible education versus homogenous education
- c. Learning to live together versus an exceedingly cognitive approach
- d. Use of senses, motivation, emotions versus mere acquisition of knowledge

⁴⁴ The information in this section is mainly adapted from the presentation and discussion performed by Ms. Beatriz Macedo, Regional Education Specialist, OREALC/UNESCO Santiago, Chili.

- e. Articulation, integration and coordination of different fields of knowledge versus structuring and juxtaposition of subjects
- f. Competences and abilities for life versus traditional knowledge

In the EFA framework, PRELAC/OREALC/UNESCO (Santiago), is developing actions for: (i) promoting the production of knowledge on different aspects of the educational problematic in particular regarding the need to provide education to teenagers and youth in the region; (ii) facilitating the creation of inter-sectorial common work which would allow for the elaboration of comprehensive policies benefiting teenagers and youth; (iii) creating necessary interfaces between research centres, decision making, elaboration of reforms, and teacher training implementation; (iv) facilitating exchanges between countries of the region regarding current experiences, innovative projects and information.; (v) proposing necessary changes in the training of professors in order for them be able to integrate reform processes in a real and effective way; and (vi) implementing innovative experiences in which research groups, professor training institutions and secondary education centres can interact on a permanent basis.

The following two main strategies have been elaborated: the creation of a Permanent Forum, a platform for mobilization and exchange for countries in the Latin American region; and the creation of an Observatory on Policies and Reforms of Secondary Education in Latin America.

VI. The Way Forward

A. The Way Forward regarding Inclusive Education

The discussion was mainly focused on how to move forward on inclusive education. Participants considered that achieving inclusive education goals might take a long time but agreed that it was necessary to embrace them if EFA goals are to be attained. Special attention should be given, among others, to girls (including those forced into prostitution), children with disabilities or special needs, street children and out-of-school children, working children, socially stigmatized children (orphans, HIV and AIDS affected children, etc.), children belonging to nomadic and minority groups, and finally children having lived a conflict. Participants suggested actions to be taken to encourage inclusive education in the region. To meet the needs of each various groups, alternative possibilities were suggested: accelerated learning, mobile schools, rehabilitation, non-formal education models and community learning centres. Also, in schools, teachers ought to be re-trained in order for them to acquire intellectual freedom as well as the necessary knowledge and skills necessary for the adaptation of their teaching approaches to children's needs.

Jointly with UNESCO ED/BAS, BREDa, Cluster and National Offices in Africa, the World Bank, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the African Development Bank (ADB); the International Bureau of Education (IBE) plans to develop a proposal for an inclusive curriculum framework for expanded basic education in Africa. It will mainly imply the development of the capacity of curriculum developers to design and implement a curriculum framework for basic education, as well as of their capacity to continue the policy dialogue, exchange information, documentation, experiences and good practices through the African Community of Practice in Curriculum Development.

Furthermore, in line with the four sub-themes⁴⁵ of the ICE 2008, workshop attendees discussed the following strategic components of inclusive education: concept; policy and legislation; finance; institutions; curriculum design and implementation; teacher training; awareness; and UNESCO's role in the region, especially with respect to actions that need to be taken in order to attain inclusive education. The main points of discussion centred around the questions in the following diagram, which is yet to be completed and improved upon according to the outcomes of future Regional Workshops on inclusive education (See schedule of upcoming Regional Workshops at the end of the document):

⁴⁵ (i) Inclusive Education: Concept, Scope and Approaches; (ii) Inclusive Education: Policy and Legislation; (iii) Inclusive Education: Systems, Links and Transitions and (iv) Inclusive Education: Learners and Teachers



CONCEPT:

There is a need to clearly identify and determine targeted groups.

- Several target groups are identified in the region: girls, children in schools which are held by volunteer teachers, street children and out-of-school children, children living with a handicap, children of house personnel/servants, socially stigmatised children (from divorced families, children of alcoholics, AIDS orphans), gifted children, children from specific social backgrounds (minorities, nomads, strongly Islamised children), post-conflict children, guide children (who are used to guide their blind or disabled parents to beg on the street), children forced into commercial prostitution, children living in slums, and displaced children (after wars, natural disasters, etc.).

POLICY/LEGISLATION

- School years must be arranged according to nomadic populations' movements.
- Learning opportunities should be widened in order to take into account the specific competencies of each student.
- There is a strong need to detect handicaps from an early stage.

