

Translation Inclusion Global Immersion

Can you see the real me?

I am creative. I learn in many ways. I want to change the world. I believe that our collective energy and desire to learn are the foundation of our global community's future. Discovered through relevance, engaged learning and global awareness, my voice—and all of our voices—can translate to that foundation.

Preparing each of us for an inspiring, global future is what we do. Creating inclusive, immersive learning environments that engage all learners, and all educators, anywhere is what we do. Let us show you.

Come see the real me.



SHWGROUP

creating learning environments that transcend architecture

5717 Legacy Drive Plano, Texas 75024 USA
Tel: +1 214 473 2400 shwgroup.com

Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Biennale 2008¹

Summary of the outcomes



General outcomes

- 1. Paradigm shift.** Given the many changes in the socio-economic environment of African countries and the challenges these pose for educational development, a paradigm shift in both the substance of post-primary education (PPE) and the structure of its provision is necessary. This paradigm shift will be the basis for further expansion across PPE, and the improvement of its quality and relevance.
- 2. Substance and structure.** The substance of the education system needs to be reconceptualised to enable education providers to respond directly to the changing realities and opportunities in the lives of young people. The structure of the system needs to be reviewed in order to allow for rapid expansion and to cater for the often large numbers of young people out of school, whose (re)absorption into the system – due to their circumstances – may require the recognition and enhancement of alternative modes of provision.
- 3. Holistic, integrated and diverse education.** The further development of education and training systems, in terms of expansion of their size, quality and relevance, needs to be approached in a holistic and integrated manner, recognising the essential diversity of modes of education provision that in many countries are already available in addition to regular formal schooling. Yet these need to be looked at in their totality and (as far as services to children and young people are concerned) be integrated in an open and equitable system.
- 4. Systems perspective.** The changes to the education system require that a systems perspective is applied to education and training, recognising the inter-relatedness of all learning and all forms of education. The multiple forms of education provision affect one another; this reality must be scrutinised and fully understood. The connection between 'general education' and '(pre-)vocational education' must also be closely examined; the common division between the two is artificial and needs to be overcome in the interest of pursuing their joint value for socio-economic development.
- 5. PPE as UBE + PBET.** PPE is not only about what follows after primary school, but also about the reconsideration of 'primary' education as it is currently structured. The Biennale shifted attention from universal primary education to an extended and expanded 9–10 years of 'universal basic education' (UBE);² and from PPE to a diversified 'post-basic education and training' (PBET) (i.e., what follows after an enhanced basic education).

Thus, in this [new] perspective, the focus is less on PPE as such than on both UBE and PBET.
- 6. Distinctions between basic education (BE) and PBET.** There are essential distinctions between the two components of education: while an expanded BE of 9–10 years will need to absorb all children and young people in the relevant age group, and ensure that all learners complete a full education cycle, at the PBET level, entry is based on choice, in accordance with interests and talents. This is a point of transition in education, in which youth need assistance and further training to enter the labour market. Moreover, whereas basic education will require an integrated curriculum with a common core of learning outcomes to be achieved by all, the PBET level requires a range and diversity of learning options that are linked both to individual needs and interests, and just as importantly, to the demands of the labour market and society.
- 7. Integrated perspective on technical and vocational education and training (TVET).** TVET concerns all vocational skills development at all levels, regardless of the providers (i.e., public or private), how it is provided and whether it is school-based or work-based. It can be developed as an integrated set of provisions with effective linkages to the different options offered, as well as between vocational education as a part of general education and vocational training as occupational preparation. Although vocational training is generally preferred to take place after completing BE, the age of the learners (15 and over) may make training at lower levels necessary.
- 8. Common system of assessment and certification.** An open system that promotes transfers between diverse modes of basic education provision and transitions to different options at higher levels of learning requires a common approach to assessment at key transition points and a system to validate learning wherever this takes place. For this reason, many countries develop a national qualifications framework (NQF) in education and/or in vocational training. An NQF focuses on learning outcomes as a basis for certification. It enables learners to gather clear information about their learning achievements and their competences, which they can use to make choices for accessing further learning or the labour market.
- 9. Massification versus democratisation.** The starting point for system reform is not the large-scale expansion or massification of the existing system, as this would imply the maintenance of an essentially elitist and exclusionary reality of educational



Schoolgirls in Bangladesh, where gender mainstreaming may lead to better career choices for them

participation, whereby selection of the few from among the many is the prevailing dynamic. Instead, the starting point is the reform of PPE, in a major effort to democratise education (in terms of participation and the design of its curriculum, pedagogical processes and forms of assessment) and to facilitate successful completion, along with effective guidance into life, society and the world of work, in accordance with interests, abilities and talents, and available opportunities, based on equal chances for all.

- 10. Gender priorities.** Gender in education and training is about ensuring equality of opportunities for both male and female learners. Gender-sensitive policies and strategies leading to gender mainstreaming require gender budgeting (i.e., an explicit reflection of the extent to which female learners benefit from education expenditures). A high priority is to be given to ensuring that a higher percentage of girls transit from UBE into PBET, and to making TVET more attractive to female trainees. Moreover, dedicated initiatives and an intense effort to improve the percentage of female teachers in secondary and higher education are needed.
- 11. Teachers come first.** The availability of sufficient numbers of qualified teachers may become a major stumbling block in both the expansion of BE into the lower secondary level and improving the quality of education. A major challenge, therefore, will be the preparation, deployment, in-service training and retention of teachers already in the system, as well

as of the many untrained teachers who are being recruited. Training of polyvalent teachers and the use of distance mode for teacher development are to be promoted. Teacher quality remains the central input into improving the quality of education.

Universal basic education (UBE)

- 12. An extended and reformed UBE.** In UBE, the agenda is partly about the extension in years of primary education to 9–10 years of schooling, which is to become an integrated cycle of a new style of BE accessible to all as a right. It is also about the reform of BE in curricular terms: as a common foundation of knowledge and skills (in particular cognitive skills, life skills, social and pre-vocational skills). Thus, UBE would incorporate a reformed and expanded lower secondary education cycle, while PBET would start at the upper secondary level or equivalent.
- 13. Expansion of lower secondary education.** UBE as a combination of primary and lower secondary education should be a continuous cycle of 9–10 years of BE. The rapid expansion of the numbers of lower secondary schools, preferably in conjunction with nearby primary schools, in accordance with resources available is necessary where expanded UBE has not yet been introduced. This expansion requires achieving ‘cost efficiencies’ – all costs, material and human, must be optimally planned and utilised.