FINANCE

- An increase in budgetary allocations is required for inclusive education.
- Regarding street children and out-of-school children, parents' financial capacities should be reinforced.
- Regarding several targeted groups, there is a need to put in place projects which generate income.

INSTITUTIONS

- Different types of institutions are needed for different target groups.
- Mildly impaired children should be enrolled in formal mainstream schools. The handicapped children should also be progressively integrated into formal education school structures.
- Special schools for children who have severe physical or mental disabilities are needed.

- There is a need to identify/establish transitional institutions for special purposes such as rehabilitation and guidance of certain categories of children before they are put into mainstream schools.
- Boarding school facilities for orphans and other needy children should be developed.
- There is a need for long distance education, mobile schools and maximisation of the use of technology in education.
- “Catching up” structures should be created for street children, out-of-school children, house personnel children, etc., and elitist schools should be abandoned.
- Programmes should be initiated to bring children to level in specific centres and psychological help should be put in place.
- Community learning centres should be created for skills development in fields such as agriculture, handicraft, etc.

CURRICULUM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Different types of curriculum and institutions are needed for different target groups.
- Flexible curricula must be put into place for street and out-of-school children.
- Specific curricula should be elaborated for socially stigmatised children.
- Specific curricula should be elaborated for girls who cannot integrate school.
- For children from specific social backgrounds (minorities, nomads, strongly Islamised children), curricula which integrate their specific cultures should be established.
- Assessment and expertise facilities should be elaborated because children would need to be assessed or pass systemic needs analysis to determine the institutions in which they should be placed.
- Guidance and counselling should be provided in all the identified institutions.

TEACHER TRAINING AND INCENTIVES

- It is also necessary to allow teachers to be creative and thus acquire better capacity building techniques.

- It is necessary to change teachers' attitudes, improve their teaching abilities.
- Teacher self-training and implementation of inclusive curricula by teachers must be encouraged.
- Teachers need to be retrained in order for them to be able to adopt more adequate teaching approaches, become learning facilitators, and provide knowledge and skills to deal with special needs.
- Incentives should be provided for teachers, notably by improving their social status and by ameliorating their living conditions (increasing salaries, providing better living accommodation, according them home leaves, increasing the respect given to them, allowing them to be included in society themselves etc.).

AWARENESS

- A conducive advocacy campaign at local and national levels promoting inclusion is necessary.
- There is a need to sensitize community leaders, political, civil servants, stakeholders, etc.
- For socially stigmatized children there is a need to lead a campaign of psychological help for children and parents.
- Employers must be sensitized with regard to the situation of their house personnel's children.
- Regarding nomad children in particular, there is a strong need to negotiate with parents.

SUPPORT

- Support is an essential element for the achievement of inclusive education. Sensitizing and informing families and communities about the availability of such education is absolutely necessary.
- Special framework structures and adaptation of education structures (chairs, stairs, tables, blackboards...) should be elaborated for children living with a handicap.
- It is crucial to give particular attention to dropouts and to give support to their parents in order for these children to be subsequently included again.
- There is a need to reinforce the capacities of volunteers creating and taking care of schools.

Clearly, there is great value in sharing national perspectives in a regional context because collective learning is very enriching and stimulating. The workshop participants are now aware of the ICE 2008, its objectives, scope and modalities, and will become agents for dissemination of this knowledge within their sphere of action. Since each workshop participant is already a member of several other networks they can disseminate the workshops outcomes, with a multiplier effect, using existing websites and planned events. Additional professional exchanges among participants and with IBE have been generated as a result of this workshop. Furthermore, participants will rely on each other for provisions of technical expertise and professional peer support. Cooperative relations will be established not only among the regional participants, but also through inter-regional exchange with inclusive education specialists working in other parts of the world.

*B. The Way Forward Regarding Competence-Based Curricula in Africa*⁴⁶

The competency-based approach appears to be an effective answer to the emergence of a new way of conceiving and understanding the role of education today, in different regions of the world. Most importantly, it is an increasingly useful tool that could contribute to a further acceleration in the direction of the attainment of EFA goals⁴⁷.

One can identify four areas of debate with regard to processes of competency-based curriculum change: (i) debates on how to envisage education systems; that is, they seem to be undergoing serious difficulties in terms of guaranteeing an effective articulation and a fluid navigability across different levels; (ii) debates on how to address the diversity of learner's expectations, demands and needs in terms of education policies, curricular

⁴⁶ This section is mainly adapted from the paper *Competency-based Curriculum Development: Some Lessons from Other Regions* by Renato Operti, Programme Specialist, IBE-UNESCO.

⁴⁷ The six EFA goals refer to the expansion of early childhood care and education, to the provisioning of free and compulsory primary education for all, to the promotion of learning and life skills for young people and adults, to the increase of adult literacy by 50%, to the achievement of gender parity by 2005 and gender equality by 2015, and to the improvement of the quality of education. See http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php_URL_ID=42332&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

frameworks, and teacher practices; (iii) debates around the concept of competency itself: most curriculum specialists and developers agree on the need to reach a consensus regarding the legitimacy and acceptance of a concept of competency, as it can be easily misunderstood due to its polemical and polysemic features and; (iv) debates concerning the concept of Pedagogy By Objectives (PBO) and its relationship with the competency based-approach.

It is believed that the Latin American experiences and their learning contexts can provide useful inputs in designing and strengthening processes of competency-based curriculum change in basic education in Africa.

By comparing and contrasting experiences from different regions of the world, one can see that there is a common concern to understand and respect diversity by implementing measures such as: inclusive policies and student-centred curricular frameworks; pedagogic practices which respond to students' expectations and needs; teachers' professional development; and school-based support.

There are several key lessons learned from on-going processes of implementing competency-based approaches, principally linked to Basic and Youth Education. They could provide useful inputs to address a comprehensive curricular reform as a key component to effectively democratize basic education in Africa, principally with regard to school years 7 to 10.

In overall terms, one can assert that competency-based approaches have contributed to enlarge the aims and objectives of education systems and to democratize learning opportunities (typically the case of Latin America). At the same time, they have had a significant impact on the curriculum structure, laying the foundations for extending the concept of basic education. However there are two main challenges in the application of a competency-based approach in relation to the curriculum; one is related to the structure and content of curricular subjects, and the other to their effective implementation at the classroom level.

*C. Guidelines for Constructing a Curriculum Framework for Basic Education*⁴⁸

The ‘systemic’ approach to curriculum development implies that school curriculum is more than a textbook or set of documents isolated from other parts of the education system. This approach views education as a set of interrelated sub-systems, each having one group of issues or responsibilities as its primary concern, but all sharing the common goal of improving the quality of teaching and learning. Successful implementation of curriculum relies on the acknowledgement of the inter-related sub-systems.

There is a need to:

- set a context of contemporary trends in education
- advocate a ‘systemic’ approach to curriculum development
- define what we mean by ‘curriculum framework’
- discuss the purpose of a curriculum framework and its components and
- pose some critical questions related to the development of contemporary curriculum and curriculum frameworks.

There are several emerging and continuously developing trends in education which have implications for curriculum developers; some of particular interest are as follows: (i) the movement away from curriculum focusing solely on knowledge to be acquired to the development in students of a range of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes – in other words a significant broadening of the range of domains in which achievement is expected from students and achievement is seen as valuable; (ii) the belief that valuable learning should and does occur beyond the years of basic education and even schooling; engagement in learning should in fact be a lifelong activity for which schools must prepare their students by teaching them how to learn; and (iii) the attention now given to the processes of curriculum development as well as the quality of the final product or documentation.

⁴⁸ This section is mainly adapted from the paper *Guidelines for Constructing a Curriculum Framework for Basic Education* by Phil Stabback, Consultant for the IBE-UNESCO.

Although curriculum development is never a simple process, there are planned steps which could include: (i) conducting a ‘contextual scan’; (ii) researching relevant best practices; (iii) consulting with stakeholders; (iv) developing a curriculum framework; (v) writing syllabuses in agreed subjects or learning areas; (vi) developing an implementation plan that sets achievable goals; and (vii) monitoring implementation.

To implement any curriculum-related change (including expanding basic education), one needs to:

- Know the educational context, acknowledging and taking into account all educational sub-systems and stakeholders
- Develop a vision
- Plan for the achievable, including staged implementation based on the capacity of the various sub-systems
- Document a curriculum framework, syllabuses and teaching-learning resources in an integrated way
- Be action-oriented
- Monitor progress

*D. The Way Forward Regarding A Holistic Movement Towards 9-year Basic Education in Africa*⁴⁹

Opportunities to follow up on the seminar were presented in the last session, in particular the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Biennale which will be held on May 6-9 2008, with 500 expected participants. This event will be an occasion for participants and their countries to advance on major educational challenges in Africa through evidence-based policy dialogue with all stakeholders. The theme of the 2008 Biennale will be Post-Primary Education and Training (PPET). It will include three sub-themes: (i) extending basic education: assuring a minimum of 10 (8-11) years of education for all; (ii) socio-economic integration: Technical and Vocational Education