- 14. Recognising the diversity of child and youth populations in provision.** The expansion of complete UBE as a right to all children and youth means that the diverse circumstances and learning needs of all potential learners must be served. In other words, UBE must be inclusive and make appropriate specific provisions for children and youth from diverse backgrounds (e.g., those marginalised because of poverty, geographical location [rural-urban], gender, race, ethnicity, disability, [post-]conflict conditions, culture, religion, family breakdowns and health factors such as HIV/AIDS). Recognition implies acknowledgement of the relevance of different learning pathways in BE for designated categories of learners for whom attending regular school is not (yet) a realistic option.
- 15. Complementary programmes and UBE.** Complementary forms of education (e.g., 'non-formal' programmes, open and distance learning, Islamic schools, community schools, nomadic education, shepherd schools) need to function as a 'formal' part of UBE. Under certain conditions, they should be recognised and provided with support. While it can be accepted that parts of the curriculum are adapted to the learners' special needs, they may need to adhere to a common core curriculum and be subject to supervision and quality control. In this context, the use of the term 'non-formal' is no longer valid. Countries may need a national policy, legal and regulatory framework within which such recognition and formal subsidisation can take place.
- 16. Training and UBE.** It needs to be recognised that in several countries many young people receive some basic education through apprenticeship training in the informal sector or through non-formal skills training programmes. Where learners are older (15 and over), training of this nature needs to be accepted as part of BE. However, informal training pathways need to provide complementary BE on a part-time basis, suggesting the possibility of flexible combinations and physical locations for pursuing UBE.
- 17. The centrality of articulation.** The principle that makes an integrated system come to life for the benefits of all learners is that of articulation (i.e., the actual connections between different learning pathways at the horizontal level and the transitions from one level to the next in vertical terms). These are the 'bridges' and 'ladders' that enable young people to move through the system in accordance with their evolving circumstances and needs. Articulation, to be effective, requires working mechanisms for transition processes and close co-operation between institutions. The establishment of national qualifications frameworks can greatly assist articulation in an equitable manner.
- 18. Equity is key.** The principle of equity – equal treatment and access to resources and benefits – is essential in the maintenance of an integrated and just UBE system that must provide equal opportunities for all. Achieving equitable access to outcomes and access to further learning or to labour market benefits may require bridging arrangements or affirmative practices for some disadvantaged groups, together with guidance and counselling mechanisms. Such measures constitute a fundamental challenge to policy-makers and planners.
- 19. Tackling wastage is priority.** Severe loss of quality, inefficiencies and corresponding high levels of dropouts and lack of relevance across basic education (primary, lower secondary and complementary modes) need to be addressed. Expanding inefficient and poorly functioning school systems will not simply waste scarce resources. True educational reform requires enhancing the quality of teachers, curriculum reform, effective institutional management, maximising strategies for using low-cost facilities, expanding Open and Distance Learning (ODL) opportunities, and creating appropriate remedial and second chance programmes for dropouts. This last point has been referred to as the 'unfinished business of UPE' – the challenge to bring the last 10–20 per cent of learners into a recognised form of BE to ensure that all learners successfully complete UPE.
- 20. UBE prepares for PBET and the labour market.** UBE graduates need to be much better prepared for life and work, as well as for continued education and training. Hence, a new and integrated curriculum framework needs to be developed that covers the entire basic education cycle, regardless of mode of provision. Moreover, the framework should stimulate a range of relevant core knowledge and skills, and incorporate appropriate forms of internal and external assessment. The latter needs to reflect learners' competencies and be used to guide graduates towards different PBET and labour market options. Effective preparation for learners post-UBE necessitates improvements in existing assessment regimes and career guidance and counselling programmes.
- 21. The challenge of science and technology.** The pace of science and technology discovery means that curricula must keep abreast of new developments, in order to prepare school leavers for coping with rapid socio-cultural change; to empower them to take calculated risks; to achieve global competitiveness while maintaining local relevance; and to enable Africa to become pro-active in its own development. The gap with the industrial world needs to be reduced.
- 22. Different views on vocationalised BE.** In the new concept and restructuring of BE, the nature of vocational education and its relationship with the general part of BE must still be clarified. While the principle of integration between general and vocational education by way of functional links has been accepted, countries face different realities and situations. Thus, policy responses within BE may vary from emphasising pre-vocational orientation and generic skills only, to accepting a combination of general education with vocational (i.e., occupational) training in selected situations.
- 23. Coherence with diversity in vocational learning.** The vision for UBE and educational system reform is that national education and training policies reflect the de facto diversity of training paths and vocational learning opportunities while encouraging coherence in education and training systems. Diversity will remain important for social reasons (acquisition of skills by young people in different situations) as well as for economic reasons (the dual nature of many African economies and the needs of diverse types of enterprises).
- 24. The critical role of validation of learning and qualification frameworks.** A major condition for systems



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Our mission

Cambridge University Press aims to further, through publication and printing, the University of Cambridge's own objective of advancing learning, knowledge and research worldwide. This transformative mission is realised through our commitment to innovation and enterprise, placing us at the cutting-edge of electronic delivery in a world that looks increasingly to digital content and networked access not only to books and journals but to a range of other pedagogic services.



Meeting the needs of our authors, readers and customers

Across the whole range of our publishing, from starter-level English Language Teaching materials for learners worldwide, through curriculum-oriented textbooks and e-resources, to the most specialised academic research outputs, we maintain and extend our age-old reputation for high quality and technological innovation to meet the needs of our customers, authors and readers across the globe.



Our spread of publishing covers virtually every educational subject seriously studied in the English-speaking world – with professional books, textbooks, monographs, reference works, English Language Teaching publications, software and electronic publishing.



An international organisation

With branches, offices and agents throughout the world, we are able to draw on a remarkable range of authors (currently around 36,000 from 120 different countries) and to market and distribute material (both print and electronic) to readers everywhere. Our 1,880 staff in fifty-three offices service an inventory of 34,000 in-print titles, growing at a rate of 2,800 new ISBNs per year, and a stockholding of 20m units in nine warehouses around the world.



www.cambridge.org

1584 • 2009

425 YEARS OF CAMBRIDGE
PRINTING AND PUBLISHING

integration and the equivalence of learning pathways in UBE is the establishment of mechanisms to assess and validate learning across modes of provision with a view of offering equitable access to continued learning opportunities. Although the establishment of NQFs is not essential for achieving this, it offers a systematic way to formally recognise all learning.

Post-basic education and training (PBET)

- 25. PBET entry as of choice.** At the PBET level, a distinction is made between upper secondary education, including technical and vocational training, on the one hand, and higher education institutions on the other hand. Upper secondary education (whether general, technical or vocational in orientation) is the final segment of education before entry into employment, further vocational training or into higher education. Higher education is not limited to tertiary education (university) but is envisaged as consisting of all types of post-upper secondary education, including vocational and skills training. 'Training' in TVET refers to pre- or in-service job-specific preparation generally undertaken outside formal education institutions. Whereas participation and completion of UBE is considered to be a right, transition to PBET is based on choice and on availability of places, depending on national needs and resources.
- 26. Diversity and differentiation in PBET.** The PBET system should not be designed homogeneously, but be characterised by diversification and differentiation. Diversity relates to the increase in different pathways that can be pursued, associated with an increasing variation of education and training opportunities linked to a wide variety of career paths. Differentiation particularly refers to a process whereby conventional forms of education are complemented by the emergence of new forms using different pedagogical approaches, mixtures of technologies, governance or financing models (e.g., face-to-face versus distance learning, public versus private institutions). As all these forms may have different goals, there is not a single set of learning outcomes in PBET.
- 27. Integration and articulation remain central.** Integration and articulation within PBET systems are as important as in UBE. It is imperative that institutions pursuing similar goals are interlinked, which will allow for transfers between modes. This means that there must be recognised mechanisms for students to shift from one learning track to another (e.g., 'open-entry, open-exit' system). Achieving effective student flow management can be done through guidance and incentives, albeit putting these in place will be a challenge to governments. Articulation is much enhanced by the existence of a qualifications framework, but also by closer co-ordination among upper secondary institutions and among tertiary institutions, as well as between the two levels.
- 28. Integrated learning programmes.** Integration is important in curriculum and pedagogical terms where it points to the extent to which different learning areas or types of competencies are brought together or converged within the same learning programme. The promotion of innovative interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary programmes will benefit learners greatly. For example, in an integrated system, programmes should consist

of an integrated mixture of continued general education, vocational skills, development and personal/life skills, whether at the level of BE or in further learning opportunities.

- 29. Assessment and transition.** Rethinking and strengthening of assessment mechanisms at the end of the upper secondary level is critical to better articulation with higher education and the fair allocation of limited places in tertiary education and training. It is acknowledged that significant gaps still exist, preventing a smooth transition from upper secondary systems to higher education, in particular for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. The principle of equity makes it essential that such gaps are addressed; for example, through bridging programmes.
- 30. Articulation promotes lifelong learning.** Effective articulation within an integrated system enables parallel and second chance pathways to emerge that learners can use to move through quality education provisions from BE through upper secondary education into higher education. The vision is that, eventually, learners should be able to access all forms of education when and where desired.
- 31. Other missions of PBET.** Learning programmes in PBET not only have a role in guiding young people to higher education and into the world of work, they also have a social and economic role in that they can ensure the development of a highly educated and technologically proficient workforce that can stimulate economic growth; in that they can facilitate contributions to development of local communities and to the reduction of poverty and inequalities in society; and in that they can promote citizenship and democratic participation.

Governance, partnerships and funding

- 32. Changing role of government.** Governments can no longer afford to be the sole providers of education and training, but must work with private and public partners, including NGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs) to achieve education goals. They face many challenges inherent to their changing role. In particular, they have to become more involved with issues related to quality and learning achievement goals, such as co-ordination, policy support, regulation, professional services, supervision, monitoring and quality assurance. As governance and funding, as well as policy development and programme implementation, are increasingly shared with other public and private socio-economic partners, new frameworks to guide meaningful division of roles and responsibilities are necessary. Substantive capacity development programmes are urgently required to enable government agencies and decentralised structures to carry out their new roles effectively.
- 33. Government in the driving seat.** Governments must take major responsibility for the reform and expansion of BE and PBET. Such processes need to be realistically planned, managed and regulated, where appropriate, using a holistic and integrated perspective that explicitly recognises the need for equitable diversity. Only governments can co-ordinate the technical and research work, the data collection and the public dialogue necessary to identify needs and priorities, and set targets for change.