⁴⁹ This section is mainly adapted from the presentations and discussions performed by Mamadou Ndoeye, Executive Secretary, ADEA and Annelie Strath, Task Team Leader, World Bank at the Regional Workshop.

and Training (TVET) and labor markets in urban and rural settings; and (iii) articulation between upper-secondary (USE) and tertiary education (TE). Participants will include representatives from African countries, representatives of African organizations such as the Council on Higher Education (CHE) South Africa, the Educational Research Network for East and Southern Africa (ERNESA), the Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ROCARE), the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE), and the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi). Also, representatives from different regions will present their own experiences: India (National Institute of Open Schooling), Latin America (redEtis, IIEP), East-Asian experiences (Singapore, Thailand), Tajikistan, Yemen (GTZ), and the Commonwealth of Learning. Many contributions will also be made by national and international agencies and the ADEA working group.

The aim will be to learn through analysis, individually or in a group, of actions taken in the field, to put the lessons learned into perspective, to compare them with experiences from other countries and with the international state of knowledge, and finally to return to these actions, seeking to improve and develop them.

The World Bank Secondary Education and Training in Africa (SEIA) programme also proposed ways of moving forward. Based on a multiyear study undertaken in collaboration with Sub-Saharan Africa, its objectives include: (i) collecting and summarizing best practices; (ii) identifying sustainable development plans for expanding and improving the quality, equity and efficiency of secondary education and training in Africa; and (iii) finding ways for donor agencies to better coordinate and support reform in secondary education and training. Key issues surrounding the expansion of secondary education could be responded to by thematic studies regarding: (i) strategies for sustainable financing; (ii) ways of making transition process and mechanisms more equitable and efficient; (iii) issues of and recommendations for governance; (iv) management and accountability and lessons learned from developing the subjects of science and mathematics and (v) Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Moreover, guidance and technical assistance should be provided in the following forms:

(i) providing support to individual countries in developing sustainable national strategies for the expansion of post-primary education and training and to attract additional financing; (ii) consensus-building towards the expansion of secondary education and training, improving quality and conducting policy dialogues with major stakeholders; and (iii) supporting policy dialogue at both national and regional levels in evaluating policies, identifying best practices to build up a knowledge base for Africa, and thus mapping out policy options for better planning and management of secondary education.

E. The “Kigali Call for Action”⁵⁰

At this Regional Workshop, UNESCO and its education partners, among others the African Union, ADEA and the World Bank, have come to the conclusion that a thorough, sector-wide reform of basic education in African countries is required. The “Kigali Call for Action” was approved by the participants.

This reform consists of two major parts:

- i) A necessary extension of basic education to a minimum of 9-10 years duration viewed as a continuous education experience
- ii) An indispensable reform of basic education, responding to the evolution and exigencies of the African societies. UNESCO and its partners have supported initiatives and formulated proposals to reform education systems in Africa, and to mobilize national authorities in charge of education to commit themselves to promoting the development of a holistic, integrated and inclusive competency-based curriculum framework.

All participants pledged commitment to reorienting and/or creating a new architecture or strengthening efforts towards expanding basic education in Africa. In order to attain such

⁵⁰ This section is mainly adapted from the *Kigali Call for Action* presented, discussed and approved by the participants of the Regional Workshop as one of the major outcomes of the event.

reforming goals, all participants committed themselves to national and international/regional actions.

From a national perspective, governments were urged to reform and expand basic education and to foster appropriate frameworks, policy environments, communication and promotion in order to uphold the right to education for all, develop good practices, reform national curriculums, train specialists and increase existing allocations to education.

From a regional or international perspective, several organisations, banks and civil society organisations/communities were called upon to act:

- i) UNESCO was asked to: (i) disseminate pertinent documents (such as the Kigali Call for Action); (ii) promote education as a right for all and the African Community of Practice on Curriculum Development as a communication platform; (iii) assist countries in their reform process (technical, legal and policy assistance; teacher training; expansion of curricula; facilitation of networking, communication and consultation)
- ii) UN agencies were called upon to work together with the UN system and in the framework of UNDAF to develop the necessary synergies to enhance learning through interventions in several areas (health, nutrition, water and sanitation (WASH), HIV/AIDS, environment, peace, school, humanitarian emergency intervention)
- iii) ADEA was requested to: (i) set up a regional education network; (ii) disseminate the Kigali Call for Action in its 2007 biennale; (iii) promote and support efforts in setting up a basic education cycle of at least 9 years.
- iv) The World Bank and the African Development Bank received an appeal to: (i) support the implementation of basic education policies; (ii) provide policy advice, technical assistance and financial strategies to execute such policies; (iii) provide the necessary financial support to all countries that have developed national policies/reforms/plans and have introduced a minimum of 9-10 years basic education.
- v) Finally, civil societies/communities were encouraged to: (i) use their network and promote social dialogue to facilitate the sharing of information and experiences on a 9-10 years basic education; (ii) reinforce the relationship between schools and communities, support non-formal education and create synergies between formal and non-formal education.

VII. Relevant Issues for a Regional Agenda

Outline of some core issues corresponding to the suggested four themes of the 48th ICE.

- Inclusive Education: Approaches, Scope and Content:
 - (a) Inclusive education touches the very foundation, strategies and contents of the education system. It promotes active citizenship, social justice and collective well-being. To address inclusive education, a human rights-based approach well embedded in the holistic framework of EFA goals should be adopted.
 - (b) For the region of Africa, apart from children with disabilities or special needs, other vulnerable groups of children cannot be ignored. These groups include, among others: girls, children in schools which are held by volunteer teachers, street children and out-of-school children, children of house personnel/servants, socially stigmatised children (from divorced families, children of alcoholics, AIDS orphans), gifted children, children from specific social backgrounds (minorities, nomads, strongly Islamised children), post-conflict children, guide children (who are used to guide their blind or disabled parents to beg on the street), children forced into commercial prostitution, children living in slums and displaced children (by war, natural disasters, etc.).
- Inclusive Education: Public Policies:
 - (a) Knowledge and political commitment should to be strengthened concerning the importance of meeting specific needs of each learner, especially those learners that are hard to reach.
 - (b) The role of the government in developing inclusive education policies should imply advocacy, coherent and sustainable policy design, attainment of financial sustainability, capacity building for relevant institutions and actors, active involvement of multiple stakeholders and accountability to society.
 - (c) Ways should be found to support the financial burden of educational reforms.
- Inclusive Education: Systems, Links and Transitions:
 - (a) In line with the EFA Goals and efforts made to develop primary education in Africa, the need to expand compulsory basic education by adapting secondary education has become undeniable in the region.

- (b) The process of attaining inclusive education in Africa, at the current stage, will mainly imply the strengthening and the revision of basic education by improving the transition between primary and secondary education, the development of competency-based approaches in curriculum and improvement in the provision of learning resources (e.g. textbooks).
- Inclusive Education: Learners and Teachers:
 - (a) Inclusive education should be learner-centred and synonymous of a good quality education. Each child should be conveyed with high expectations and provided with individual support.
 - (b) It is critical for African countries to improve teacher social status, living and working conditions in order to retain the teaching force.
 - (c) There is an urgent need to reinforce teacher training in the region so that teachers' attitudes, practices and teaching capacities can be improved accordingly.

VIII. Appendix

List of IBE Regional Consultative Activities on Inclusive Education

The workshops are planned over the period June 2007 – March 2008 in different geographical regions according to the following calendar:

1. Eastern and South Eastern Europe: Sinaia, Romania (14-16 June 2007), completed;
2. Eastern and Western Sub-Saharan Africa: Nairobi, Kenya (25-27 July 2007) completed;
3. Gulf Arab States: Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) (27-28 August 2007), completed;
4. Latin America: Victoria, Argentina (12-14 September 2007), completed;
5. Africa: Kigali, Rwanda (27 September 2007), completed;
6. CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States): Minsk, Belarus (29-31 October 2007), completed;
7. East Asia: Hangzhou, China (2-5 November 2007), completed;
8. The Caribbean: Kingston, Jamaica (5-7 December 2007), completed;
9. Eastern Europe: Riga, Latvia (24-26 February 2008)
10. Northern Europe: Finland (7-8 March 2008)

Report prepared by:

Mr. Renato Opertti, Programme Specialist, Coordinator, Capacity Building Programme (r.opertti@unesco.org); Ms. Lili Ji, Assistant Programme Specialist, Capacity Building Programme (l.ji@unesco.org); Ms. Nathalie Chalmers, Research Intern, Capacity Building Programme (n.chalmers@unesco.org); Ms. Anne Matter, Research Intern, Capacity Building Programme (a.matter@unesco.org).

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