- 34. Management and leadership.** A major effort is to be made to provide management training for principals/heads of educational institutions. Moreover, conditions need to be created to enable more women to occupy management and other leadership positions. All management personnel are to be given more opportunities and support to enhance the quality and relevance of education and training.
- 35. Special mission of universities.** Universities have a special responsibility to help create the learning experiences and pedagogies that young Africans need to understand their own reality and the roles they can play in its transformation. Through research and dialogue, and the creation of networks around education development issues, universities must take a stronger interest in the development of the education system as a whole. In particular, higher education institutions have a pivotal role in helping to improve the leadership and professional capacity of ministries and partner organisations to design and steer education reform programmes.
- 36. Resources for expansion of BE.** Countries need to think carefully about what it will take to expand basic education to 8–10 years of learning for all in a cost-effective manner. The mobilisation of extra resources will be more urgent for some countries than for others, and will vary within country conditions and socio-economic contexts. There are different possible measures for mobilising resources: from deploying and using existing resources more efficiently, through reduction of unit costs, to building effectively on complementary programmes already in existence. In most countries, a judicious mix of public and private financing will be essential to achieve a diversified system of acceptable quality.
- 37. Public-private partnerships.** UBE is an unrealistic goal without public-private partnerships (PPPs). PPPs may involve different socio-economic partners, such as employers' and workers' organisations, community associations, civil society organisations and private companies. Such partnerships are essential to share governance, mobilise additional resources, participate in policy dialogue, provide professional support services and stimulate creative and innovative thinking. They also help improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness. They can greatly assist in enhancing diversity of modes of provision, while ensuring quality and relevance in accordance with needs. Formal agreements, specifying responsibilities and procedures, help in making PPPs work and ensure equity and democratic control.
- 38. Prudent financing of UBE and PBET reform.** Although many countries have significantly increased national investment in education since the World Education Forum (Dakar 2000), rapid population growth means that resources will continue to be spread thinly. This puts a premium on trying to build on what people are doing already, on mobilising resources from all partners to the best of their ability and on using these as creatively and efficiently as possible. Significant gains can be achieved by using state funds for targeted subsidies; by allowing more discretion to respond to regional and local needs through decentralisation; and by practising tighter planning. In the final analysis, affordability of reform can be best enhanced through economic growth. It is recommended that, in the interest of equity, allocations of state funding at different levels be based on actual need rather than on merit.

- 39. Global trends, country-specific realities.** Despite similar trends in most countries of Sub-Saharan Africa regarding the needs and issues in reforming education systems, such as expanding from UPE to UBE and creating an equitable integrated system that offers various modes geared to individual and societal needs and the governance challenges implied, the reality on the ground differs significantly. National practices, significant variations in national economic resources, educational traditions and the very nature and underlying philosophy and culture of a specific education system mean that policy and programmes will differ accordingly. In other words, the notion of 'one size fits all' will not work. Yet sharing practices – what does work and what does not work – does not pre-empt country-defined solutions, it can enhance them. Ultimately, intra-country dialogue and the course of the democratic process will determine best how UBE and PBET reform and expansion will be shaped. Countries are encouraged to contextualise their approaches to educational development and to localise curricula and pedagogy within a national frame.
- 40. Political will and visionary leadership.** The most fundamental prerequisites for bringing about a paradigm shift in thinking and acting in PPE development are a national vision that underscores the need and desire for a paradigm shift, and the political will and visionary leadership to act upon it. Strategic but hard political choices will have to be made that require foresight and courage. Such political leadership needs to respond to the needs of all sectors of the community without exception, and to consider the requirements of social and economic development.

Endnotes

- 1 The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) is first and foremost a forum for policy dialogue. Created in 1988, it was initially set up as a framework for better co-ordination among development agencies. Twenty years after it was founded, ADEA has come to represent a genuine partnership between African education and training ministries in Sub-Saharan Africa and their technical and external partners. It has also developed into a network of policy-makers, educators and researchers, and, based on its capacity to foster policy dialogue, a catalyst for educational reform. It is recognised today as being a major actor in the processes of dialogue, sharing and learning for qualitative change in education aimed at promoting Africa's development.
- 2 For the purpose of this Biennale, UBE refers to basic education for children and young people. It does not deny the significance of UBE for older youth and adults.

DR WIM HOPPERS is an independent education policy analyst and researcher. He is Visiting Professor at Stockholm University Institute of International Education and consultant to the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). From 1993 to 2004, he served as Regional Education Advisor to the Netherlands Government in Southern Africa, based in Pretoria. He has published widely on policy and practice related to education alternatives.